

General School Guidelines and Procedures

School Schedule

The Bell rings at 7:56 a.m.

Classroom Instruction Begins at 8:00 a.m. (Tardy bell rings at 8:00)

School Ends at 2: 41 p.m.

Early Release on Tuesdays—1:32 dismissal

Opening procedures: All students must be on time—in their seats by 8:00 a.m. There is limited supervision before 7:30 a.m. and students should not be on the campus before this time unless they are part of a special program. Students should arrive at school between 7:30 and 7:55 so they are on time and supervised. Tardiness is a problem for some students. It is extremely disruptive to the educational program to have students walk into class after the bell rings. Students will also miss important instructional time if they are late to class. Consequently we ask **that parents and students make an effort to be on time on a daily basis. Students must be seated in their first period class, when the bell rings at 8:00! Any student not in his/her assigned seat at 8:00 will be considered tardy.**

Dismissal procedure: The school day ends at 2:41 p.m. for ALL students. To avoid supervision problems, all students are to go home immediately after school (the only exceptions are students in school sponsored activities). There is no supervision 15 minutes after students are dismissed for the day (only exceptions are school sponsored activities such as after school sports or class). Parents must make arrangements to pick up students within 15 minutes of dismissal. There will only be after school supervision for students that ride the school bus. There will be no after school supervision for students that linger around the school (or leave the campus) and then take a public bus home. Tuesdays will be early dismissal days for all students. Students on a six period day will be dismissed at 1:32 on Tuesdays. There will be NO supervision after school. Students will be asked to leave the campus immediately and the doors/gates will close 15 minutes after dismissal.

Changes in student's schedule: In developing the schedule, we tried to honor all student requests. However, if your child scored low on last year's exams, he/she may need to take a study skills class. Students with F's will need to take a study skills or repeat the failed class the first trimester (until he/she has passing grades in the given subject). For example, if a student failed sixth grade science and did not make up the class during summer school, he/she will have sixth grade science as an elective and seventh grade science as a core subject. Students not submitting enrichment requests were scheduled into classes based on program availability.

Please be aware that we are extremely limited in the number of changes we can make without impacting the master schedule. Consequently, **we will not change a schedule unless there is a substantial reason warranting the change.** All class changes will be reviewed on an individual bases. If there is a unique situation that you feel necessitates a schedule change, you or your child must complete a change of schedule form. We will review the forms one/two weeks after school has started (this time frame is necessary since we need to have a handle on enrollment prior to making changes). A change of schedule will only be honored if space is available in a given class, and the change does not negatively impact the core classes.

Parents on Campus: For safety reasons, we ask that parents check in the office at all times when visiting the school. During the day, a parent may not pick up a student from a class.

Parents are NOT to walk on campus without checking into the office. For the safety of all students and staff, **the campus gates will be locked between 8:05 and 2:41.**

Parents are to go through the office (must check in) ANY time school is in session. To ensure the safety of all students, the front door will be kept locked at all times. Parents will need to ring a bell to request entrance into the school.

Lunch: Students may bring or buy a hot lunch at school. Lunch prices for this school year are \$1.75 for a complete lunch, 30 cents for milk, and 40 cents for juice. Students may also buy snacks during nutrition and breakfast items before school (prices vary depending on items). Parents of students in the lunch program will need to **complete a new lunch application the first days of school.** All students in the lunch program last year (at EWMS or another school within our district) will continue in the lunch program the first weeks of school or until a new application is processed. The old lunch card will not be valid after September. Please note that lunch applications go to the district and take about two weeks to get approved.

There are two different lunch periods. The first lunch block is for 6th grade students and the second is for 7th and 8th. The first lunch is from 11:05 to 11:50 and the second lunch is from 11:55 to 12:40. Unless there is an emergency, all lunch arrangements are to be made prior to the beginning of the school day. We will not interrupt class to deliver special lunches to students (such as McDonalds, Burger King, etc.). **Additionally, if parents bring a special lunch, we request that parents bring lunch only for their own children. We cannot have parents bringing lunch for other students—it presents too many complications.** Last year we had far too many special lunches and these lunches became a major disruption to the academic program. Please help us with this problem; keep lunch procedures as routine as possible. We apologize if this presents any inconvenience to you or your family, but we must maintain an academic focus with minimal disruptions to the instructional program. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Emergency Information: Within the first week, you will get emergency cards. Please complete and **return the emergency information immediately.** If at any time during the year you have a change of address or phone number, please let us know. It is very important to have up-to-date information in case of an emergency. Without up-to-date information, we may need to call the police or children's protective services in case parents cannot be reached during an emergency.

Bikes: Each student must have a lock for his/her bicycle. On school grounds, students must walk their bikes at all times. State law requires helmets for all children riding bicycles. Students caught riding their bikes without helmets may lose bike-riding privileges and parents will need to come for the bicycles.

Skateboards: NO skateboards/roller blades/skate shoes are permitted on school grounds! Skateboards on school property will be taken from students, and parents will be asked to come and retrieve them.

NON-SCHOOL ITEMS/MONEY: We request that students **NOT BRING ITEMS of NON-ACADEMIC VALUE TO SCHOOL.** We will not be responsible for broken or lost items.

MONEY/personal items: Students should only bring necessary money to school (i.e. money for lunch or P.E. clothing). Money gets lost very easily, and it is difficult or impossible to recover. Students should NEVER bring I-pods, games, cameras or any other item of value—the school will not be responsible for lost items that should not be brought to school!

Please note that weapons are NOT permitted on school grounds; this includes toy weapons and jewelry that is a replica of a weapon. Students are NEVER to bring toy guns/or knives (same applies to jewelry)—these will be taken away and the student will be suspended.

Students may not sell anything on the school campus unless it is connected with the school and approved by the Associated Student Body (ASB). This includes anything brought from home and /or purchased for the purpose of resale.

CD Players/Ipods/Cameras/Electronic Games: CD Players/Ipods/Cameras/Electronic games are not allowed in school. Teachers will confiscate these items if students are using these devices on campus. Parents will need to pick-up CD players/Ipods/Cameras/games from the office. We will not be responsible for lost Ipods/CD players/Cameras/Electronic Games—these items must not be in school. If they are brought a second time, these items will be sent to the district office.

Cell Phones & Other Personal Electronic Signaling Devices--The following board policy provides the direction regarding cell phones usage. It reads:

Students may possess personal electric signaling devices.... The school will not be responsible for loss, theft, damage or unauthorized or illegal usage....

Permitted Devices shall:

1. Be **turned off while on campus** and at any other time directed by a district employee (NO EXCEPTIONS).
2. Not disrupt the educational program or school activity
3. **Must be kept inside a purse or backpack while on campus.**

If a disruption occurs, the employee shall confiscate the device and deliver it to the principal.

In keeping with this policy, we remind all parents and students that phones must be turned off at all times while on campus. Phones may not be used until students are off the campus (this includes after school and school events such as games). Phones will be taken from students if students are using them during lunch, after school, nutrition and/or **any other time while on campus**. The only exception to this rule is if a student is using the phone at **a designated pick-up area at the end of the day**. The designated pick up areas are marked with red lines and are inside the fence. These areas are between the fence and room 27 and are clearly marked with double red lines.

If a student's phone is confiscated, the student and his/her parents will need to sign a phone contract and the parents will need to pick-up the phone in the school office at the end of the school day. If there is a continual phone violation, the parent will need to meet with the principal, and the student will lose phone privileges. If a child continues to use a phone on campus after losing phone privileges, the phone will be sent to the District office, and parents will need to pick-up the phone at that location. The student may be suspended for defiance if he/she persists on using the phone during the school day. Students in designated "pick-up areas" and designated loading areas (past red lines on Catalina side of campus) are considered off

campus and may contact parents on cell phones (this is the only area allowing cell phones after school).

Students are **never to take photos of other students while on the campus!** A student taking a photo on campus may be subject to severe disciplinary action. At no time are students to photograph any part of the campus without the permission of the staff. Last, but not least, students are advised not to share their cell phones with other students—the school is not responsible for misuse of phones or theft by other students during and after school.

Parent Concerns: When parents have a concern, we ask that you first call your son/daughter's teacher. Parents should try to resolve problems with the teacher(s) prior to calling school administration. We ask that parents always call and make an appointment if they wish to meet with a teacher. A pre-scheduled appointment will save parents much time and allow the teachers time to get necessary work samples if needed. If for any reason a parent cannot reach a teacher, the office will be glad to deliver a message or arrange an appointment. **Parents are never to go to classrooms without checking into the office.** Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

PTSA: Parents interested in getting more information about this organization may call Mr. Ben Hernandez and Mrs. Gigi Ramirez, PTSA co-presidents. PTSA executive board meetings are usually the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the library.

School Site Council: This committee (composed of elected parents, teachers, and other staff) meets on a regular basis to plan the school program. This committee makes all decisions regarding the school categorical budgets. Meetings are open to the public and agendas are posted in the main building 72 hours prior to a meeting. Parents wishing to get more information about this committee may call Mrs. Duron/Mr. Gebhard or other committee members.

Parking: Please do not park in areas that block the drive-way entrance to the school or double-park in the street when picking up or dropping off students (the police will be giving citations for double parked cars and cars parked in a red zone). Parents are to use the circular drive ways by room 26 or the teacher parking area for pick-up and drop-off. Please do not use the circular driveway by the office (on Catalina) for drop-off/pick-up. This area is a bus loading zone and must be accessible to our school buses. Please do not park in the circular driveways and block traffic--it is imperative that traffic flows at all times. We ask that parents keep moving at all times in pick-up areas. If parents need to conduct school business, please park in visitor areas or in the teacher parking lot by the gym. The Whittier Police Department will monitor traffic on a regular basis, and they will cite people for traffic infractions.

Designated crossing areas: **Students must use the designated crosswalk areas at all times**—especially when crossing Catalina. Students not using the designated crossing areas may be cited for jay walking. Please comply with all parking and/or safety regulations. Do not park across the street on Catalina and motion for your child to run across the street. Your child may get hurt crossing in the middle of the street. Please note that teachers may also assign detention to students that continually and willfully defy safety rules after school.

Absences/Vacations during the year: When students are sick, we ask that parents notify the office as soon as possible. If parents do not call the school, parents must send a note regarding the absence the day a student returns to school. Only sickness (including doctor/dentist visits)

and deaths in the immediate family are considered excused absences. Lack of transportation, being out of town, vacation, parent illness, parents having to run errands, etc. are all considered unexcused absences. **Referrals to the District attendance officer will be made after three unexcused absences.** Please make every effort to have your child in school (and on time) on a daily basis. If for any reason your child is ill and needs to be out of school more than two weeks, please let us know immediately so we can work with you to arrange home instruction. A home-study teacher may be available to assist your child if your doctor deems it necessary.

Please note that we will drop children who undertake long absences during the year. This applies to students that are out of the area traveling with their parents or staying with relatives in a different location (it will not apply to medical absences). We will drop students who are away from the area (and school) more than one week (for non-medical reasons). If you are planning to be away from the area for an extended period of time, you should transfer your child to a school within the area in which you will be living. If for some reason you need to keep your child out of school during your absence/travel, we ask that you place him/her on independent study. On independent study, students must complete schoolwork at least 225 minutes per day (under the supervision of the parent). If you do not have your son/daughter on independent study, we will drop him/her from our class list. Upon your return from an extended absence, you will need to re-enroll the student, and she/he will have a different schedule (depending on space limitations). We ask that parents make every effort to plan vacations and other activities during non-school time. When students miss two/three weeks of school during the year, they are not able to meet academic expectations.

Dress Code: East Whittier Middle School has a written dress code policy that is sent home every year. Please contact the office if you have questions regarding our policy. Our policy is in compliance with the East Whittier City School District dress code that bans all gang-related dress styles. The reason for the dress code is to ensure a safe and non-distracting learning environment for all students.

If for any reason a student comes to school dressed inappropriately, you may be called and asked to bring a change of clothing. If you cannot be reached, alternative clothing will be provided to your son/daughter. Please keep in mind that the dress code applies to ALL students in East Whittier Schools. We ask that parents please help us enforce the dress code. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Homework: Research tells us that **homework is necessary for the academic success of students.** It is an integral part of the school program. Consequently, **homework is assigned every night** to all students. Please note that lack of completed homework may result in lower grades. We ask that parents monitor homework on a regular basis. If a student continually says he/she has no homework--**please call the school, please call the teacher—there may be a communication problem.** If the parents and the school stay in touch, your child will not have homework problems. Many parents take time to bring in homework when children leave it at home. We commend these parents for their care and support of education, but if it happens too often, we encourage you to hold the students responsible for their homework. The reason for this recommendation is to make students more independent and accountable for their actions—skills needed for success in high school.

Information on bullying, dress code and harassment:

The District sends a mailer with important information prior to the opening of school. If you did not get this information, a second copy is available in the office. The school's dresscode is found in a planner provided to your child at the beginning of the year. Please be aware that bullying and sexual harassment are not tolerated in any of the East Whittier Schools. If your child experiences this type of harassment, please encourage him/her to inform a school official. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, sexual slurs, comments about an individual's body, sexual jokes, drawings, pictures, spreading rumors, and derogatory comments. Please remind your child that engagement in any of these behaviors at school or school related functions will result in strong disciplinary action.

