

# McKinley Elementary School Handbook 2023-24



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## General School Information

### About McKinley

McKinley Elementary School is a diverse school with approximately 410 students in grades TK-5. McKinley has been recognized by the California Department of Education for achievement and commitment to excellence as a three-time recipient of the California Title I Academic Achievement Award (2006, 2007, 2011), a California Distinguished School Award (2010), and a California Pivotal Practice Award (2022) for innovative practices during Distance Learning.

We are a school where diversity is valued, we develop the Whole Child, collaboration and teamwork are the norm, and student learning is the top priority. Our core goal is extraordinary achievement for all students while simultaneously closing the achievement gap. Our PRIDE philosophy guides all aspects of life at McKinley and McKinley students, staff, and parents work together as a community in service of this core belief. We are: Peaceful, Respectful, Intelligent, Diverse, and Enthusiastic.

McKinley teachers teach the California State Standards and utilize research-based instructional strategies and methodologies to meet all students' needs. Some strategies include Cognitively Guided Instruction, Thinking Maps, Inquiry/Project Based Learning, and Blended Learning. Staff participate in continuous professional development in order to provide students with an innovative and rigorous learning experience. McKinley teachers are also committed to analyzing data to differentiate their instruction for each child. We utilize a Response to Intervention (RTI) system to ensure all students receive the support and interventions they need to be successful.

Our school site focus is Academic Discourse. We use a variety of protocols to provide students with opportunities to talk to the teacher and each other in pairs and groups to communicate their reasoning and deepen their understanding. You will see students using sentence frames and Thinking Maps to guide their thinking and apply academic vocabulary.

McKinley is unique in that we supplement the core curriculum with additional enrichment in science, visual arts, theater, music, physical education, library, and gardening for all students. It is McKinley's goal to engage students in learning, foster students' talents and interests, and to promote critical thinking and creativity.

Here at McKinley, we also focus on students' social-emotional development. Teachers teach behavioral skills with the goal of preparing the next generation of lifelong learners to be positive members of the community and the world. Our Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Model (PBIS) incorporates Responsive Classroom techniques, Restorative Justice, Morning/Community Meetings, Mindfulness, and explicit social skills instruction through the Second Step curriculum. McKinley behavior is guided by our PRIDE Philosophy, Character Counts Pillars of Character, Five for Success school rules, and Olweus Anti-Bullying rules and program.

McKinley believes that parent engagement positively impacts the success of the students and the school. Therefore, the school has a variety of family events that connect students to school, bring families and staff together, and create a fun and positive environment for all. McKinley also has numerous school-home communication methods, and offers a variety of volunteer, committee, and leadership opportunities for family members. McKinley parents are proud to model PRIDE for our students, and promote a positive school culture and climate for our children.

McKinley is a wonderful place, and we welcome you to our family.

## **SMMUSD and McKinley Goals**

Extraordinary achievement for all students while simultaneously closing the achievement gap

1. All graduates are socially just and ready for college and career.
2. English Learners will become proficient in English while engaging in a rigorous, culturally and linguistically responsive standards-aligned core curriculum.
3. All students and families engage in safe, well-maintained schools that are culturally responsive and conducive to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

## **School Site Focus**

### *Academic Discourse*

At McKinley, we use a variety of protocols to provide students with opportunities to talk to the teacher and each other in pairs and groups, to explain their thinking, justify their reasoning, use evidence to prove a point, and deepen their understanding. This focus was selected because assessment data shows that listening and speaking skills, and communicating reasoning in math, are areas of need for our students. So when you walk into a McKinley classroom you will see students actively engaged in learning, working collaboratively, and will hear productive noise. You will also see students using sentence frames and Thinking Maps to guide their thinking and apply academic vocabulary. Discourse is applied across the curriculum in all subject areas to develop 21st century, academic, and social-emotional learning skills.

Some benefits of Academic Discourse include:

- Discourse is a research-based proven effective strategy for closing the achievement gap.
- Discourse strengthens listening and speaking skills and deepens students' understanding of concepts.
- Discourse develops students' higher-order thinking, critical thinking, and problem solving skills all of which will transfer across subject areas.
- Discourse engages students in learning and in school.
- Discourse promotes a positive school culture by facilitating relationship building.
- Discourse benefits English Learners by rapidly developing academic language.
- Discourse ties directly into District, LCAP, SPSA, and McKinley goals.

## **McKinley Philosophy**

The PRIDE philosophy guides all aspects of life at McKinley. McKinley students, staff, and parents work together as a community in service of this core belief.

We are: **Peaceful**, **Respectful**, **Intelligent**, **Diverse**, and **Enthusiastic**

## **School Schedules**

Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:00am-4:00pm, and Wednesday/Minimum days 8:00am-2:30pm.

Wednesdays are early dismissal days for staff professional development. All SMMUSD schools have one banked time day each week so teachers can participate in on-going professional development. During this time staff meet together as a professional learning community, plan and reflect on instruction, and learn new skills to help provide a rigorous and high-quality program for our students. Please do not ask for a meeting with your child's teacher on Wednesday afternoons, as teachers are attending staff development meetings.

In addition, a 10 days each year are designated as Minimum Days with early dismissal. Refer to the school calendar for the current year's schedule.

There is a staggered dismissal schedule. There are also assigned pick up gates for each grade level at dismissal.

Grade Level	Minimum Days	Regular Days	Wednesdays
TK & Kindergarten	8:30AM – 12:30PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM
1st – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grades	8:30AM – 1:35PM	8:30AM – 2:45PM	8:30AM – 1:35PM
3 <sup>rd</sup> -5th Grades	8:30 AM – 1:45PM	8:30AM – 3:00PM	8:30AM – 1:45PM

A downloadable PDF of the bell schedule is available on our school website.

Please note the assigned grade level gates at pick-up.

TK/K	TK/K Chelsea Gate
1st	Parking Lot Gate
2nd	Arizona Garden Gate
3rd	Parking Lot Gate
4th	Arizona Gate
5th	Arizona Garden Gate

During construction there is no drive-through pick-up lane.

## Home School Communication

### Home School Communication Methods

School-home communication is a priority at McKinley School because we view parents as partners in their child's education.
















We have multiple ways in which we communicate school, class, and student information with parents and families such as:

- School Website- [www.mckinley.smmusd.org](http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org)
- Twitter- @McKinleyLions
- Weekly Lion's Roar on Smore- principal newsletter eblasted on Saturdays and on the school website
- Eblasts from McKinley
- Phoneblasts from McKinley
- Postings on the Marquee
- Postings on the School Fences
- Flyers on the Bulletin Boards and Rounders
- Emails from McKinley Staff
- Individual Calls Home from Staff
- Push notifications from the SMMUSD App
- Digital platforms used by Teachers such as Seesaw, Class Dojo, and Google Classroom
- In-Person Conferences (Parent/Teacher Conferences, SSTs, IEP Meetings, other meetings as needed)
- First Day Packet
- McKinley Handbook
- Volunteer Handbook
- School Information Events- Back to School Night, Open House, K Roundup etc.



The PTA also communicates school and PTA related information:

- PTA Website- [mckinleypta.com](http://mckinleypta.com)
- PTA Meetings
- Committee Meetings- AASG, ELAC, SBC etc.
- Room Parents
- PTA Facebook Page
- Eblasts from PTA

#### McKinley School/Home Communication

<b>School Website</b> <a href="http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org">www.mckinley.smmusd.org</a> 	<b>School Website Calendar</b> Also connects to personal Gmail calendars 	<b>Twitter</b> @McKinleyLions 
<b>Eblasts from McKinley</b> A message from MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY McKinley Elementary <mckinley-sc@smmusd.org> 	<b>Push App Notifications and Texts from McKinley</b> 	<b>Phone Blasts from McKinley</b> 
<b>Weekly Principal's Newsletter</b> <i>The Lion's Roar</i> Important schoolwide dates, announcements, and flyers via Smore. Eblasts on Saturdays and on the website. 	<b>Teacher Classroom Newsletter Emails</b> Classroom specific details, schedules, and info. 	<b>Teacher Virtual Classroom Postings (Google Classroom or Seesaw) or Software like Class Dojo</b> 
<b>Postings on the Marquee and the Fences</b> <b>Flyers on the Bulletin Boards and Rounder at the Front Office</b> 	<b>Emails to/from McKinley Staff</b> All staff emails on the school website 	<b>Individual Calls Home as Needed</b> 
<b>Conferences</b> Scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences, SSTs, IEPs, as-needed meetings etc. 	<b>McKinley Parent Handbook</b> Available on the school website 	<b>School Information Events, Trainings, and Workshops</b> Back-to-School Night, Open House, K Roundup, Parent Academy etc. 
<b>Site Governance (School Site Council) Meetings</b> <b>Special Education Resource Group Meetings</b>	<b>English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) Meetings</b> <b>Info Shared at Room Parent Meetings</b>	<b>African American Support Group (AASG) Meetings</b> <b>Info Shared at PTA Meetings and PTA Exec Board Meetings</b>

#### PTA Communication to Support the School

<p><b>PTA Website</b> <b>McKinleyPTA.com</b></p> 	<p><b>PTA and Committee Meetings</b></p> 	
<p><b>Room Parent Newsletters and Emails</b></p> 	<p><b>PTA Facebook Page</b></p> 	<p><b>Eblasts from PTA</b> notify@membershiptoolkit.com</p> 

### Who to Contact

If you have a question or concern regarding your child, it is important to communicate with the school right away so that we can help.

Contact your child's teacher first. Please email your child's teacher to arrange a meeting. Teachers will be unable to accommodate pop-in meetings, as they are busy preparing lessons for the class or teaching. Please inform the teacher of the reason for the meeting, so they can prepare materials and information. As teachers are teaching during the school day so emails may not be responded to during the school day. Response time to emails is approximately 48 hours.



After meeting with the teacher, if you still have a question or concern, contact an administrator to schedule a follow-up meeting with both the teacher and an administrator. You may email an administrator directly, or schedule a meeting with the Administrative Assistant. You will be asked if you have already met with the teacher, and if so to describe the question or concern so that the administrator can be prepared for the meeting. If the parent has not yet met with the teacher, they will be referred back to the teacher.

For questions about community resources, please contact our Community Liaison in the front office.

Please contact our front office with questions about enrollment or attendance.

Please refer to the staff roster on our web site for staff contact information: [www.mckinley.smmusd.org](http://www.mckinley.smmusd.org)

### **Custody Matters and Communication**

The staff, school, and district do not get involved in custody matters. The school will focus fully on your child, and will work to ensure their well-being and success at school. If parents have shared custody and both parents wish to attend a meeting, please plan to attend one meeting so that both parents can hear the same information at once.

### **Email Protocol**

Professional, productive, and efficient communication is important for all members of the SMMUSD community. This email communication protocol is designed to strengthen communication by establishing professional expectations. It will also ensure teachers have time to focus on instruction, while being able to respond to questions and concerns in a helpful and timely manner.

We ask that parents follow these professional guidelines when emailing McKinley staff:

- Maintain professional tone and language at all times.
- Keep messages brief and to the point.
- Use the subject line to indicate the audience, content, and purpose.
- State the response expectations.
- Use group distribution lists sparingly.
- Use Reply All sparingly, and only when a response to all recipients is necessary.
- Forward emails only when appropriate.
- Make personal contact, face-to-face or voice-to-voice a priority over email; especially when issues are sensitive.

When writing emails, McKinley adults assume good intentions, model our PRIDE Philosophy, and communicate with collaboration and kids-first in mind. The school's Civility Policy applies to email communication as well as zoom, phone, and in-person communication.

Employees will check emails at a minimum of one time per day, but not during the instructional time, so responses will likely be before or after school on business days. Employees will respond within 48 hours on business days.

### **Class Email Lists**

At the start of the school year Room Parents will receive a class roster of emails to share with their class so parents can arrange playdates and for school-related communication. These emails are to be kept confidential, and not shared with other classes, people, or outside organizations. Emails should

only be used to communicate school and classroom information as provided by the school or teacher, and as such are intended to engage parents in school, facilitate school-home communication, and to promote a positive school climate. Email communication is not to be used for personal or political information, viewpoints, or other matters. The school's Civility Policy applies to email communication as well as in-person, zoom, and phone communication. Those using these emails are expected to uphold the SMMUSD Email Communication Protocol by maintaining professional tone and language at all times, keeping the number of emails to a minimum, keeping communications brief and to the point, using the "reply all" sparingly and just when a response to all recipients is necessary, and forwarding emails only when appropriate.

Parents may choose to opt out of having their email shared to the Room Parents and class list by informing the office at the start of the school year.

### **Back to School Night**

Back to School Nights are held the 2nd week of school for TK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade and the 3rd Week of school for 3-5th grade. Information about grade level standards, classroom rules, expectations about homework and the academic program for a grade level is provided during classroom meetings. This is an excellent opportunity to open lines of communication with your child's teacher and meet the other families in your child's class. Please note Back to School Night is for adults only; please make arrangements for childcare. Students are not permitted on the playground during this event.

### **Parent Conferences**

Information on individual student progress is shared with parents formally during Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences. Conferences with teachers may also be arranged at any time during the year by contacting the teacher.

### **Progress Report/Report Cards**

A progress report is given in November during Parent/Teacher Conferences that describes how a student is progressing academically at that point in the year. Formal Report Cards are given in February and the last day of school in June. The Report Cards provide comprehensive feedback on student progress relative to state standards in key areas. A document called "Understanding your Child's Report Card" is available on the district website.

### **Open House**

Open House is scheduled each Spring. This is a special night when children can show their parents the classroom and the work the class has been doing. It is an informal time to visit and look at the classroom and campus facilities. Open House is open to the public.

## **School Safety**

### **Visitor/Volunteer Procedures for Entering/Exiting Campus**

1. Enter via the main office.
2. Office staff will ask the reason for the visit. Visitors must have a previously arranged, and administrator/designee approved reason, for being on campus. Surprise/drop-in attempts to volunteer or visit classrooms are not permitted. The office will call the teacher to notify them of the visitor's arrival and confirm the visit/volunteering.

3. The office will ask the visitor for their driver's license (or other government issued identification), and the Raptor computer system will scan the ID. A sticker badge will be printed showing the ID picture, the date, time, school name, and campus location of the visit.
  4. Visitors will place the sticker badge on their body in a visible location. Students have been taught to let a teacher know if they see someone without a badge. If adults see someone without a badge (all staff wear a badge as well) they should immediately inform the office. Badges must be worn at all times during a visit.
  5. The office will buzz in the visitor.
  6. Visitors must go directly to the volunteer classroom/location, and upon finishing return directly to the office. Visitors are not permitted to go to other locations on campus if it has not been previously arranged.
  7. When leaving campus the sticker badge may be returned to the office and the office staff will sign the visitor out via the Raptor system. Exit campus through the main office. It is important to check out with the office staff so the office is aware of all individuals on campus in the case of an emergency.
- Even if the office knows the parent or visitor, all individuals visiting or volunteering must follow these procedures for the safety of the campus.
  - When volunteering first thing in the morning, please drop off your child at the gate and then go to the office to follow these procedures. Do not go straight to the classroom; volunteers need to sign in and get a sticker badge.
  - Volunteering: Parents must attend a Volunteer Orientation and complete the required Volunteer Application to be permitted to volunteer. The Volunteer Application is downloadable from the school website and may be turned in to the office. Applications are approved by the nurse and administration, and cleared applications are valid for 4 years.

The Raptor badge system is used for campus safety so that we know who, when, where, and why everyone is on campus.

The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Raptor system, and in the event of a match Raptor notifies designated school officials. No other data from the ID is gathered and no data will be shared with any outside company or organization.

For large schoolwide events, and events open to the public, a paper check-in system may be used if the Raptor system creates an excessive delay.

Thank you for your assistance in helping to keep our campus safe.

### **Morning Drop Off Procedures**

From 8:15-8:30am students may enter campus at any of the open gates: the Arizona, Parking Lot, and Courtyard Gates. TK/K walking may enter via the TK/K Gate.

Adults may also utilize the Car Drop-Off system through the parking lot 8:15-8:30am (during construction the lane will be Eastbound on Arizona Ave). Students being dropped off via car may enter via the Courtyard Gate or TK/K Gate.

Students eating breakfast may enter campus via the Arizona gate beginning at 8:00am. Please do not drop off children prior to 8:00am as the school is not yet open and there is no supervision.



A McKinley staff member will be present at gates as a Gate Monitor.

The gates are student-only access, so adults say farewell to their child at the gate and students enter campus on their own.

When students enter campus there is no play on the playground before school. This is for students' safety. Students go directly to their class line up area and wait to be picked up by their teacher.

McKinley staff members are supervising on the yards (8:15-8:30am) and in the cafeteria (8:00-8:20am). Morning campus monitors and gate monitors are composed of Instructional Assistants, Paraeducators, Campus Supervisors, Teachers, and Administration, who all also work on campus during regular school hours.

Gates are locked promptly at 8:30am and after that time students enter through the main office and get a tardy slip. Instruction begins promptly at 8:30am. During construction, after December 2023, access to the office will be from a camera buzzer gate in the staff parking lot.

Adults coming onto campus for volunteering, parent teacher conferences, group/committee meetings, school events, follow the SMMUSD Visitor Policy.

Special/Alternate Morning Procedures may occur for special events or schoolwide functions such as the first day of school, jog-a-thon, sing-a-long, graduation etc. The school will provide information to parents in such situations.

#### McKinley Drop Off Procedures Map 23-24

1. Students coming to campus early for breakfast may enter via the Arizona Gate from 8:00-8:15am to go to the Cafeteria. Please do not drop off students before 8:00am as there is no supervision before this time.
2. All gates open at 8:15am and close at 8:30am: Arizona, Parking Lot, Courtyard, TK/K Gates. Students enter at the nearest gate.
3. Tardy students after 8:30am may enter via the office to get a tardy slip.
4. Parents will say farewell at the gate and students will enter campus on their own.
5. Parents may utilize the car drop off system through the parking lot. Students being dropped off via car will enter through the Courtyard Gate.
6. Students walk to their class lineup area and wait for their teacher (lineup areas by room number are shown on the map below). There is no free play on playground before school.

