

EXPLORER MIDDLE SCHOOL

2009-2010
PARENT
STUDENT
HANDBOOK

“BLAZING THE PATH
OF A
NEW GENERATION”

WELCOME TO EXPLORER MIDDLE SCHOOL

The “Make Your Day” program is a citizenship program with only one, simple rule: “No one has the right to interfere with the learning, safety, or well-being of others.” In other words, no one has the right to interfere with your child’s learning, nor their right to safety, dignity, and respect. Similarly, your child does not have the right to interfere with the rights of other students to learn or the teacher’s right to teach.

Our school district is proud to state that we have several elementary schools currently using the “Make Your Day” Citizenship Program. Explorer is the first middle school in Paradise Valley to utilize the program. However, there are many other middle schools across the Southwest successfully implementing this program. I would like to respond to some of the myths you might have heard regarding this program and they are as follows:

Myth 1: Make Your Day causes students to “tattle” on each other. No matter what system you have been familiar with at your child’s other schools, tattling occurred. Make Your Day did not invent tattling, but what it has done is provide a safe, constructive format whereby students can talk to one another about their concerns. Conflict is a daily part of all our lives, Make Your Day allows this conflict to be worked out in a constructive manner instead of fighting, note writing, harassing, or name-calling.

Myth 2: Students make up lies about other students during points in order to get them into trouble. It is possible for one student to lie about another, but this possibility could exist with any program. Make Your Day requires the teacher to be a very active listener and if he/she believes that a student is not being honest, that student loses “trust” and the right to disagree during point time.

Myth 3: Children feel great pressure to “make their day.” If this pressure is being imposed on students, it comes from sources outside the school, not the Make Your Day Program. Students are never told they must be perfect to make their day. In fact, they are taught that making mistakes is a normal process of growth and learning from those mistakes is the key. Students can make mistakes and still make their day; they do not have to be perfect.

Myth 4: Make Your Day embarrasses students when they choose to go to steps and sit or stand at a chair along the perimeter of the room. This again is not what the student is taught about steps. A step is a “place” that a student chooses to go to when their behavior is interrupting the learning or teaching of others. The student is asked to reflect as to why he/she was asked to go to step 1 and how he/she can act differently in the future. Usually within 3-5 minutes the student is able to return to their seat. Please note that while the student is at step 1, he/she is still hearing the instructional lesson being taught. If the student goes to step 1 and continues to disrupt, he/she can move through steps 2 and 3 and finally to step 4. When a student chooses to reach step 4, because they have been unable to control their behavior, they also choose to have their parent come to the school immediately for a conference between themselves, the

teacher, and the parent. The student conducts the conference, with input from the teacher, and is held accountable for choosing to have their parent come to school. If the parent is unable to come to school at that time, the child remains out of their classroom and sits at step 1 in a Buddy Teacher's room until the conference is conducted. Step 1 of Make Your Day affords the student an opportunity to modify his/her behavior and rejoin their classmates within 3 to 5 minutes.

Now that I have hopefully dispelled some of the misconceptions about the Make Your Day Citizenship Program let me address the advantages this program will bring to the students and teachers of Explorer Middle School. They are as follows:

Fact 1: All students can successfully make their day, be congratulated, and leave school feeling good about what they have been able to accomplish. No other program allows each student in a middle school to be recognized for good work and good behavior every day. Make Your Day makes this possible for every Explorer student every day!

Fact 2: Make Your Day teaches students they are responsible for their own learning behavior. They are responsible for completing their assignments and coming to class prepared to learn.

Fact 3: Make Your Day is positively motivated not negatively motivated. Its goal is to put students in a position to succeed not fail, to be uninterrupted by others, and to know that they must be the best they can be.

Fact 4: Make Your Day constantly points out to students that being responsible for their own learning is the key to school and lifelong success. When a student acknowledges that he/she has not earned their points for that class period, the teacher's response is, "Thank you for taking responsibility." That continual praise for personal responsibility is a unique and special strength of Make Your Day. The sign of a maturing young person is that they are beginning to internally control themselves and their behaviors without the adults in their lives constantly attempting to externally control them.

Does the Make Your Day Citizenship Program solve every problem created by a student making a wrong choice? The answer is no. However, what it does do is keep students in school and out of detention or on suspension. It empowers them to take responsibility for themselves and reap the benefits for making positive choices. What we all want for our children is that they will grow up to become adults who are responsible, trustworthy, respectful, and truthful. This program gives students the opportunity to develop these skills and become successful members of an adult world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marianne M. Bursi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'M' at the beginning.

STEPS

Inappropriate behavior will be dealt with through a step process. The Make Your Day program emphasizes student decision-making and responsibility. It is important for the students, parents, and teacher to realize that progression through steps is ENTIRELY THE STUDENT'S CHOICE. IT MUST BE NOTED THAT WHEN THE STUDENT IS ON STEPS, HE OR SHE IS NOT ALLOWED TO TALK, MOVE AROUND EXCESSIVELY, OR MAKE NOISES.

STEP 1: When a problem occurs for a student in a class, the student will be asked to take a seat away from the academic setting and sit facing away from the class. The student is to spend an appropriate time period, approximately 3-5 minutes, quietly thinking about the problem he/she had. The teacher will then ask the student if he/she chooses to return to the class activity.

STEP 2: If the student fails to sit appropriately on step 1, he/she forfeits his/her chair and stands facing away from the class for an appropriate time period before returning to step 1.

STEP 3: If the student fails to stand appropriately on step 2, the student will focus on a sign with the Make Your Day principle written on it. The purpose of this is to assist concentration on appropriate behaviors. After an appropriate time period the student may return to step 2.

PLEASE NOTE THAT STEPS 1-3 ALLOW THE STUDENT TO REMAIN IN THE CLASSROOM AND RECEIVE INSTRUCTION AS THEY ATTEMPT TO CORRECT THEIR BEHAVIOR.

STEP 4: Inappropriate behavior on step 3 will lead to a step 4 conference. The student will be sent to the office to telephone a parent, with an adult present to request a time to meet. Parents will be requested by the student to come in for an immediate conference to facilitate the student's returning to class. The student will remain out of their class and sit on step 1 in a Buddy Teacher's room until a parent, student, and teacher conference can be held. This is to determine if the student is ready to return to class for the purpose of learning. If the parents are not able to meet on the day of the step 4 violation, the student will be kept in a Buddy Teacher's classroom for the remainder of the day and parents will be requested to keep the student at home from that day until his parents are able to conference regarding their student's behavior. Upon completion of a successful conference, the student then returns to step 3.

SHADOWING: If a student interacts with another student who is on steps, that student chooses to shadow that same student on that step. Example: If a student chooses to talk to a student who is on step 3, then that student is also on step 3.

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This handbook has been prepared so that our students and parents will have a clear understanding of the expectations we have for Explorer students. Please take the time to review the information printed in this handbook as it will help our students get the school year off to a great start. We all hope our students will have their best school year ever!

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Explorer has a wide variety of after school activities that include Intramurals, Festival Sports, Festival Interscholastic Sports and student clubs. All of the above mentioned activities are open to all students and physicals are not required. A fee will be charged for each activity and the fees will vary depending on the activity.

Intramurals are conducted on Explorer's campus and run for 16 days. The intramural may run 2, 3, 4, or 5 days per week.

Festival and Festival Interscholastic Sports are also conducted on Explorer's campus with the exception of Saturday Festivals and 1 to 3 away games/competitions at other Paradise Valley Unified School District middle schools during the week. A Saturday Festival is a competition at a local high school and includes all P.V.U.S.D. middle schools. A Festival includes EVERY student that signed up for that particular sport (no cuts). Festival Sports include 1 Festival and 2 competitions. Festival Interscholastic Sports include 1 Festival and 6 competitions. The main difference between Festival and Festival Interscholastic Sports is in the Festival Interscholastic Sports program "All Star" teams are chosen for the 7th and 8th grades after the first 3 weeks and they participate in the 6 competitions.

A late bus is available to those participating in the after school activities and clubs. There is no fee for the late bus but a parent permission slip must be completed and signed. If a student receives 1 bus referral during an activity they may not ride the bus for the remainder of that activity. Students who are not picked up within 15 minutes after the close of a school sponsored event will not be allowed to attend the next such event.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Articles Prohibited In School

Students are prohibited from bringing articles which are hazardous to the safety and wellbeing of others or interfere in some way with school procedures. Such items include, but are not limited to, fire works, toy guns, paint balls, water pistols, knives, stink bombs, matches, lighters, and if brought to school, will be confiscated and will result in disciplinary measures.

Bicycles/Skateboards/Rollerblades

Students are reminded that if they ride their bicycles, skateboards, gopeds, razors, and roller blades to school, they must obey all traffic regulations. The school assumes no responsibility for damaged or stolen items. However, provisions have been made to safeguard these items by requiring them to be properly parked and locked in the school bike rack (located on the north side of the school). Students should never leave these items in the bike rack without securing them with a padlock. For the safety of our students, riding bicycles, skateboards, gopeds, razors, and roller blades are prohibited on school grounds. Students who violate these safety rules may face disciplinary action along with having the item confiscated.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones must remain in the student's backpack or purse and turned **OFF** at all times during the school day, 8:51 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Students who violate this policy will be directed by the staff member to turn the phone off and store the phone in the backpack/purse. Students who repeatedly violate our school's cell phone policy will be referred to administration for appropriate disciplinary action.

Electronic Devices

Explorer rules prohibit such items as cell phones, CD/MP3/iPod players, electronic games, or any other electronic devices between the hours of 8:51 a.m. and 3:35 p.m.

Students are prohibited from personal use of cameras and video recording devices while on school grounds.

Gum Policy

No gum chewing is allowed on campus. This policy is in place to keep our campus clean, to protect school property, and provide an environment that eliminates everyone from getting a sticky, gooey mess on their shoes. Students who violate this policy may be referred to the office for consequences.

Student Valuables

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money to school, and if they wear glasses or watches, to keep track of them at all times. Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property.

EVERY DAY COUNTS FOR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Students are expected to be in school every day, as classroom instruction cannot be made up and learning is lost forever. Lectures, discussions, and participation are lost to those who are absent.

Attendance Awards:

Recognition will be given for outstanding attendance! Students demonstrating outstanding attendance will be recognized and become eligible for drawings, awards, and prizes. Our goal is to improve student attendance and celebrate their success.

Perfect Attendance Award:

Students who arrive on time and remain in class from 8:54 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. every day are eligible to receive the Perfect Attendance Award.

Excuse an Absence:

1. Report the absence by telephone to the office by 10:00 a.m. each morning that a student is absent. For your convenience, we do have voice mail to record absences at: (602) 449-4201 from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.
2. Submit the completed Absence/Tardy Excuse Form (see example) to the Attendance Secretary within 24 hours of the student's return to school.

**EXPLORER MIDDLE SCHOOL
ABSENCE/TARDY EXCUSE FORM**

(To be considered excused, form must be provided to the Attendance Secretary within 24 hours of the student's return to school.)

Student Name: _____ **Current Date:** _____

<u>Absence</u>	<u>Tardy</u>
Reason for Absence: Date(s) of Absence: _____ ____ Medical Appointment (verification required) ____ Funeral ____ Legal ____ Sick (Doctor's note may be requested on 4 th day) ____ Other (please explain) _____ _____	Arrival Time _____ Date of Tardy: _____ Reason for Tardy: ____ Medical Appointment (verification required) ____ Funeral ____ Legal ____ Other (please explain) _____ _____

Explorer FAX number (602) 449-4205

Student signature: _____

Parent name: _____ Parent signature: _____
(please print)

IN CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL TIME IS CRUCIAL TO THE TOTAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE!!

For office use only:
Excused _____ Unexcused _____ Unverified _____

Dismissal During The School Day:

1. A parent must come in and sign the student out. A student will not be released to persons other than the parent or legal guardian.
2. If it is necessary for the student to be released to someone other than the parent or legal guardian, a written or verbal permission must be given prior to release.
3. Picture identification is required in order for the student to be released.
4. Submit the completed Absence/Tardy Excuse Form and verification of appointment to the Attendance Secretary within 24 hours of the student's return to school.

Late Arrival:

1. A phone call must be made to the attendance office the morning of the tardy.
2. Submit the completed Absence/Tardy Excuse Form and verification of appointment upon return.
3. Habitual morning tardies may result in referral to Saturday School per Tardy Policy.

Tardiness

Students who are late to school must report to the attendance office. Students who are late to class without an excuse will be considered tardy.

Tardy Policy

1 st tardy:	Points issue
2 nd tardy:	Points issue, student calls home
3 rd tardy:	Points issue, student sits on step, teacher calls home
4 th tardy:	Points issue, referral to office
5 th tardy:	Saturday Community Service; no show results in suspension from school
6 th tardy:	One-day suspension from school

Truancy Procedures

A student absent without the consent of his/her parents is truant and will be given an unexcused absence. A student is truant if:

- The student leaves school without signing out in the front office.
- Leaves school at lunch without a pass.
- Is absent from school without prior permission from the parents.
- Is absent from class without permission.
- Obtains a pass to go to a certain place and doesn't report there.
- Becomes ill and goes home or stays in restroom instead of reporting to the nurse's office.
- Comes to school but does not attend classes.

C.U.T.S.:

To encourage and improve school attendance, Explorer has implemented a truancy program in partnership with Maricopa County Juvenile Court. This truancy program is called C.U.T.S. (Court Unified Truancy Suppression). We will be tracking attendance very closely. Your child is expected to be at school every day, unless there is an excused reason not to be. An absence is defined as a minimum of one missed class period per day. An unexcused absence will count as a truant day as defined by law. A student is **“habitually truant”** if he/she has **five or more unexcused absences** from school. A student that is **absent more than ten percent** of the required number of school days per year is considered to have “excessive absences” **whether the absence is excused or unexcused**. When a student has **five** or more unexcused absences or excessive absences (excused OR unexcused), the student can be cited to the CUTS Program through the Juvenile Court.

SCHOOL DAY

Assemblies

Assemblies are a regular part of the curriculum and as such are designed to be educational, as well as, entertaining experiences. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and attentive. Talking, whispering, whistling, stamping of feet, and booing are discourteous and prohibited.

1. Report to assigned class prior to attending an assembly.
2. Sit with your assigned class during the assembly.
3. When the chairperson of the assembly asks for your attention, give it immediately.
4. Do not leave the assembly until dismissed.

Before and After School

Students are not allowed on the school grounds prior to 8:30 a.m. unless requested by a teacher. After arriving on the school grounds, students are not to leave before the first period unless permission is granted from the office. This is a violation of open/closed campus. Students are not to be on the school grounds after 3:45 p.m. unless requested by a teacher or participating in a supervised activity.

Bus Passes

Students who wish to ride a different bus home must submit a note that is signed by a parent (including a phone number where they may be reached during the day) must be submitted to the front office. The office will call to verify the bus pass request. You must bring the note to the office BEFORE school starts.

Cafeteria and Courtyard Rules

In order to keep the cafeteria and courtyard clean and safe the following rules must be observed:

1. Walk.
2. Remain seated until you are finished eating.
3. Keep tables, chairs, and floors clean.
4. Talk in a normal voice.
5. Never push or run.
6. All food must be eaten at the tables.
7. No sitting on table tops.
8. No throwing food or other objects.
9. Treat all students and adults with respect.

Cafeteria Rules

Breakfasts:

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria before school at a cost of \$1.00 for grade 6, \$1.25 for grade 7 and 8 students. The reduced or free-lunch program includes breakfast. The breakfast menu will vary daily. Along with milk, juice, and cereal, other items such as breakfast sandwiches, breakfast pizzas, bagels, muffins, cinnamon rolls, journey bars, pancakes, or waffle stix may be available.

Lunches:

Students have two options for lunch at Explorer. They can either bring a lunch from home or purchase the school lunch for \$2.00 for grade 6, \$2.25 for grade 7 and 8 students. Lunch includes an entrée, food bar, tater tots, and a milk or juice. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding breakfast or the lunches, please contact the kitchen manager at (480) 449-4207.

Free Or Reduced Lunch Program:

Please note that the request for reduced or free-lunch program form is available upon request.

Campus Passes

Students are not allowed to leave their classroom during class period unless they are accompanied by a staff member or have a pass from an authorized staff member. If a student wants to see a teacher, counselor, or principal, he/she must arrange it in advance. The teacher must give the student a pass permitting the student to be excused from class.

Closed Campus/Visitors

We operate a closed campus. Students must stay on the school grounds from the time they arrive, even if the first period has not started, until dismissed or until picked up by the bus. Parents **MUST** sign their children out in the front office by showing picture identification if they wish them to leave campus.

Corridor Courtesy

The three-minute interval between classes is allotted for passage from one classroom to another. Move promptly to your next scheduled class by walking in an orderly fashion and being courteous toward other students and staff members. This is the time when bathroom and drink breaks should be taken.

Fire Drills

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the buildings by moving as quickly as possible to the designated area. The teacher in each classroom will give the students instructions. There should not be any talking so that each student will be able to hear necessary instructions.

Fund Raising

Students cannot sell or distribute any merchandise on campus without the approval of the principal.

Health Services

If a student becomes ill in school, he/she should get permission from a teacher to report to the nurse who will decide what should be done. Students must not leave the school grounds because of illness without permission. Students should never exchange medications with each other for any reason. This is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action. You may call the nurse at (602) 449-4200.

Medications At School:

The Health Office at Explorer does not carry a supply of Tylenol, allergy medication, or antacids. Students who will frequently need to take such medications during the school day will have to bring their own supply from home. The medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office and dispensed by the nurse as the parent directs. Students should never carry medications in their backpacks.

The medications must be delivered to the school by a parent in their original containers. A permission slip must be signed by the parent. You can stop in the office and complete a form. Prescription medications must be delivered to the office in their original containers with the student's name, prescription number, name of medication, dosage, and time to be given clearly printed on the prescription label. Only those students with severe asthma who have a note from their doctor stating that they must carry an inhaler in their backpacks will be allowed to do so. This note **MUST** be presented to the school nurse. In any other case, **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY MEDICATIONS IN THEIR BACKPACKS**. This policy is in place for the safety of all students at Explorer Middle School. If you have any questions, please call (602) 449-4200.

Health Services

Physical Education Medical Excuses:

Participation during Physical Education class is required unless excused by written request of the family physician. A one to three day excuse may be obtained by having the parent write a medical excuse. This excuse only allows time to arrange for a doctor's appointment. The parental excuse must be specific and presented to the nurse prior to the start of the school day. The office will verify excuses.

Holidays

Students will have the following days off from school during the school year:

September 7 th	Labor Day Recess
September 28 th	K-12 Recess
October 12 th	K-12 Recess
October 30 th	K-8 Recess
November 11 th	Veterans' Day Fall Recess
November 26 th -27 th	Thanksgiving Recess
December 19 th -January 3 rd	Winter Break (School resumes January 4, 2010)
January 18 th	Martin Luther King/Civil Rights Day
February 15 th	President's Day Recess
March 29 th -April 2 nd	Spring Break

Homework

Students should set aside time each evening for homework. Homework practice will consist of math, reading, composition, research, project development, and review. Homework completion will contribute toward the student's overall grade.

Honor Roll

Scholarship is recognized and encouraged through the Honor Roll. The Honor Roll is compiled at the close of each of the marking periods. Honor Roll is obtained by student's earning all A's and B's on their report card. The Principal's Honor Roll is obtained by a student earning straight A's on their report card.

Lockers

Every student in P.E. will be assigned a locker and padlock. This is the only locker students will have. The lockers and padlocks are free of charge. If a student should lose or damage a padlock a replacement padlock will be issued at a cost of \$5.00 per incident.

Lost And Found

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the Lost and Found in the cafeteria. Lost articles not claimed by the end of the year will be given to local charities.

Make-Up Work Policy

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all work is requested and made up upon return from any absence. It is the responsibility of the teacher to make the assignments available to the student. Students returning from an excused absence will have an amount of time equivalent to the number of days absent to complete the assignment.

No credit will be given for work missed during a truancy. Full credit will be given for all assignments missed during suspensions. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the teacher with the completed assignments the day they return to school following a suspension.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Parents are encouraged to communicate concerns directly with their student's teachers. A scheduled appointment is required to ensure teacher availability, as well as a successful outcome. Parents are required to sign in the front office and wait for verification that the teacher is available before entering campus grounds.

Physical Education Information

Students are required to dress out during their P.E. classes. Parents can purchase a P.E. uniform from Explorer for only \$16.00. Tennis shoes must be worn. Students will be purchasing their uniforms during the campus walk through. Please make checks payable to the school.

Physical Education Medical Excuses:

Participation during Physical Education class is required unless excused by written request of the family physician. A one to three day excuse may be obtained by having the parent write a medical excuse. This excuse only allows time to arrange for a doctor's appointment. The parental excuse must be specific and presented to the nurse prior to the start of the school day. The office will verify excuses.

Restrooms

Students may use the restrooms before and after school, between class periods, and during the lunch period. Students are expected to keep them clean. Do not loiter, write on walls, litter, or damage the facilities in any way. If feeling ill, report to an adult and receive a pass to the nurse's office; do not remain in the restroom. Students need a pass to go to the restroom during class time.

School Crossings

Extreme care must be used in crossing streets. Cross only at designated crosswalks under the supervision of the crossing guard. Students who "jaywalk" are endangering their lives and are subject to disciplinary action.

School Spirit

School spirit may be divided into three categories:

1. Courtesy – toward teachers, fellow students, and other staff members.
2. Pride – in everything our school endeavors to accomplish.
3. Sportsmanship – the ability to win and lose with dignity and respect for your opponent

Student Council

Student Council is an organization through which the students may express their opinions, assist in the administration of the school, and participate in the management of school enterprises. Student Council works to promote leadership, initiative, and self-control among its members.

Student Schedules

No requests for schedule changes will be honored unless, we as a school, have made a mistake. For instance, placing a girl in a boy's P.E. class or a seventh grader in an eighth grade class. If we have made a mistake, please contact one of our counselors at (602) 449-4200. We appreciate your cooperation regarding this matter.

Student Schedules – First Day of School

Official student schedules will be handed out on August 17, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. until 8:54 a.m. The seventh grade students are to report to the cafeteria and the eighth grade students are to report to the gymnasium to pick up their schedules.

Substitute Teachers

Our school is fortunate to have capable people help us whenever our regular teachers are absent. Each student is expected to be as considerate of the substitute teacher as he/she would be of the classroom teacher. The same courtesy should be extended to all guests.

Supplies

Students will need a three-ring binder, dividers for six classes, paper, and pencils. Individual teachers may have some other supply requirements and will inform you of these needs during the first week of school.

Textbooks

Students will receive one set of textbooks for home use during the walk through. A classroom set will be available for student use. If a classroom or home book is lost, stolen, misused, or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the student will be required to pay the full replacement cost of the book.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Adult staff members are responsible for maintaining order on campus. Students need to realize the need to follow directions given by all staff members, not just their classroom teachers. Students in defiance will be subject to disciplinary action. The school has legal authority to "...discipline students for disorderly conduct on the way to and from school." Disorderly conduct would include, but would not be limited to, fighting, smoking, verbal abuse, threats, etc. (ARS 15-341.A.15)

Bullying/Harassment

Bullying or harassment is identified as physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, taking personal belongings), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, making threats), or psychological (spreading rumors, encouraging social exclusion, extortion, intimidation) behaviors that can provoke an aggressive or negative emotional response. These actions fall under the District harassment policy and consequences range from counseling to expulsion. In serious cases police involvement will occur. If you witness or feel you are being bullied/harassed you should tell an adult on campus and/or complete the bullying form.

“Bully Free Zone” Rules

1. I will not bully others.
2. I will help students who are bullied.
3. I will include students who are left out.
4. I will always tell an adult when I see some one being bullied.

Bus Rules

The Paradise Valley School District and Explorer Middle School have established bus rules for the safety of our students. All bus riders are under the authority of the school bus driver and shall observe the rules.

1. Obey the bus driver's instructions and directions.
2. Bus aisles/emergency exits shall remain clear of all objects.
3. Stay properly seated with your back against the seat back, your legs facing forward and all parts of your body out of the aisle.
4. Keep head, hands, feet, and objects to yourself and inside the bus.
5. Talk quietly, use respectful language -- no profanity.
No throwing of any objects inside the bus or out of the bus windows.
No eating or drinking on the bus (water in plastic bottles is acceptable).
7. Animals, balloons, insects, skateboards, glass containers, weapons/dangerous objects, tobacco, alcohol or drugs are not permitted.
8. No student has the right to interfere with the learning, safety, or well-being of others.

Consequences for bus rule violations are as follows:

- *1st offense: Warning
- *2nd offense: One day bus suspension
- *3rd offense: Three day suspension from all buses
- *4th offense: Five day suspension from all buses
- *5th offense: Nine day suspension from all buses
- *6th offense: Suspended for the remainder of the year from all buses

Bus Rules

There may be no warning given for fighting, vandalism, verbal or physical abuse, possession of dangerous objects, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or other infractions considered to be severe. Steps 1 through 5 can be bypassed if the situation warrants a more serious consequence.

Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation. The driver of any bus shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the students transported. Riding the bus is a privilege that mandates student behavior and responsibility. If suspended from the bus, the student involved will be expected to be in attendance as per state compulsory attendance law and district policy.

Care Of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper use and care of all books, supplies, and furniture supplied at the school. Students who damage school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage or replace the item.

Drugs, Alcohol, “Look-Alikes”, And Paraphernalia

The possession, use, or sale of drugs, alcohol, “look-alikes” or paraphernalia at school or on the way to and from school will result in suspension or expulsion from school and possible criminal prosecution. (ARS 13-3401 through 13-3411)

Fighting

Fighting, engaging in or threatening to engage in physical combat, involving two or more individuals, on the way to, at, or on the way home from school, will result in severe disciplinary action, ranging from suspension to expulsion. Students who are involved in this type of misbehavior may also face legal and/or financial responsibility for their actions.

Running On Campus

Students must walk on campus. Injuries can occur because of running. Students in violation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Smoking/Tobacco Products

Explorer Middle School is a tobacco free environment for students, staff, and visitors. Students are not permitted to have any tobacco products, matches or lighters in their possession at any time in the school buildings, on the school grounds, or within the area surrounding the school grounds. This includes any students who are "just holding it for a friend", or who just had "someone hand it to them". This applies to all school-sponsored activities as well as the regular school day. Smoking and/or possession of tobacco is a violation of the law. (ARS 13-3622)

Weapons

Weapons of any kind including knives, guns, simulated weapons or firecrackers, are not allowed on school grounds, school buses, or any premises, grounds or vehicles used for official school purpose. Students involved with this type of behavior will face severe disciplinary consequences. These consequences range from suspension with police involvement to possible expulsion.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Accelerated Reading

Accelerated reader is web based. One of the features of the program is the availability of parent access to program information for their child.

Parents interested in having this access need to contact the Media Space Specialist at (602) 449-4200 to be enrolled in the AR program as parent users. Parents will be assigned usernames and passwords. The username and password will enable parents to logon and view the following “read only” information:

- School to Home Report
- AR Goals and Points
- Student Record Report
- STAR Reading Report
- Quiz List for EMS

Parents will receive notification and instructions through email after they have been enrolled in the program.

Computer, Network, and Internet Usage

Good behavior and responsibility are mandatory when students use school computers, the internet, and network services. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply.

The following are NOT permitted:

1. Sending, accessing, displaying or printing offensive messages or pictures.
2. Publication of any names, addresses, phone numbers, pictures, or other personally identifying information.
3. Using obscene language.
4. Damaging computer equipment, software or data.
5. Violating copyright or trademark laws and regulations.
6. Accessing folders, files, or passwords of others.
7. Using the network for commercial purposes.
8. Accessing inappropriate sites including email, chat rooms, instant messaging, blogs, journals, diaries, audio, video, and message centers.

Consequences:

1. Violations may result in a loss of access to school computers, the internet, and network services.
2. Violations may be subject to disciplinary action ranging from a conference with a school administrator to possible expulsion.
3. When applicable, law enforcement agencies will be involved.

Counseling/Guidance Services

Guidance services are available for every student in the school. These services include assistance with education planning, interpretation of test scores, career information, peer tutoring, peer counseling, help with home and personal problems, or any questions the student may feel he/she would like to discuss with a counselor. Students wishing to see a counselor should fill out a form in the counseling office and give it to the appropriate counselor. Parents wishing to arrange an appointment, please call (602) 449-4200.

Media Space

Students may use the Media Space for homework, reading, studying, returning books, or checking books out. Socializing with friends should take place in the commons area. Student Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Media Space may be closed in the morning or during lunch when staff meetings are being held or when teachers are using the Media Space with their classes. Signs will be placed on the doors. Students with inappropriate behavior in the Media Space will lose the privilege of using the Media Space for one or more days. Parents will be notified. Students need a pass from their teacher with a stated purpose and time of departure from the classroom when coming to the Media Space during class time. Media Space staff will sign the pass when students return to the classroom. Open drink containers and food are not permitted in the Media Space to avoid damage to Media Space materials and equipment.

Media Space book rules:

1. Two books may be checked out per loan period. New books may not be checked out if students have an overdue book or an outstanding bill on lost or damaged books.
2. Books may be returned to the Media Space before the due date if they are no longer needed.
3. The loan period for general circulation books is two weeks.
4. A book already checked out may be renewed once for an additional two weeks.
5. Reference books are not available for check out.
6. Overdue notices will be given to students every Wednesday through their English class.
7. No fines will be assessed for overdue books.
8. Students will be billed for the replacement cost of lost books and books damaged beyond repair.
9. Books removed from the book shelf should not be returned to the shelf. If these books are not needed, they should be placed on book carts found throughout the Media Space.
10. Student identification cards are required for checking out **textbooks** for short-term use in the Media Space in the morning, during lunch, and after school.

Study Island (www.studyisland.com)

Explorer students have access and are required to use Study Island as a great resource to prepare for AIMS testing. Study Island is a web-based program accessible to students from school or home. Since the Study Island state assessment program is completely web-based, students can access it from any computer with an Internet connection and a standard web browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape). Simply go to www.studyisland.com and enter your username and external password at the upper-left of the screen and click "Login". Results from student study sessions are recorded and made available to teachers, including sessions completed at home.

The Study Island program is divided into sections (math, reading, writing, science). Many topics are accompanied by a lesson, which includes some brief information about the material covered. It is helpful to view the lesson before answering the questions in the topic. When you pass all topics in all sections, you have completed the program and will be well prepared to take the state test. Students are required to use Study Island. Progress is reported on quarterly grades. Student who achieve a level of "Exceed" on all Study Island reading, math, science (8th only), and writing (7th only) will earn a lunch at the Olive Garden Restaurant.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

A person's dress and grooming should reflect upon the "society" in which the individual is located at the time. Our "society", the school, should house students who make appropriate and responsible choices in regard to attire and grooming—simplicity, neatness, and modesty are the expectation.

Although we recognize that each student's manner of dress is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference we believe that the educational mission of our school will be enhanced if students dress appropriately to maintain an environment conducive to learning. Our students should treat coming to school as their job and should dress accordingly.

Student dress and personal appearance shall not disrupt nor distract from instructional procedures, school sanctioned social functions, or the disciplinary control of the school staff. Parents and students are encouraged to adopt a style of dress and grooming that is appropriate to the age and size of the child, without extremes that become disrupting influences in the classroom.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE CODE

- All students must wear shirts with sleeves (cap sleeves are appropriate). Tank tops, backless blouses, tube or halter tops, sheer garments, torn or cut garments are not permitted. Sleeveless/spaghetti string tops or dresses cannot be worn unless a non see through shirt or jacket with sleeves is worn with the top or dress.
- Any attire that exposes cleavage is prohibited.
- Undergarments are not to be seen.
- Shorts and skirts must pass the "thumb rule" which means they may be no shorter than where the student's thumb touches the leg when the arm is hanging down. Slits in skirts and shorts must also pass the "thumb rule."
- Dress and appearance shall not present a risk to the health, safety, or general welfare of students or others in the school.
- Dress and appearance shall not interfere with or disrupt the educational environment or process.
- Dress and appearance shall not be contrary to curriculum goals and/or educational objectives. This includes advertising or promotion of: gang related affiliation, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, or illegal, sexual, or violent behavior.
- Hats, caps, visors, bandannas, sweatbands, or any other kind of headgear are prohibited.
- Footwear (shoes or sandals) must be worn at all times.
- Pants and shorts need to be worn pulled up and secured at all times.

The responsibility for making determinations concerning dress and appearance code rests with the school principal or designee. Students who violate the school's dress and appearance code may be asked to do any of the following, depending on the specific circumstances:

- Remove the accessory.
- Change into clothing that may be provided by the school.
- Call a parent/guardian.
- Have other clothing brought to school.

Repeated violations of the dress and appearance code may result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken, including suspension from school.