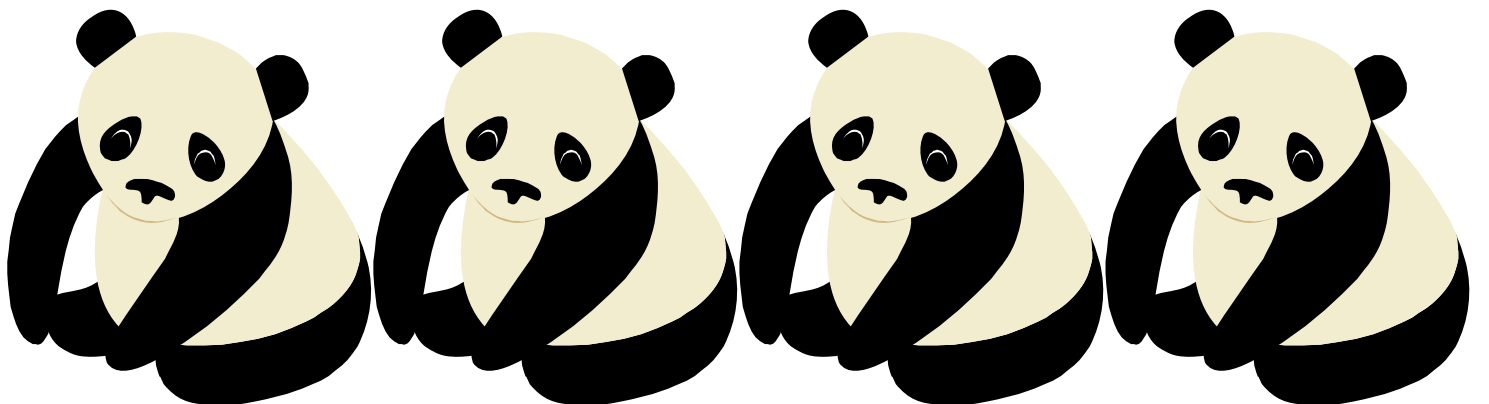


***PORTOLA***  
***ELEMENTARY SCHOOL***  
***2010-2011***

***STUDENT HANDBOOK***



***PORTOLA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL***

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***THE HISTORY OF THE "PORTOLA PANDA"***

The panda was chosen as Portola's school mascot in 1984. When two real pandas from China visited the San Francisco Zoo that year, the Portola PTA sponsored a field trip for the entire school to go see the *live* pandas. At about the same time, Amanda Panda (the large panda with the bandage on her ear) resided in the window of a store in Serramonte Shopping Center. Unfortunately, she sat too close to the light bulb in the window and burned her ear. The store, unable to sell her, offered her as a prize in an essay contest. Mr. Casey's third grade class wrote to the store telling them the panda was our mascot, and if we won Amanda Panda for our school, we would take good care of her. As a result, she came to live at Portola.

Portola's students were horrified when, in the spring of 1985, some teenagers came into the school, kidnapped Amanda off the table in the hallway and ran off with her! The police were notified, and they caught the culprits "red-handed." Unfortunately, Amanda had to be held as evidence in the hearing. Although she was sorely missed at the school, rumor has it that she was treated as an honored guest at the police station, and was even seen wearing 49er shirts, police hats, etc.

When Amanda was returned to her home at Portola, she was given the table in the office as her special place of honor. Many students found excuses to come into the office to give Amanda a "welcome home pat." Now Amanda sits above the door in one corner of the multipurpose room watching over all the children.

Since Amanda has joined us, our family of pandas has grown. In the spring of 1992, west wing teachers at the time, Barbara Kelley-Taylor, Veronica Kelly and Debra Cartwright organized their classes to build a replica of a *real* panda bear. The life-sized, papier mache panda was to be entered in an Endangered Species contest held at Serramonte Center. The students worked on the panda for many weeks, patiently putting layers of newspaper over a wire frame. The panda was painted and named "Peter." He was taken to the Serramonte display and won first place in his category, bringing home a set of children's encyclopedias as his prize. Peter now has his own corner of the multipurpose room where he also watches over our students.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORTS.....13

APPENDICES .....17

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL .....6

ATTENDANCE.....6

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT AND OPEN HOUSE.....8

BEFORE SCHOOL / AFTER SCHOOL CARE.....7

BIRTHDAYS, PARTIES AND HOLIDAYS.....9

CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL AWARD.....3

CLOTHING.....15

COMMUNICATIONS FROM SCHOOL .....8

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM .....10

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION.....11

    English - Language Arts.....11

    English As A Second Language.....12

    History - Social Science .....12

    Mathematics .....11

    Physical Education- Health Education.....12

    Science .....11-12

    Visual & Performing Arts .....12

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS .....16

DISCIPLINE.....10

HOMEWORK .....7-8

IF YOU NEED TO MOVE. . . . .16

LIBRARY .....14

LOST AND FOUND .....15

LUNCHESES AND THE CAFETERIA.....15

MEDICAL NEEDS .....14-15

OUTDOOR EDUCATION.....14

PARENT INVOLVEMENT .....8

PARENTAL QUESTIONS AND CLASSROOM VISITS .....9

PARKING.....7

PORTOLA SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT .....3

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE.....4

PSYCHOLOGIST .....13

PORTOLA PTA .....9

RESOURCE SPECIALIST PROGRAM.....13

SCHOOL SCHEDULE & STAFF.....5

SCHOOL AND LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (SLIP).....14

SPECIAL DAY CLASS .....14

SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY.....13

SPIRIT DAYS .....9-10

STUDENT BILLS .....14

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS.....11

STUDENT GROUPINGS/CLASS PLACEMENT .....7

TECHNOLOGY .....12-13

TELEPHONE USE.....16

TEN WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED .....3

## **TEN WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL**

As a parent, you can do much to help and encourage your child to succeed in school. Here are some great ways you can promote your child's success:

1. Make certain your child attends school **on time** every day he/she is physically able to.
2. *Set realistic goals for your child.* Provide direction and encouragement for your child to meet those goals.
3. *Reinforce the importance of personal responsibility through words and actions.* Children need to learn how to accept responsibility for their decisions and actions as well as the positive and negative consequences that accompany each.
4. *Set aside a quiet place for your child to study.* Then provide a time each day for your child to study and/or read without interruption or distraction.
5. Arrange for your child to have regular physical exams and dental checkups.
6. Show an interest in the work your child is doing.
7. *Help your child develop a healthy attitude toward error.* Children need to learn early and be reminded often that mistakes and disappointments are not only a part of living, but that they are often necessary for learning itself.
8. *Communicate with the teacher.* You can provide insights that will help the teacher assess what your child is capable of accomplishing, and the extent to which your child is achieving his/her potential.
9. Demonstrate the importance you place on school through your involvement in the educational process.
10. Make sure your child knows that you love them unconditionally.

Your child will mirror your own attitudes and feelings about school. Anything you can do to promote the importance of a good education will pay off in big dividends later!

## **PORTOLA SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

The members of the Portola School family are committed to developing a positive learning environment that addresses individual learning styles. As a community of teachers, students, staff and parents, it is our purpose to present a rich, meaningful, developmentally appropriate curriculum. We strive to empower children to set high standards and to achieve their personal best. We aim to ensure that each student acquires the knowledge, confidence, and skills necessary to succeed in our school and beyond. Our ultimate goal is to provide students with a variety of academic and social experiences that promote leadership, creativity, individual responsibility, and a joy of lifelong learning.

## **CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL AWARD**

The state's Distinguished School Award goes to schools that have strong standardized test scores, and well developed programs and processes which best meet the needs of their student population. Of the state's 5,555 elementary schools, only 377 schools received this honor in 2006. Portola Elementary was one of the schools awarded this high honor for our excellence in education. "Portola Elementary has distinguished itself as a school that rises to the challenge of academic excellence as a result of its continuous commitment to fostering a comprehensive education for its students." (Assemblyman Gene Mullin, 2006)

## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Portola School! We are pleased to have the opportunity to work together with you to make your child's learning experience this year the very best it can be.

Portola School is committed to the safety, health and well being of each of our students. It is our goal to educate and nurture every child—to give each student the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful, happy and productive members of our society. Children are motivated to achieve when they are challenged *and supported* at their individual levels. At Portola we are committed to providing purposeful, rigorous learning activities that engage all students. Above all else, Portola Elementary School is a community of learners.

When parents are actively involved in their child's learning process, students succeed. We encourage parents to take an active interest in what your children are doing at school, to join the PTA, and to get involved in school activities. There is no better investment one can realize than seeing a child grow and blossom into a well-educated, caring, responsible young adult. Let us collectively commit ourselves to making this happen for every student enrolled in our school.

I look forward to meeting all of you throughout the 2010-2011 school year.

Charlie Rohrbach, Principal

## **SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

Grade(s)	Regular Schedule			Minimum Day Schedule
	Starting Time	Lunch/Recess	Dismissal Time	Dismissal Time
Kindergarten	8:10 AM		11:35 AM	11:35 AM
First Grade	8:10AM	12:00-12:50	2:45PM	1:15 PM
Second Grade	8:10 AM	12:00-12:50	2:45 PM	1:15 PM
Third Grade	8:10 AM	12:00-12:50	2:45 PM	1:15 PM
Fourth Grade	8:10 AM	12:00-12:45	2:45 PM	1:20 PM
Fifth Grade	8:10 AM	12:00-12:45	2:45 PM	1:20 PM
Sixth Grade	8:10 AM	12:00-12:45	2:45PM	1:20 PM

## **SCHOOL STAFF**

**Teachers:** Mrs. Veronica Kelly, Mrs. Ann Nore, Mrs. Georgia Dalikas, Mr. Michael Casey, Mrs. Cindy Forbes, Ms. Julie Calleja, Ms. Kathleen Talbot, Mr. Jed Burnham

### **School Support:**

Office Manager: Lisa Chapman

School Cook: Natalie Yan

Day Custodian: Travis Stansberry

Night Custodian: Gary Bergman

Point of Sale: Stephanie Sage

Noon Supervisors: Noreen Flynn, Monique Briggs, Amanda Heathcote

### **Educational Support:**

Para Professional: Lisa Nelson

Instructional Aide: Stacia Warner

Library Media Aide: Kristie Postel

Special Education: Iris Clifford

Speech: Carolyn DeWitt

Counselor: Lisa Thorsen - Spano

Special Day Class: Jeannie Yandell

## **ATTENDANCE**

Research shows conclusively that attendance is strongly associated with student achievement for several reasons. First, it is difficult for young people to learn if they are not in class. Each lesson presented to students is based upon or related to those that preceded it. Second, developing the habits of good attendance and prompt completion of assignments while in school leads to success after graduation. With this in mind, please make every effort to get your child to school on time each and every day.

**Parents are asked to call the school whenever they know that their child will be absent.** A voice mail message system is available to record your message after regular office hours. The office requests that parents call and verify their child's absence every day.

The school budget is based on regular attendance of all students. When a child is absent from school *for any reason*, we lose \$35.00 per day. Unless a child is too ill to attend school, it is important that s/he attend school every day. If a child must be absent, it is important for those students to complete all missed work. A good way to make these arrangements is to call the school office to let the teacher know you would like to pick up homework after school. Teachers need reasonable notice in order to prepare the missed work. One day's notice for pick up the following day is best. Additionally, it's a good idea to arrange for your child to have a "homework partner" in his/her class pick up homework on days absent.

**Vacations should be taken during regular school vacation times.** If extended absences from school are unavoidable please let the office and teacher know at least a **week** in advance.

## **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL**

Being at school every day possible and on time is critically important. Whenever a child is absent, he/she comes back to school behind and often at a disadvantage. When a student is **tardy**, he/she disrupts the rest of the class and misses part of the instructional program. Excused tardies include medical/health problems, and doctor or dentist appointments. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours. Excessive tardies or absences will affect a student's performance and grades.

Late students must check into the office for a tardy stamp when they arrive at school. Teachers will not admit any late student without this stamp. Parents will be notified by mail or phone if their child is having a persistent tardiness problem.

**Children should not arrive at school more than 15 minutes before class is to begin.** There is no yard supervision before 8:00 a.m. at which time an adult is present to supervise the playground. When students arrive at school, at 8:00 or after, they may use the playground equipment until the bell rings, and then they are to line up in the designated area for their class.

Students are not allowed to **leave the school grounds** alone during school hours. If you need to take your child out of class before the end of the school day, please come to the office and sign him/her out. We will contact the classroom and have the child meet you in the office.

Your child is expected to go home directly **after school** unless previous arrangements have been made by the teacher and/or parent. Teachers are instructed to notify the home prior to keeping a child after school for any reason. If a change in the normal routine is necessary, a written note from a parent is required. Students will not be released during the school day to leave campus without an authorized adult (adult's name must be on your child's emergency/registration form). If you need to check your child out of school unexpectedly, please come into the office to sign him/her out. We will call for the student to meet you in the office.

***There is no provision for children to play on campus after classes are dismissed. Students are expected to go directly home after school.*** *We appreciate your support and cooperation in this regard.*

## **PARKING**

**Parking at Portola is limited. If you are simply dropping off or picking up your child(ren), PLEASE PULL UP PARALLEL to the loading/unloading zones. If you prefer to park, please use the appropriate parking stalls. FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL OUR STUDENTS, PLEASE DO NOT STOP IN THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC IN THE PARKING LOT! This is not only dangerous for students running to and from cars, but obstructs traffic in our one way parking lot.**

## **STUDENT GROUPINGS/CLASS PLACEMENT**

There is no “top” or “slow” classes at any grade level at Portola School. Together, the principal and teachers *hand place* each child based on:

1. Student-to-student interaction and personality
2. Balance of age, gender and ethnic diversity
3. Teacher strengths and student needs
4. Siblings

At the beginning of the school year, it may take some time to get the teacher/student assignments finalized because of family movement during summer, new enrollees, etc.

## **BEFORE SCHOOL / AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

Childcare is offered both before school and after school through a private company located on site called “Champions.” Champions offers a fun, unique educational program designed around the children’s development and interest. They offer hands-on, interactive learning in a stimulating and safe environment. For more information on the program Champions offers visit [www.discoverchampions.com](http://www.discoverchampions.com).

Champions hours at Portola are as follows:

Before school care: 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

After school care: 2:45 PM – 6:00 PM

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is vital to any instructional program. It directly helps to improve student retention and understanding. Furthermore, it indirectly helps to improve students’ study skills and their attitude toward school, while fostering responsibility and independence. In addition, homework involves parents in the school process. We urge parents to be aware of student’s homework assignments and to monitor student progress. As parents, your involvement in your child’s homework early-on will have long-term benefits. The following are just a few benefits to ensuring your child completes his / her homework thoroughly and to the best of his / her abilities. Homework helps students:

- ◆ Develop regular study habits and the self-discipline and responsibility basic to effective study; the ability to work independently.
- ◆ Have more opportunity to develop a personalized, creative approach to projects and other school work.
- ◆ Learn to budget their time more effectively.

- ◆ Come into contact with out-of-school learning resources.
- ◆ Spend quality time with parents at home on a common project.

Each teacher creates his/her own specific policies regarding homework, and communicates expectations to students and parents. Some teachers assign homework on a weekly basis so parents have more flexibility to fit it into the busy schedules of their children and themselves. Homework will be assigned on a regular basis and will be:

- ⇒ Learning activities related to district and school goal statements and instructional objectives.
- ⇒ Assignments designed for enrichment, reinforcement, and extension of school experiences.
- ⇒ Designed to focus on *quality* rather than *quantity* of tasks.
- ⇒ Clear, purposeful, and appropriate to the developmental level of the student.
- ⇒ Evaluated and shared with the student. It may also be a factor in determining grades.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

**There are many ways you can help your child at school and at home. We believe that quality education comes from a real partnership between parents and professionals working together. We know that many parents are not able to help at school due to their own work schedules. There are important things you can still do. Our September Back to School Night will include a “Volunteer Fair” where you can learn more about PTA and other activities and sign up if you are interested. Teachers and the office will recruit volunteers for various projects using this information. Often times teachers need help with preparation of materials, there are PTA evening or weekend projects, etc. Please complete the survey when school begins. We are always grateful for our wonderful parent volunteers, at school and at home.**

### **BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT AND OPEN HOUSE**

Early in the year, all parents are invited to “officially” meet the principal and teachers at Portola. At Back to School Night, we meet in the cafeteria first, then adjourn to classrooms. Each teacher will explain his/her program, addressing issues of classroom management, curriculum and homework policies. It is extremely important for parents to attend, as this overview will help you understand the ways you may help and support both your child and their teacher. It is not, however, a time to discuss individual concerns about your child. If you feel such a conversation is desired, please make an appointment for a conference.

Our Open House will be held in May. This is a time for our students to shine and show off the best of their projects and learning efforts. It is a time for them to take you by the hand and show you everything they’re most proud of! You won’t want to miss it!

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM SCHOOL**

Our school newsletter, the *Portola Pawprint*, comes out on a monthly basis. It is an important way to let you know what is happening at school. In it you’ll find lots of information about coming events as well as updates on school happenings. In general, we will send flyers, handouts, and other notices, both from school and other groups, home with the *Pawprint* whenever possible. Anything that comes home on purple paper should be read immediately. It is our way of letting you know that that information is very important or date-sensitive.

Another great way to stay informed as to what is going on at Portola is to join our group e-mail system, *Big Tent*. If you are new to the Portola family, you will receive an invitation to enroll in *Big Tent* via e-mail. Once you have enrolled you will receive updates as to the happenings at Portola. There are also grade / class subgroups you can join to stay as connected as possible to your child’s classroom and the exciting events that take place there!

## **PORTOLA PTA**

Portola School has a very active Parent-Teacher Association chapter. The purpose of this group is to establish a working relationship between the home and the school. All parents are invited to participate by joining and becoming actively involved in its activities. Meetings are held monthly at school (on the third Thursday), and are announced in the *Pawprint*. Meetings are usually held in the faculty room. Executive board meetings are usually held before a PTA meeting. Our board includes a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer as well as various committee chairpersons for special activities. We encourage you to get involved in any way you can. Our September Back to School Night will include a "Volunteer Fair" where you can learn more about how best to get involved.

## **PARENTAL QUESTIONS AND CLASSROOM VISITS**

From time to time you may have need for clarification regarding an activity or form you have received from school. Please come in or call the school office for more information. Should you have an educational concern and wish to speak to the teacher, you may send a note, call to leave a message, or call to make an appointment to see the teacher. **We encourage this type of communication between school and home**, but remind you that there are a number of activities which involve teachers both before and after school, which may impact when conferences can be scheduled. Likewise, should you wish to speak to the principal, remember that appointments are best. Mrs. Chapman will be happy to make an appointment for you if you call the school office.

We encourage parents to take an active interest in their child's school and education. Parents may visit classrooms, using the following guidelines to ensure a successful visit:

- 1) Make an appointment with your child's teacher ahead of time (The principal can accompany you, if you wish, with prior arrangements).
- 2) Go to the school office to sign in before visiting the classroom and secure information regarding the schedule and classes (district policy).
- 3) Plan for your visit to last about thirty minutes unless you and the teacher feel a longer/shorter visit is appropriate.
- 4) Make childcare arrangements for other small children so that they need not distract the class from its work. This is especially important in the primary grades.
- 5) Make an appointment for a conference with your child's teacher so that the classroom work will not be interrupted. Individual questions are best discussed in out-of-school time.

## **BIRTHDAYS, PARTIES AND HOLIDAYS**

Each class has three parties a year. These occur at Halloween, Winter and Valentine's Day. Each teacher will ask for volunteers to act as room parents to coordinate these events.

Additionally, we do allow parents to send food to school to celebrate the birthday of their student. Please contact the teacher if you would like to provide healthy treats for your child's class (see Appendix for notice of Nutritional Guidelines). Birthday treats will be passed out after lunch. Remember to include napkins, cups and serving utensils. Another way parents can honor their child's birthday is to donate a book to the library or the student's classroom. We can recommend appropriate books and have special bookplates for such gifts.

## **SPIRIT DAYS AT PORTOLA**

Every Friday, Portola Elementary students and staff show pride in their school by wearing our school colors of black and white. Immediately following the morning bell each Friday, students, teachers and families gather around the flagpole for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge is followed by a message from our

principal. On the last Friday of every month, Student of the Month Awards are distributed by each classroom teacher. We encourage families to join in our Friday flag ceremonies.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### ***School Wide Rules:***

1. Come prepared to work.
2. Follow adult direction; respect learning time.
3. Play safe.
4. Toys and trading cards stay at home.
5. Respect school property and the belongings of others.
6. Use appropriate language.
7. No harassment or inappropriate touching.
8. Stay in supervised areas.
9. Wear appropriate dress for school (see CLOTHING p. 15 for guidelines).
10. Use respectful behavior and body language towards adults and other children.

### ***Zero Tolerance:***

For every Zero Tolerance offense (except fighting) police are called.

The consequence for any of the following infractions will be out of school suspension or expulsion:

- ◆ Fighting to cause harm
- ◆ Weapons
- ◆ Drugs, Alcohol, or Tobacco
- ◆ Verbal threat to cause harm

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Portola Elementary is dedicated to insuring a safe learning environment for its students. A key component to keeping our students safe, is teaching them appropriate conflict resolution strategies. Good problem-solving skills enable children to avoid aggression, stand up for themselves, and build competence and self-esteem.

There are 5 basic steps to effective conflict resolution:

1. Identify the problem through active listening.
2. Brainstorm solutions.
3. Evaluate solutions.
4. Choose a solution and try it.
5. Evaluate the outcome.

Our goal is for students to gain the comfort needed to guide themselves through these steps. Adults, however, are always available to guide children through this process.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

1. Do your very best at school everyday. Get enough sleep, come to school prepared, and do your homework.
2. Respect everyone. Respect yourself, respect other Portola students, respect Portola teachers, and respect every adult in the building.

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

This is only a brief description of the instructional program at Portola. More specific information can be learned at Back to School Night, parent conferences, and Open House.

### ***English—Language Arts***

Every teacher at Portola teaches listening, speaking, reading and writing in an integrated and meaning-centered approach. The Open Court Language Arts Series (SRA) is used in all classrooms throughout the San Bruno Park School District. In the primary grades, this focuses on helping children *learn to read* using phonics, noteworthy literature, spelling and extensive experiences in written expression. This instruction is supported with computer technology *Write to Read, Stories and More, Read Naturally, and Reading Counts*. In the upper grades, students focus on *reading to learn*, using those skills developed in younger years to learn about the world, science, other people and ideas. Their program also includes phonics, as needed, spelling, extensive writing experiences, and fine literature. Computer technology is more geared toward writing as an expression of what is read. Listening and speaking skills are practiced at all grade levels. Our library program also supports recreational reading and research in all subjects. Many writing assignments go through some or all of the five stages of the writing process (brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing and final publication). They are evaluated on the basis of a “Open Court Grade Level Rubric” that examines the *total* writing, not just elements of language mechanics. These grades may be reflected as numbers rather than letter grades.

### ***Mathematics***

Although computation is still a strong part of our mathematics program, we focus on deeper understanding of concepts and applied problem solving, not just rote memorization of facts and skills. Every child learns about number concepts, measurement, geometry, patterns, logic, algebra, and statistics/probability. With the adoption of California Math by Houghton Mifflin (K – 5) and McDougal – Littel (grade 6), we have an even greater emphasis on the use of manipulatives to understand math concepts. Computer software also supports concept development and computational practice. For students seeking additional reinforcement at home, CDs are available for use with your home computer which reinforces the concepts being taught in class. Students demonstrate their understanding of math ideas and skills through a wide variety of evaluators—demonstrations, oral and written explanations, and written tests. Progress is evaluated weekly and monitored by unit test assessments.

### ***Science***

In today’s world, the teaching of science has changed dramatically. Today we emphasize the *nature of science and the process by which knowledge is gained* (scientific process) rather than factual knowledge, since that is changing so rapidly. All children learn about physical, life and earth sciences. Our science program, California Science, by Scott Foresman, emphasizes student exploration and discovery learning of these concepts. Students who desire further scientific investigation at home may do so through our online science program at [www.pearsonsuccessnet.com](http://www.pearsonsuccessnet.com). Teachers must register their students before children can gain access

to this interactive website which directly connects to the students' in class learning. In the classroom, students work in cooperative learning teams doing experiments specifically designed to help them experience the wonder of science for themselves. They then use written and oral expression to explain and refine their thinking.

### ***History—Social Sciences***

We use history and social science learning to help children understand themselves and others as well as a means to develop good judgment, perception, civic pride and responsibility. Our program, by MacMillan/McGraw-Hill is progressive and somewhat sequential to match the age-appropriate developmental levels of student understanding. Young children learn about themselves, their families, the neighborhood, towns and cities, California, and the United States. Oftentimes these studies are thematic, focusing on topics such as helpers, immigration or landforms. We use a variety of resources to teach these concepts, including field trips, video and other media, simulations, literature, assemblies, artifacts and community service. Older students also have opportunities to participate in activities which build leadership and character such as the “Reading Buddies” program which partners upper and lower grade classes to celebrate the joy of reading.

### ***Physical Education—Health Education***

All children have the opportunity to participate in structured activities, which develop their physical abilities. Young children learn about and practice skills to develop body control and coordination. Older children use these skills in increasingly complex competitive games which give them an opportunity to develop a sense of sportsmanship and the ability to follow a set of established rules. “Rhythm and Moves,” a private Physical Education Company, contracts with the San Bruno Park School District to provide structured physical education instruction to the Portola 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders on a weekly basis. The Portola PTA provides financial assistance to ensure that students in the Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade also receive weekly physical education class with “Rhythm and Moves.”

### ***Visual and Performing Arts***

The theory of “multiple intelligences” states that talent in music or art is just as valid a measure of intelligence as the ability to read or do math. Children have their own unique ways of expressing themselves and we encourage these expressions of non-verbal communication, which may be more meaningful for some students than traditional school subjects. For this reason, much of the visual and performing arts curriculum at Portola is integrated with other studies such as history and literature. We also provide assemblies and field trips, which expose all children to the wonders and joy of performing through dance, ethnic music and a variety of art media.

### ***English as a Second Language***

Students who come to our school with a limited understanding of English receive special help through our Intensive English instruction program by Santillana, which focuses on developing vocabulary and appropriate verbal expression. In addition, all of our teachers have been trained in sheltered English techniques, which simplify the most critical parts of lessons and support them through the extensive use of pictures and real objects. This allows students with limited understanding of English to learn the important concepts of other subjects as they continue to learn the language. As additional support, our English language learners use a computer program titled, *Rosetta Stone*, which provides them with language building skills and vocabulary development.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Students at Portola have access to our mobile computer lab consisting of 24 laptop computers. The teachers at Portola incorporate the use of LCD projectors along with the computer laptops to maximize student learning.

Since our school is equipped with a wireless network, the students are able to support their learning not only through our campus wide programs such as *Rosetta Stone* and *Reading Counts*, but they also have supervised access to a variety of educational websites that help them to enhance the skills they are learning in the classroom. A list of educational websites has been provided below so that students can use them at home to further enrich their educational experience.

<http://www.prongo.com/>

<http://www.funbrain.com/>

<http://funschool.kaboose.com/>

<http://www.starfall.com/>

<http://www.gamequarium.com/>

<http://www.primarygames.com/>

<http://www.learningplanet.com/stu/kids0.asp>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

<http://www.aplusmath.com/>

<http://www.mathtutor.com/>

<http://teachertube.com/>

<http://www.history.com/>

<http://www.sfskids.org/templates/splash.asp>

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORTS**

At Portola School, academic progress is reported in three ways—report cards, parent conferences, and deficiency notices. **Report cards** are issued three times a year, in November, March and June.

**Parent/teacher conferences** are held in December and March. Minimum days are scheduled to facilitate these conferences. Some conferences may need to be held by phone. Teachers or parents may also request additional conferences at other times during the year. We view parent/teacher conferences as the most desirable way of reporting student progress to parents. Your cooperation in attending conferences will result in improved understanding and will assist your child's educational progress tremendously. If you cannot keep an appointment, please notify the teacher as soon as possible, so the time can be used for another parent and you can reschedule.

**Deficiency notices** are mailed to parents at the midpoint between reporting periods. They are issued when a student is receiving a C-, D or F in any subject or an unsatisfactory report in academics, study habits or effort. This is intended to be an early warning to parents and students while there is still time to take corrective action.

### **RESOURCE SPECIALIST PROGRAM**

A Resource Specialist Program is available at Portola to offer special assistance to those students who qualify. RSP is a part of Special Education. Eligibility for the program is determined by a set of procedures that involve testing, observation, evaluation, and many district, county, state and federal guidelines. No student can qualify for the RSP program without consent of the parent. Meetings are held before any student is referred or qualified into the program to solicit the input and reflection of the parents and the child. An individual education plan (IEP) is developed for all students who qualify. Students receive these services on a pullout basis or through classroom support.

### **PSYCHOLOGIST**

A licensed psychologist is available for the evaluation of pupil learning and for the evaluation of disabilities and emotional issues.

### **SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY**

Our speech and language therapist is available at the school one day a week to service the needs of identified students who qualify for such services. She works with students on articulation and syntax problems.

### **SPECIAL DAY CLASS**

San Mateo County Elementary Services for Special Needs has a class on our campus. The goals of this program includes maximizing individual learning potential, improving social skills, normalizing behavior, increasing critical thinking skills/judgment and building a more positive self-concept. This class has lunch and recess with other students at Portola and are regularly involved in school activities.

### **LIBRARY**

Kristie Postel is the Portola School librarian. Each class has at least a one-hour block of time for library visits each week. Late notices are mailed home to parents when necessary, and students with unreturned books at the end of the year will not receive their final report card until the book(s) are returned or paid for. If books are not returned/paid for at the end of the year, students will not be allowed to check out books until such time as the account is cleared.

### **STUDENT BILLS**

Students are responsible for the school materials and textbooks issued to them. They (and their parents) will be billed for all lost or damaged textbooks, library books, and for all willful destruction of school property. End-of-year report cards may be withheld from any student who has an outstanding bill or unreturned school property.

### **OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

All fifth grade students have the opportunity to spend a week at Jones Gulch campground in La Honda as part of their science education curriculum. They are accompanied by at least one teacher and supported by a knowledgeable staff of naturalists at the camp. Students hold various fund-raisers during the year to offset the cost of this weeklong adventure.

### **SCHOOL AND LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (SLIP)**

The State of California provides supplemental funds to our school in addition to the regular school budget. These funds are provided for all students. This year we will be working on our new Single Plan for Student Achievement. As a school we will be focusing on Reading Comprehension and greater understanding of the relationship between numbers, quantities, and place value from whole numbers through fractions, decimals, integers, ratios, and percents. Students will be able to model and solve problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

The School Site Council (SSC) is a committee of three elected parents, three teachers, a classified employee and the principal. Together these members make decisions about the educational program we provide for our students and how we spend SLIP monies. The committee meets a minimum of 3 times per year. Notification of meeting dates and times are posted in the monthly newsletter. All parents are welcome to attend. We have agendas and minutes of our meetings posted on the lobby bulletin board to keep you informed.

### **MEDICAL NEEDS**

Students attending school should be in good physical health. Their condition shall be such that it will not endanger the health of other students. School personnel cannot diagnose or treat illnesses or previous injuries. When a sick or injured student is brought to the office from the classroom or playground, the school secretary will administer first aid. Parents may be called to take their child home. Students who are contagious may not stay at school or the daycare facility. It is important for the school to have an accurate emergency form

on file in the office so we can contact you in an emergency situation. *If the parents cannot be reached, the principal may call for emergency services or take the child to the hospital.* Forms are sent home at the beginning of the school year. For your child's safety, they need to be filled out and returned to school immediately. **If there are any changes in address, telephone number, work numbers, or emergency caregiver during the school year, please notify the office immediately. It is very important that this information be current at all times. We cannot release students to persons who are not listed on the emergency release form.**

If it is necessary for your child to take prescription medication during school hours, written notification of this must be on file in the office, including a form signed by the physician. Your physician can fax this information to us at 738-6697. Medication will be kept in the office and dispensed by the office manager or principal. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO KEEP ANY MEDICATION IN THEIR CLASSROOM OR WITH THEIR PERSONAL BELONGINGS.** (This includes aspirin, cough drops, allergy pills, etc.) If your child requires such medication, you may send it to school along with a permission slip authorizing school personnel to administer the appropriate dosage as would be required with a prescription drug.

### **CLOTHING**

Students should wear clothing that is appropriate, permits them to participate in school activities freely, and does not distract others from learning. The Portola playground is prone to wind, fog, and clouds, so a warm jacket (with a name inside) is a very important item of clothing for all students to have on hand here. Remember that Portola's weather can change from warm and balmy to bitter cold in a matter of minutes.

**The following are NOT permitted at school:**

- hats in the building
- tank tops, spaghetti straps, see through or midriff exposure
- short shorts
- baggie pants
- flip flops or shoes with no backs
- skate/roller shoes
- clothing which advertises illegal substances, includes inappropriate language for a school setting, or implies criticism toward a particular group
- electronic equipment such as games, pagers, or cell phones

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Personal articles or clothing found on the school grounds or in the building are kept in the front hall area to the right of the office. Small articles and "valuables" are kept in the office. Any such item may be claimed by student or parent. Items not claimed by the end of school (June) are boxed and given to a non-denominational, non-profit agency. **Please label all rainwear, coats, jackets, lunch boxes, backpacks and folders.**

### **LUNCHES AND THE CAFETERIA**

All students eat in the cafeteria, regardless of whether or not students get a hot lunch or bring one from home. Hot lunches are available in the cafeteria daily. Milk is also sold for 50¢. Full lunches are \$2.25. **ALL** lunch money should be brought to the office BEFORE school. We do not provide facilities for food to be heated in a microwave oven.

**Loan Policy: Children who forget their lunch or lunch money will not be allowed to use the school phone.** Those who forget their lunch will be given milk and a peanut butter sandwich. Repeated incidents will necessitate a conference between the principal and home.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

The office telephone is available for pupil use in case of an emergency. Incoming calls to pupils will be forwarded through their teachers during recess so as not to interfere with class instruction.

## **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

The school maintains for use as needed: flashlights, first aid supplies, and special tools/equipment that might be needed in an emergency.

A comprehensive School Safety Plan is available in the office, however, you can review the school's Emergency Preparedness Plan located in the Appendix of this handbook. We hold monthly fire drills and periodic earthquake drop-and-cover and evacuation drills during the school year. In the event of a disaster during the school day, students will be kept on the school site until such time as it is declared safe by the administrator to dismiss students or until an adult *designated on the child's emergency/registration form*, arrives to pick up the child. **Only those adults designated on the emergency registration form are allowed to take any student from the school site.**

## **IF YOU NEED TO MOVE. . . .**

If you move to another residence during the school year, but your child(ren) will still be attending Portola, please remember to update the emergency card information in the school office. If you need to move out of the area and transfer your child(ren) to another school, please advise the office **at least five days before you plan to leave**. We will need the following information:

- last day of attendance at Portola
- new address and telephone number
- name of new school, if known

Please return all library books, textbooks and other school materials by the child's last day.

## **APPENDICES**

**Superintendent Letter**

**Emergency Preparedness Plan**

**Student Internet Use Agreements K-3 & 4-6**

**Uniform Complaint Procedures**

**Annual Notice To Parents Of Legal Rights**

**Students: Sexual Harassment**

**Annual Notification of Drug-Free Workplace**

**Statement of Mutual Rights and Responsibilities**

**Districtwide School Year Calendar**

**School Times Schedule**

**Nutrition Guidelines**