

2023 - 2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

# THE SISKIYOU SCHOOL



# PARENT HANDBOOK

631 CLAY STREET ASHLAND, OR  
541-482-8223

[WWW.SISKIYOUSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.SISKIYOUSCHOOL.ORG)

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# OUR CORE PRINCIPLES

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## THE SISKIYOU SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

To cultivate the intellectual, imaginative, artistic, and individual gifts in each student within a community that honors childhood, practices compassion, values diversity, and inspires a passion for learning and service.

## PURPOSE AND VALUES OF THE SISKIYOU SCHOOL

Our purpose is to inspire academic excellence, artistic creativity, and social responsibility through a rich Waldorf curriculum. The Siskiyou School is committed to providing a quality Waldorf education honoring the whole child: body, mind, and spirit.

## OUR VALUES

- Academic excellence
- Preservation of childhood through developmentally appropriate education
- Inspiration of imagination and fulfillment of individual potential
- Cultural and economic diversity
- Creative freedom for teachers to educate
- Good stewardship and fiscal responsibility
- A collaborative partnership among families, faculty, administrator, and board
- Compassionate listening and respectful, open communication

## OUR FOUR PILLARS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The “Four Pillars” governance model, adopted by the Siskiyou School board and faculty in the fall of 2006, is based on collaborative leadership among the board, faculty, parents, and administration. Each pillar has its well-defined sphere of expertise and activity.

- The *board* carries the school’s finances and legal affairs.
- The *faculty*, in conjunction with our Pedagogical Chair, holds the pedagogical program.
- The *parents* are tasked with “creating a mantle of warmth” by doing what they love in service of the school and helping organize events which build community and raise money to support the school.
- The *administrator* heads the administrative team and acts as the school’s point person, holding the whole and supporting the work of each group to ensure good communication and collaboration among them.

In addition, we have within the faculty and administrative pillars the following:

### The Leadership Support Committee (LSC)

The LSC consists of a lower grades class teacher, an upper grades class teacher, a specialty or subject teacher, the faculty representative (FR) and the administrator. Members are selected by the administrator from faculty who express interest in the role and serve in an advisory capacity. The committee meets on a weekly basis and serves a one-year term at a time. Additional meetings will be scheduled on an as-needed basis for urgent matters. The roles of the LCS include:

- Setting the agenda for all faculty meetings, in-services, and board-faculty conference.
- Supporting the administrator in pedagogy, discipline actions, and policies as well as advise and assist the administrator on topics brought to the committee.
- Ensuring all upper and lower grade teachers and specialty teachers have section meetings.
- Review the teacher support program yearly.
- Establish the PIP (Performance Improvement Plan for teachers) at the beginning of the school year.
- Develop employee evaluation criteria in coordination with the administrator.
- Create restorative justice policies for the parent handbook.
- Help organize and lead in-house school assemblies.
- Set parent enrichment calendar with faculty input.
- Assist administration with writing annual giving thank you cards.

### **The Faculty Representative (FR)**

This person is a member of the current faculty and serves a one-year term at a time. The representative serves as a communication bridge to the board, the LSC, and administrator from the faculty. The FR attends monthly board meetings. They are responsible for receiving agenda topic requests from the faculty which they will then bring to the LSC. The faculty representative will also be the point of contact for faculty that wish to bring other larger questions to the LSC such as class related issues (i.e. discipline questions), a need for a class study, or a need for a child study or other similar topics to be discussed. The faculty representative and administrator will meet weekly to work in coordination for bringing relevant topics to the LSC for discussion, recommendations, review.

Each body has a part to play; all are needed to carry the work of the school.

## **PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW**

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### **SCHOOL HOURS & SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

#### **Office Hours**

Monday-Thursdays: 8:00 - 3:30      Fridays: 8:00 - 1:00

#### **School Hours**

8:10 School officially opens for business, arrival of students begins  
8:25 Morning Bell Rings  
1:00 Dismissal for Kindergarten (without afternoon enrichment)  
2:10 Dismissal for First Grade for the first semester  
2:55 Dismissal for First Grade for the second semester  
3:00 Dismissal for Grades 2-4 and kindergarten with afternoon enrichment  
3:10 Dismissal for Grades 5-8

#### **Friday & Half-day Dismissal Times**

12:20 Grade 1 and kindergarten  
12:30 Grades 2-4  
12:45 Grades 5-8

#### **Full-Day Schedule of Classes (for grades 1-8)**

8:25-10:20 Main Lesson  
10:20-10:50 Snack & Recess  
10:50-11:35 First Period  
11:40-12:25 Second Period  
12:25 -1:05 Recess & Lunch  
1:05-1:20 Reading Time  
1:20-2:05 Third Period  
2:10-2:50 Fourth Period  
2:50-3:00 Class Clean-Up & Homework Review, Grades 2-4  
2:50-3:10 Class Clean-Up & Homework Review, Grades 5-8  
\*First and second grade recess times may vary by 5-10 minutes from the above.

#### **Full-Day Kindergarten Schedule**

8:25-1:00 Program for children without afternoon enrichment  
8:25-3:00 Program for children with afternoon enrichment

#### **Half- Day Schedule of Classes**

8:25 Kindergarten program begins  
8:25-10:20 Main Lesson for Grades 1-8  
10:20-10:50 Snack & Recess  
10:50-11:35 First Period  
11:40-12:25 Second Period  
12:20 Dismissal Grade 1 & kindergarten  
12:30 Dismissal Grades 2-4  
12:45 Dismissal Grades 5-8



## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

\*Pick-up times may be 2-3 minutes later than the dismissal times noted above as it takes a couple of minutes for the children to make their way from their classrooms out back to the front parking lot.

### Schedule on Smoke Days

If smoke is in the valley around the start of the school, air purifiers and air conditioning units will be continuously running. The School tracks air quality with data from AirNow ([AirNow.gov](http://AirNow.gov)), and decides on outdoor recesses or classes based on the following AQI scale:

*Good* (green): Recess and outdoor classes conducted as normal.

*Moderate* (yellow): Recess and outdoor classes conducted as normal.

*Unhealthy for sensitive groups* (orange): Recess and outdoor classes conducted as normal; masks recommended for sensitive children.

*Unhealthy* (red): Recess and outdoor classes moved inside. When outdoors, masks are highly recommended.

Any index past red will automatically move all recesses and outdoor classes inside. School will operate on the full-day schedule if the AQI is 0-150; school will operate on half-day schedule when the AQI is forecasted to reach 151 or higher by 12:00 noon.

### Schedule on Snow Days

The Siskiyou School follows the Ashland School District's lead on snow days and driving safety. On days when a snow day possibly may be called, check the District's website homepage banner at [www.ashland.k12.or.us](http://www.ashland.k12.or.us). By 6:30 a.m. the District posts their decision. If the District calls a snow day or late start, we also have a snow day and/or late start.

*Exception to the rule:* Fridays are the exception. Fridays are always half days for the Siskiyou School, so when the District calls a *two*-hour late start on a Friday, we do not have school at all. If they call a *one*-hour late start, we do have school. On late-start days we adjust the day's schedule to ensure that the children get main lesson.

## DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

### Opening Time

The school officially opens for the children at 8:10. At 8:10 parking lot helpers come out to monitor traffic flow and help children out of cars, classroom doors open, recess monitors go on morning playground duty, the ball box is unlocked, and the play area becomes available for children to begin their games. Until 8:10, the playground and classrooms are closed to students as teachers are preparing for the day.

### Morning Arrival

Teachers give a lot of thought to the children's first hour at school, knowing its effects reverberate through the day. In keeping with our conviction that predictability and consistency are healthful to the growing child, we ring the morning bell at exactly 8:25 a.m. every day. As soon as the bell rings, class teachers begin leading their children through a rhythmic sequence of activities designed to bring the class together and each student into a place of openness and readiness for main lesson. Getting your child(ren) to school 10-15 minutes before the bell to give them a moment to settle in,

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

put belongings away, and connect briefly with their friends and their teacher is a gift you can give them every day. The faculty greatly appreciates your help with morning timeliness.

### **Parents Coming to Campus & Office Access**

When school is in session, the campus will essentially be reserved for the children, teachers, and staff. If you need to bring something to the office, please use the red double doors main entrance. You will be greeted in the front hall by a staff member to decrease flow into our small office.

### **Designated Pick-Up Area at Dismissal Time**

The designated pick-up area for students is the parking lot in front of the school. Teachers must be notified if a child is being picked up from the Clay Street Park parking area. Do not use the park entrance by the Glendale House or anywhere on Glendale Street as a place of pick-up.

### **Where Parents Should Wait at Pick-Up**

Parents who arrive on foot to pick up their child(ren) are to wait out front by the bike rack. That's where teachers bring their classes at dismissal. We ask that parents not wait out back as classes are in session until dismissal.

### **Kindergarten Drop-off and Pick-Up**

As per the school's parking guidelines, kindergarten parents can only park on Clay Street at the front of the school or down in the Clay Street Park parking lot; but NEVER on Glendale Avenue.

Drop off has several options. One option is to drop off your child at the front of the school in the drop-off line with all the other school parents. The Kindergarten assistant teacher will receive the students in Pine Hall, with two middle school students present to support this process in the transition from the car to Pine Hall. The second option is to park at the front of the school, walk your child to Pine Hall and wish them a lovely school day. Another option is to walk your child along with the other kindergarten students to the classroom.

At 8:25 am, the Kindergarten assistant and the two middle school helpers will walk the students to the kindergarten along the outer path. If you find that you are running late, please walk your child to the kindergarten classroom. If you need to pick up your child early or drop them off late due to an appointment, please stop at the front office for attendance purposes.

For the first week of school, parents can walk their child to the kinder yard for drop off to anchor into a good rhythm. We ask that parents say "see you later" outside the classroom on the porch after children change into their inside shoes or slippers, and that only students enter the classroom to begin the day. This is a big transition and exciting time. As children tap into our emotions, a parent's confidence will assist their transition into the school day.

Pick up at the end of the school day at 1:00 pm will take place outside of the kindergarten classroom. If your child is leaving at the school day's end at 1:00 pm, please park in front of the main campus or at Clay Street Park and pick them up at the classroom.

Pick up for children in Afternoon Enrichment is in front of the school. The children will be safely walked to the front of the school for pick up. If you would like to pick up your child from the Kindergarten yard directly, please email the teacher to make arrangements.

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

### First Grade Pick-Up

- **Monday - Thursdays:** From Opening Day to the end of the first semester (end of January), pick-up is at 2:10 p.m. After January pick-up is at 2:55 p.m.
- **Fridays and other Half-days:** Half-day dismissal for first graders is 12:20 p.m.

### Early Pick-Ups

On any given day, many children may need to be picked up early for one reason or another. All children leaving campus before dismissal must be signed-out at the office. To minimize class interruptions and for safety concerns, please note the following guidelines:

- **Let the office know.** Please be sure the class teacher and the office know when your child leaves early. For your child's safety and for campus security, the school needs to know where all students are always during the school day.
- **Staff gets students from classes, not parents.** Parents are not to go out back to the classroom to pick up their child; an office staff member will go get the child for the parent if the child is not out front at the pre-arranged time.
- **Early Pick-Up by Arrangement, Grades 1 - 4:** If you know ahead of time that you will need to pick up your child early on a given day, please notify the office the morning of the early pick-up. An office member will send a note to your child and their teacher regarding the early pick-up. An effort will be made to have your child out front at the time of pick-up. However, please anticipate that due to an engaging lesson, or specialty or substitute teacher, your child may not be up front and waiting for you. Please arrange to arrive early for pick-up, and if your child is not waiting for you, please let an office staff member know.
- **Early Pick-Up by Arrangement, Grades 5 - 8:** Please send in a note about early pick-up to your child's teacher. Students are expected to coordinate with their teacher about coming out front to meet their parent at the time requested. Students **MUST** check in and sign out at the office immediately **BEFORE** they leave campus.
- **Unexpected & Immediate Pick-up:** If something unexpected comes up and you need to pick up your child immediately, call the office and a staff member will be glad to go to your child's class and bring your child to wait for you in the office hallway.

### Late Pick-Ups

There is a 15-minute window for afternoon pick-up. For grades 2-4 it is 3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.; for grades 5-8, it is 3:10 p.m. - 3:25 p.m. A "late pick-up" begins after that 15-minute window and the duty teacher will make calls to parents of children who are still waiting out front to confirm that the parents are on their way. *Please do not call the office to say you will be late unless you know you actually WILL be late, i.e. that you will arrive to pick up your child after the 15-minute window.*

### 'Hanging Out' after School

Children are not allowed to play out back after dismissal unless they have permission from the office. Children must be under teacher supervision if they stay after school.

### Arranging Play Dates

Please finalize after-school plans with your children **before** dropping them off in the morning; it's stressful to negotiate play dates with your child in the stream of afternoon traffic. If your child calls

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out to you in the drive-through lane about a play date, please park and come back to have the conversation. Students are not allowed to phone parents in the day to arrange play dates.

### NEIGHBORLINESS & OUR PARKING LOT PROTOCOL

We are a school surrounded by many houses in a residential area. Being respectful of our neighbors is not only the right thing to do, but under the terms of our Conditional Use Permit with the City of Ashland, our continued presence on this site depends on good relations with our neighbors. The biggest strain revolves around Siskiyou School parent parking and traffic on the street. At drop-off and pick-up, gridlock can form in the blink of an eye, causing both entrances and exits to get blocked and traffic to stall for everyone. Based on years of experience by faculty who daily monitor traffic at drop-off and pick-up, we have formulated a list of rules to make clear which behaviors and practices are key to making it all work. Please take note of the rules below.

#### OUR PARKING LOT PROTOCOL

##### The Basic Rules

- Never make U-turns on Clay Street during rush hour, 8:00-8:30 am and 2:45-3:30 pm.
- Never leave your vehicle unattended in the traffic flow lane.
- Never stop your car in the Clay Street or school crosswalks.
- Never pull into the right-hand lane in the pickup area unless directed by the traffic helpers.
- Never park in the entrance to our school parking lot.
- Never enter through the parking lot exit.
- Never block any driveways or mail boxes when parking on Clay Street.
- Never block a fire hydrant when parking.
- Never park in front of any mailboxes Clay Street.
- Never talk on your cell phone while driving on Clay Street – even hands free.
- Always use your blinker to indicate which direction you want to exit out of the exit lane; this helps the traffic personnel immensely.
- Always drive slowly and with care on the length of Clay Street.
- Always park your car as close to the “curb” as possible to leave room for traffic.
- Always park in the direction of the traffic flow.
- Always pull up as far as possible in the drive-through lane before stopping to drop off or pick up your child.
- Always follow the directives of the teachers, even if they seem counterintuitive. Traffic helpers may be aware of children that drivers cannot see, such as the child coming around to get into a passenger side seat or step out from between parked cars. Waiting patiently in single file, is a necessary precaution and small price to pay for guaranteed safety. The close calls are terrifying.

##### At Drop Off

- Do not allow your child to exit the car anywhere but the designated drop-off spots: Spots 1 and 2 before the crosswalk, and Spot 3 just after the crosswalk. Even if there is a line of cars ahead of you, have your child stay in the car until your car reaches one of the three drop-off spots

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where a staff member is available to help open car doors and ensure safety. The first two drop-off spots are in front of the crosswalk. The third drop off spot is just before the crosswalk.

- Finish conversations and after-school arrangements with your children before you pull up at the drop-off spot and encourage them to have backpacks and lunch bags in hand so they are ready to step out quickly when the helper opens the car door.
- If you are in the drive-through lane, do not get out of the car to help your child out or to say goodbye; those extra seconds can cause back-up in the traffic loop.
- If your child is seated next to you in the passenger seat, caution them to check for oncoming traffic before opening the passenger side door. Exiting cars pose a danger.
- If your child is not sitting up front with you, have them sit behind the driver's seat so they can get out on the sidewalk side versus the traffic lane.
- If your child or carpool group has school gear stowed in the back or trunk, please park on the street, unload there, and walk up to the crosswalk so as not to hold up the flow of traffic.

### At Pick-Up Time

- Pull as far forward as you can before stopping. If there are no cars ahead of you, pull up to the Pull-Up Line and into Spot 1. There are two spots for cars in front of the crosswalk.
- Have your back seats free and clear so your child(ren) can get in and seated quickly.
- Keep driving at a steady pace down the drive-through lane rather than slowing down to scan the crowd of children for your child. Slowing down affects the flow for all the cars behind you. Teachers have a system for finding your child and getting your child to you.
- Do not arrive earlier than the designated pick-up time of your oldest child; the more cars that have to circle, the more congested the flow becomes.
- If your child's class is late getting out, circle until the class comes out.
- If after-school plans need to be discussed, park and then have the conversation.
- Prepare to be patient; even though all teachers are out to help, the process sometimes takes a minute.

The board, administration, and faculty are very grateful for your attention to all these points. We are acutely aware of the importance of neighbor relations as we field complaints when our traffic interferes with their lives. Having parents *also* carry a keen awareness of our neighbors and do their part to make traffic safe and efficient is hugely helpful. Thank you!

### Parking & Traffic on Festival Days

On big festival days when we have many visitors in attendance in addition to our own parents we need to be extra considerate of our neighbors. Leave a respectful distance when parking near a person's driveway and park the mandated 15 feet from mailboxes and fire hydrants.

## COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL DURING THE DAY

### Notifying the office about illness or absences

Please leave a brief message on the attendance line at 541-482-8223 ext. 14. It can be as simple as "*Johnny in first grade is out today with a fever*". The office will forward your message to the class teacher. If a child has a contagious illness, the office may email other parents in the class to give them a heads-up.

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### **Leaving messages on the school phone**

If you get the answering machine when you call the office, please leave a very brief message. Voicemail is checked regularly throughout the day. Afternoon pick-up times are particularly busy; messages left in the last hour of the day may not be listened to until after 3:00.

### **Getting messages to your child(ren)**

Before dropping off your child(ren) in the morning, please make sure they have their lunches, they know who will be picking them up and what their afternoon plans will be. The predictability, clarity, and foreknowledge is reassuring. If the pick-up plan changes in the course of the day, call the office; we will be happy to get the message to your child(ren).

## **ABSENCES & MAKE-UP WORK**

### **Make-Up Work for Absences**

If children are sick, teachers want them to take a complete break and not even think about schoolwork. There will be time enough to catch up later. If the child starts feeling well enough to do *some* work, parents of students in grades 5-8 can check the homework website for current assignments and be in touch with the teacher or office regarding picking up materials needed.

### **Main Lesson Catch-Up Work**

Main lesson is a living, whole-class experience; the main lesson drawings and texts assigned by the teacher are a way for students to express their experience of the living lesson presented by the teacher. Out of context, those assignments lose their purpose and thus are not usually given as catch-up work. When children return after a short absence, class teachers find a moment to catch them up if and as needed to follow the flow of the new lessons. Because main lesson is such an important part of the Waldorf curriculum and cannot be caught up in a meaningful way, we sometimes encourage children who are beginning to feel better but just don't have enough energy yet to be at school for the whole day to come in *just* for main lesson.

### **Excessive Absences**

If a student misses more than 5 days a semester, the office or class teacher will schedule a conference with the parents to discuss a plan that supports consistent attendance.

### **Missing School for Family Trips**

We recognize that some family trips can only be scheduled outside of official vacation times. Check with the class teacher to see whether there is a better or worse time for that trip in terms of the whole year's schedule. When looking at travel dates, please avoid overlap with major class events such as class plays and class trips. Equally important, please note that official return days—the day after Winter Break and the day after Spring Break—are usually the start of a new block and very high on a class teacher's list of not-to-be-missed days.

In the event of a family trip outside of official vacation days, the class teacher will spell out expectations for work to be completed by your child during the time away. A teacher may assign writing, reading, and math. Parents should not expect class teachers to catch students up with missed main lesson work; main lesson is a "living lesson" that cannot be recreated outside of the

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

moment. In the middle school grades, credit will not be given for a missed main lesson block unless the child completes an independent study.

While recognizing the genuinely priceless value of those special family trips, we also want to advocate for the value of consistent school life for young children. Each main lesson day and block has its own nourishing quality and following through on a school-year commitment communicates something important to the children as well. The fewer days missed in a school year, the greater the children's sense of connection with and investment in their schoolwork and life.

### **Scheduling Appointments**

Please try to schedule appointments with doctors and dentists after school or at lunchtimes (12:25-1:20) so as not to break the rhythm of the day for your child or the class. We certainly understand that this is not always possible.

## **FOOD AT SCHOOL**

### **Snack and Lunch**

Good nutrition during the school day is vital for focus and balanced energy. School takes energy and children get very hungry! Please pack a substantial, nutritious snack and lunch. Teachers will make sure the children get the time and space they need to eat quietly and peacefully. We ask that children not bring food that requires heating and that no candy, soda, or gum be brought to school. Gum chewing is not allowed at school.

### **Water Bottles**

Teachers encourage the children to drink frequently throughout the day to stay well hydrated. All children in grades 1-8 are expected to have a labeled water bottle at school every day. The water bottles are kept in the children's cubbies or by their desks and taken home to be washed on a regular basis as directed by the class teacher. Children can refill their bottles with filtered water from their classroom sink.

### **Recycling & Composting**

Our goal as a school is to be as 'green' as possible and to keep trash to a minimum. To this end, we ask parents to send snack and lunch foods in reusable containers and ask the children to pack out what they bring in. All students help with our recycling program.

### **Hot Lunches**

As a fundraiser for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class offers to serve 1-2 hot lunches per week to fellow students starting in October. Meal options may be pizza, a falafel "bento box", or another lunch offering. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders sort the orders and deliver them to each classroom at lunchtime on the given day. Parents sign their child up to receive one or all the hot lunches for a semester; it's not a day-to-day thing. The 8<sup>th</sup> class makes money by charging a bit more for the food than what they themselves bought it for from the local restaurants. The restaurants are often owned by school parents who offer generous discounts to the class. Over the course of the year, this little difference adds up and helps towards the funding of their end-of-year trip. Watch the Tuesday Notice for information about the hot lunch start date, the choice of lunches offered and subscription costs.

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

### **Forgotten Lunches and/or Homework**

When children forget their lunch or homework, they find it hard to focus until that is resolved. Please make a habit of asking your children as they leave the house in the morning, *Do you have your lunch? Your homework?* The office will call you if a missing lunch or homework situation is brought to our attention. When you bring in a late lunch or missing homework, please drop it off in the office; we will deliver it to the classroom.

## **CLOTHING**

### **Cold/Wet Weather Gear**

When the season calls for it, please make sure your child leaves home with the necessary outerwear, including rain boots and jacket, to stay dry through the day. Children with clothing suited for the weather *will* be allowed to play outside at recess; children without proper weather gear will stay indoors at recess times.

### **Change of Clothes**

Children in Kindergarten and first grade are asked to keep an extra set of clothes at school for those occasions when emergency changes are necessary.

### **Labeling clothing, water bottles, etc.**

We encourage parents to label all sweatshirts, jackets, lunch bags, and water bottles. Children arrive in sweatshirts or jackets in the cool mornings but take them off as they warm up during recesses and then forget them outside. Those items end up in the Lost and Found. If they are labeled, we can make sure they get back to the child. We also encourage labeling of potluck dishes using masking tape. Labeling is a big help in our being able to get your things back to you.

### **School Dress Code**

We do have a school dress code, and the clothing we consider inappropriate for school is listed in our Dress Code Policy, which can be found under the School Policies section of this handbook. The heart of our dress code is that we don't want a child's clothes to be distracting, we want to see the child, not their clothes. In cases where students arrive at school in clothing that is "debatable," it is the class teacher's prerogative to "make the call."

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Teachers host a birthday-acknowledgment moment in class for every child each year up through 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In grades 1 and 2, parents are invited to attend and to bring a fruit treat for the class to share. Traditionally, the teacher invites the birthday child forward, and classmates each share something they appreciate about the child's unique gifts and qualities. All the children know from firsthand experience the specialness of the moment, and the birthday child receives the words of their friends with shy wonder. It is a reverent moment and a special circle for all. Subsequent grades may also have birthday moments as directed by the class teacher. Treats for the class, if requested by the teacher, are to be nutritious and enjoyable by all students (gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan, and free from excessive sugar); fruit kabobs or fruit cups make the best choice.



## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

The subject of outside birthday parties is usually on the agenda of one of the first Parent Evenings because it is a delicate matter. For children even up through middle school, receiving an invitation to a classmate's party is the most exciting thing. Conversely, children who learn that a classmate is having a party and that they weren't invited can hurt for a long time. To maximize the chance of not hurting any child's feelings, teachers recommend parents choose one of two options: (1) make your child's "party" so intimate, with just a "best" friend or two, that the other 20 plus children in the class are unlikely to feel excluded even if they hear about it; (2) invite the whole gang! Invitations to birthday parties are always distributed *outside of class*, with discretion as needed.

### FIELD TRIPS & END-OF-YEAR CLASS TRIPS

#### Chaperoning & Field Trip Rules

Field trips are wonderful opportunities for the children to be together in new ways. It is also an opportunity for parents to spend time with their child's class. For field trips that require driving to a location, class teacher sends out an email to the class requesting a specific number of chaperones/drivers. If more parents offer to chaperone or drive than are needed, class teachers notify parents who will make that particular trip. The number should be respectfully observed unless class teachers specifically state that "all parents are welcome." Occasionally, class teachers will ask the parent rep to coordinate drivers/chaperones on their behalf. Over the years, all parents interested in chaperoning get opportunities. Prior to field trip departure, class teachers communicate relevant details and information to their chaperones. Before getting into the cars, class teachers review the rules with the children and the chaperones so that everybody is on the same page. The main guidelines are as follows:

- Class teachers decide who rides in which cars. Parents are asked to support the teacher's decision and not negotiate seating arrangements for their child. If your child has any special needs, please make sure the teacher is aware of these before the trip so that the assigned chaperone can help.
- Chaperones are asked to make sure the seatbelt rule is enforced in their cars. By law, all children must wear seatbelts and are not allowed to "double buckle." Students in the lower grades should not occupy a front seat. Please take this into account when notifying the teacher of seating spaces available in your car.
- Chaperones are asked not to make a food stop for their car unless it has been agreed before that *all* the chaperone cars will be stopping. Every car is to carry extra food and water.
- Chaperones are asked to uphold the school rule about electronics. No electronics are allowed - no cell phones, iPods, or video games. We also ask that chaperones keep the radio turned off to optimize the chances the children will engage with one another. Without the distraction of radio or electronics, the children soon "drop into" talking among themselves and having fun making up car games. The car trip itself can become a highlight of the field trip experience.
- Chaperones are expected to come alone, without younger siblings, so they can give full attention to the group they will be accompanying.
- Chaperones are asked to model courtesy to hosts and a willingness to follow guidelines prescribed by the class teacher and/or trip leader.

#### Paperwork Required of Field Trip Volunteer Drivers

Parent drivers/chaperones must have their paperwork in order before the day of the field trip, i.e. the parent volunteer and background check that was included in their child's enrollment packet.

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

As soon as the teacher confirms you will be a driver/chaperone, email Phyllis Cooley at [phyllis.cooley@siskiyouschool.org](mailto:phyllis.cooley@siskiyouschool.org) to ask if she has what she needs on file to okay you to be a driver. Field trip drivers are required to have 1) a clean background check, which includes a clean driving record, 2) a current insurance policy that indicates the prescribed level of liability limits, and 3) a completed auto maintenance report. Phyllis will check your file and email you what you need to bring if your file is incomplete.

### **End-of-Year Outings**

Most classes have a special outing at the end of the year such as a class picnic, with parents invited as well. The class teacher decides what trip or outing will be best for the class and announces the date well in advance. Parents help with logistics and chaperoning.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **The Lost & Found**

Please label your child's belongings to ensure misplaced items will find their way back to you. Any unlabeled item left outside is brought to our Lost and Found, the front hallway closet. Children know to look in the Lost & Found if they are missing something. At parent-teacher conferences, all items are set out in front of the main building so that parents can easily check for their child's unclaimed belongings when they come for their conference. After a couple of days, unclaimed items are taken to Goodwill. Please check frequently, especially if your child is missing belongings.

### **Dogs/Pets**

Teacher permission is required before a beloved pet can be brought to school to show the class. In the event of a pet day in the classroom, please notify your teacher of any allergies to animals that your child(ren) has. Dogs (or other pets) are not allowed on campus at any time during the school day and especially not at drop-off and pick-up.

### **Electronics/Toys**

No electronic devices, toys, or personal entertainment items are allowed at school as they can distract the children from healthy play at recess and be disruptive in the classroom. The safety of such items cannot be guaranteed, offering still another reason for keeping them at home.

### **Cell Phones**

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during school. If children need to call their parents during the day, they must get a permission slip from their teacher to go to the office to use the office phone. Please read our full Cell Phone Policy further on in the handbook.

### **Bicycles**

Children are encouraged to ride their bikes to school, and many of our students do. We recommend parents scope out the safest route to school and ride with their child the first few days to foresee any hazards your child should be aware of. School bike rules are as follows:

- No biking to or from school on lower Clay Street; the road and curve are dangerous.
- From school, always access the bike path from the Takelma neighborhood access point.
- No bike riding in the parking lot area or behind the school building.

## PART I. DAILY LIFE & THINGS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

- Helmets are a must any time a student is on a bike.
- Lock bikes if leaving them at school overnight. We have had several thefts of bikes left overnight. The police recommend that families register their bikes at the police station to facilitate recuperating them should they ever be stolen.

**Dismissal & Arrival Bike Routes:** At dismissal, bikers walk their bikes from the end of the exit ramp across the Clay Street crosswalk, through the Takelma neighborhood, to the Takelma bike path access point. Likewise, in the mornings, bikers follow the bike path all the way to the Takelma neighborhood bike path access point. They then make their way to the school campus via Takelma Street, the Takelma-Clay Street shortcut path, the little bridge, and the school crosswalk. It takes than a minute from the bike path.

## **PART II. PARENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL LIFE**

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### **VOLUNTEERING**

It truly takes a village to raise a child and many volunteers to support a school. Our school requests 16 volunteer hours per family per year. There are many ways help out to make the Siskiyou School a better, more caring, conscious and beautiful place.

Everyone has something to bring. We encourage parents to find a way that feels true to them to contribute. In keeping with the “do what you love in service of the school” approach to parent participation, parents have chosen different ways to help, from forming a cross country team for middle schoolers to rebuilding the school garden. A volunteer form is enclosed with the enrollment packet.

Often the office and class teachers send out emails requesting help as needs arise. Helping with campus work or chaperoning on field trips are common requests. Stay tuned and the opportunities will arise. We are deeply grateful for - and dependent on - your support!

### **PARENT PILLAR REPRESENTATIVES**

The mission of the Parent Pillar Representatives (Parent Reps) is to nurture, support and help develop a sense of community among the families of the school through social activities, information sharing and help with fundraising. Simply by participating in the opportunities offered, every parent can add to the social life of the school and strengthen our web of connection.

Each class has at least two Parent Pillar Representatives. A Parent Rep shares information about school happenings with other parents in the class, coordinates at least one social event for the class and attends monthly gatherings to get to know the other Parent Reps.

Our Events and Fundraising Coordinator, Erin Dickinson, is the contact and coordinator for the Parent Pillar Reps. If you are interested in learning more, email her at [erin.dickinson@siskiyouschool.org](mailto:erin.dickinson@siskiyouschool.org).

### **CLASS VISITS, CLASS NIGHTS, CLASS PLAYS**

Parents are offered several opportunities through the year to observe their child’s class and spend time with their fellow class parents.

*Class Visits* occur when class teachers invite parents to observe during main lesson for special presentations such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> shelter project, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade animal reports, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade state reports, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade business fair, or the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade PowerPoint presentations. Parents of lower grades may be invited to watch circle activities.

## PART II. PARENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL LIFE

On *Class Nights*, parents are invited to Pine Hall to watch their child's class share work from main lesson and specialty classes.

*Class Plays* are a highlight for every class through the eight years. Just about every month, a class presents its play in Pine Hall. Premiers of the plays usually are scheduled on a Thursday evening; the majority of the audience that first evening usually consists of the parents and families of the class. The following morning the play is performed again, this time for the children of the school. Parents of the class often attend this show as well, glad for a second opportunity to see their child's class on stage. Parents are encouraged to attend the plays of every grade. Watching class plays is a great way to get a sense for a class and witness the engagement of all the children of the school with the curriculum. All students look forward to seeing the plays of other classes. After a performance, the younger children are frequently overheard commenting – regardless what the play was – that it was “the best play they have ever seen!”

### PARENT ENRICHMENT

Each year the school organizes talks, lectures, workshops, or study groups to offer parents insights into Waldorf education, child development, and parenting. These are led by our faculty or outside specialists. At the start of each school year, the school sends out a Parent Enrichment Series flier that lists the offerings scheduled for the year. Reminders are posted in the Tuesday Notice. Some presentations are targeted for specific grades or age groups; others are of a more general nature. These presentations are always followed by a Q & A. Each evening is an opportunity for parents to learn not only from the presenters but from each other as they share experiences.

## PART III. COMMUNITY LIFE

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### TYPES OF GATHERINGS

Being part of the Siskiyou School is being part of a community. Parents have occasion to experience our community through class events, parent events, and whole community events. **Class events** such as Class Nights and end-of-year class picnics or holiday parties bring together just the parents and children of a given class. **Parent events**—Parent Welcome Night, History and Vision Night, the Auction, and Parent Enrichment Evenings—bring the parents of the school together. **Whole community events** —Michaelmas, Winter Faire, Winter Assembly, and May Day—bring all Siskiyou School students, parents, and friends together. See descriptions of the events in the next section: Important Events in Our School Year.

**In-house assemblies** bring together teachers and students as their own little community. The weekly **Friday Assembly** is the most recurrent of these. On Friday mornings teachers and students gather in Pine Hall to catch up on current and upcoming events and hear from classes that have been on trips or share from their main lessons. Sometimes matters of importance to all the students are brought up or shared. Occasionally, we host visitors – musicians, artists, speakers, etc. When a holiday is being celebrated such as Indigenous Peoples’ Day, MLK Day, Earth Day, Valentine’s Day, Thanksgiving or Advent, the heart of the assembly is a story told by a class teacher. These gatherings always begin and end with singing. In-house assemblies are vital to fostering connection among the classes and with class teachers from other grades. If the occasion lends itself, parents are invited; invitations for Friday assemblies or other in-house assemblies are issued by way of an email from a class teacher or through a mention in the Tuesday Notice.

### Seasonal Celebrations

Cultivating an awareness of the rhythms of the year through seasonal celebrations is a central part of Waldorf education. Some seasonal celebrations are whole community celebrations to which parents, grandparents, alumni, preschools, and friends are invited. Others are celebrated quietly just by the children and their teachers in Pine Hall. Each celebration has its accompanying rituals, songs and verses. As the years pass, the children acquire a repertoire of songs, verses, and stories associated with the big turning points of the year. In the days and weeks leading up to the festival, the singing of related songs can be heard coming from the classrooms and music room. The school does not teach a particular religious view; the festivals are universal in nature.

### Venues for School Gatherings

We use different venues to host our gatherings and shape our events, partly in consideration of our space limitations. Class gatherings, class plays, parent enrichment nights, in-house assemblies, and History and Vision Night are easily accommodated in Pine Hall. Seasonal celebrations are often held at Clay Street Park. When our whole community comes together, we number several hundred and need to rent space at area auditoriums or halls.

### Social Events Outside of School

The Parent Representatives for a class may also organize fun family or parent-only activities throughout the year. Participation in these activities is always optional but provides a great opportunity to bond as a class. Events range from formal class holiday parties to casual picnics.

## PART III. COMMUNITY LIFE

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Cultivating a habit of service and a love of service in our students is part of our school mission. All our classes perform community service activities of some kind. Some of that work is on our own campus, some off campus. Class teachers, with parent help, look for activities that can be meaningful for their classes. Examples include clearing trails for the Park Service, maintaining Clay Street Park (our school is the steward), and providing artwork and performing music in nursing homes and hospitals. The school community engages in outreach as well. Each Thanksgiving, we do a food drive to replenish shelves at the Ashland Food Bank. We remain committed to having community service be a way of life for our students.

## **PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR**

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### **OPENING DAY CEREMONY**

Each year on Opening Day we hold a ceremony to welcome our new class of first graders. All first-grade parents are expected to attend, and all parents of the school are welcome. When the morning bell rings, our Kindergarten and children in grades 2-8 gather with their teachers outside by the maple tree on blankets in a semi-circle. New first graders are also in the circle, sitting with their parents. Following a welcome and introductions, the first-grade teacher steps forward to call up the incoming first graders, one by one. The child gets up from their parents' side and walks up to the teacher to be welcomed. From the other side of the circle, a sixth grader comes carrying a flower for their new buddy and gently leads them to the students' side of the circle. The ceremony ends with the whole school singing as the first graders, led by their new teacher and their new 6<sup>th</sup> grade buddies, walk off to their classroom to begin their first day. Following the ceremony, all parents are invited to the Opening Day Tea.

### **PARENT WELCOME NIGHT & FIRST CLASS MEETINGS**

Parent Welcome Night usually takes place on Thursday evening the second week of school and lasts from about 5:45-8:00. At least one parent from every family is expected to attend. The evening includes a community dinner out on the blacktop offered by the board and class meetings in every grade. The community dinner offers parents a time to connect and socialize after summer vacation, capped by a welcome from the administration. Then, between 6:30-8:00, parents go into the classrooms to attend what is usually their first class meeting of the year. The teacher gives an overview of the year's curriculum, key dates, special events, etc. A sense of community and shared purpose prevails.

### **MICHAELMAS HARVEST CELEBRATION**

The last weekend of September, the Siskiyou School, like all Waldorf schools around the world, celebrates Michaelmas. Michaelmas is an ancient festival named after the Archangel Mi-cha-el, conqueror of darkness, a symbolic source of strength as the life-giving forces of nature recede. The festival is held on our school campus on a Friday afternoon so that our whole community can attend. The afternoon has three parts. For the first hour, the children delight in participating in games and challenges at Clay Street Park. Then everyone files back onto campus for a "Michaelmas Pageant," with each class playing a different role in the traditional story of St. Mi-cha-el overcoming the dragon. The afternoon ends with a community potluck/harvest supper. While parents sit and chat in the glow of sunset, the children play. It is a wonderful way to usher in Fall.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

There are three required parent-teacher conferences each year: mid-October, mid-February, and late May. These conferences are always held on the Thursday and Friday of conference week. Parents are expected to be available on the designated Thursday or Friday rather than asking to schedule a



## PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR

conference on another day. The Thursday and Friday conference days are NO SCHOOL days for students so that class teachers can give their full attention to the parents. Conference sign-up sheets go up online two weeks prior. Parents with more than one child in the school are encouraged to sign up as soon as the sign-up sheets are posted to get back-to-back time slots with their children's teachers and avoid having to make several trips into school. Teachers ask divorced parents to attend conferences together so that both parents or sets of parents hear the same thing at the same time. In cases where it is not possible, parents should contact the class teacher to see if an accommodation can be made. Two times a year, 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> parents also sign up to meet with their child's math and language arts teachers on those Thursday-Friday conference days. Conferences with class teachers last a half hour. Conferences with the subject teachers are 15 minutes.

### GRANDPARENTS' DAY

Each year grandparents are invited to spend a morning sharing in their grandchild's school life. They take part in their grandchild's main lesson, attend an all-school assembly, and tour specialty classes to experience the breadth of the curriculum. The morning ends with a sit-down lunch served by students and an opportunity to have a professional photo portrait taken with their grandchild. Grandparents' Day is a special day for all. Aunts, uncles, and grand-friends are welcome.

### HALLOWEEN

On Halloween Eve, children in grades 1-8 carve pumpkins together, with buddy classes paired. On Halloween morning children and teachers arrive at school in costumes. Given our highly impressionable young ones, we ask for *no masks, no scary costumes, no blood, no weapons*. Imagination and creativity are encouraged, and the children always rise to the challenge. On Halloween morning, parents are invited to walk their children to class to see the colorful cast of characters strolling around campus! When the bell rings, parents leave, and the children go to class to start their day. A short while later, a call beckons the cast of characters to join a procession which winds its way into Pine Hall, illuminated now by hundreds of jack-o-lanterns. Music, dance, and story then bring spirits to life. When Halloween falls on a school day, we have a half day.

### LANTERN WALK/MARTINMAS

Martinmas, celebrated in early November, is another ancient festival that we bring to the children in the fall. Like Michaelmas, it offers the children a picture of how we humans can bring light and warmth to one another even as the light from the sun grows progressively scarcer. The festival is traditionally celebrated in Waldorf schools around the time of St. Martin's Feast Day, November 11. Legend has it that Martin, a soldier in the Roman Army, tore his cloak in half to warm a shivering beggar at the gates of the French city of Amiens. Later, in a dream, the holiness of that poorest and most wretched of all beings was revealed to Martin, affirming that all human beings are "God's creatures" and equally worthy. In commemoration of this image, children in the younger grades make a lantern symbolic of the light each of us carries within. Then class teachers of the Kindergarten and grades 1-2 choose an evening and a place for the class to meet. The children process with their lit lanterns through the darkness to experience the radiance of light and to deliver

## **PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR**

baskets of goodies. Gatherings take place in Lithia Park, North Mountain Park, or through our own neighborhood. Traditionally, cider and special breads are shared around a fire at the end of the walk. It is a lovely and quiet ceremony.

### **WINTER FAIRE**

Usually held on a Saturday or two before Thanksgiving, Winter Faire is the biggest community event we host. It draws alumni and old friends as well as hundreds of people from all over the valley who have no affiliation with Waldorf education. People come because the Waldorf Winter Faire has a long tradition and reputation in the valley for its unique holiday spirit and high-quality crafts. Winter Faire features many children's activities, great food, a silent auction, and the crafts of dozens of local artisans as well as of Siskiyou School parents and students. Admission is free. Proceeds support the school's tuition assistance program.

### **THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE**

November marks the beginning of an active period of outreach by our school to our larger community. In early November, we begin a food drive for the Ashland Food Bank. Bins are set out front, and through the month, families are encouraged to make donations as they are able. The Tuesday before Thanksgiving, the donated cans and boxes form the centerpiece of an assembly in Pine Hall. Children see with their own eyes how their individual gestures add up to a BIG gift. A teacher tells the children a Thanksgiving story, and students and faculty join in traditional Thanksgiving songs. The assembly ends with the middle schoolers loading the food into vans and then going to the Ashland Food Bank to unload and stock shelves.

### **ADVENT & HANUKKAH**

Between Thanksgiving and Winter Break, faculty and children gather each Friday morning to celebrate the season by lighting the Advent wreath, the Menorah, and the universal light, singing seasonal songs, and hearing stories.

### **WINTER ASSEMBLY**

At the Winter Assembly, parents get a sense of the whole school as grades 1-8 present pieces from their class work as well as holiday songs. The evening ends with the whole community singing together. All children are expected to attend and to come dressed in their best for this celebration. Winter Assembly is held in December at a venue that accommodates our whole community.

## PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR

### **WINTER BREAK**

We have two major vacations in the school year: Winter Break and Spring Break. Both last two weeks. We ask parents to schedule trips within these dates so the children are back in time to resume classes in January. The first day back usually marks the beginning of a new block.

### **HISTORY & VISION NIGHT**

History & Vision Night, also known as the Annual Meeting, is hosted in Pine Hall in late January or early February by the board, faculty, and administration. The evening is designed to familiarize parents with the history of the school, let them know what the board has been working on, and present them with a picture of “the state of the school”. Parent understanding of how the school works and what it needs to maintain and grow programming is vital to the long-term well-being of the school. The evening includes a reception, a presentation by board and faculty, and a Q&A time.

### **END OF FIRST SEMESTER**

The halfway point of the year falls at the very end of January. Our second parent-teacher conferences are after the start of the second semester, in mid-February. With the start of the second semester, first graders move to the full-day schedule, ending school at 2:50 rather than at 2:10. Also, in grades 1-5, first semester Chinese classes switch to Spanish for the second semester.

### **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY**

Teachers and children gather in Pine Hall for an in-house assembly to celebrate MLK’s life and the significance of his work and message in our lives and these times.

### **VALENTINE'S DAY & SINGING VALENTINES**

Valentines’ Day is a favorite of the children. The day is marked by classroom celebrations with exchange of handmade cards shared among classmates and by an all-school circle in Pine Hall where students deliver an extra special handmade card to their Secret Valentine, a student from another grade whose name they drew a couple of weeks earlier. Valentine’s Day is a particularly big day for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. Following a tradition of many years, they set out in the morning in small groups, chaperoned by parent drivers, and deliver singing valentines throughout Ashland. For weeks beforehand, the halls of the school are filled with the sound of old favorite love songs! Forms are attached to the Tuesday Notice so parents can order a Singing Valentine surprise for their loved ones. 8<sup>th</sup> graders dress formally for the occasion and people receiving their surprise visit are touched to the core. The 8<sup>th</sup> graders are moved as well by experiencing firsthand how a song can be a gift.

## PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR

### **AUCTION**

Held in March, the Auction is a fun event for current parents, alumni parents, grandparents, friends of the school, and invited guests. The evening includes food, drinks, entertainment, and silent and live auctions. The goal of the evening is to have fun together and raise money for the school. Families and friends contribute items to be auctioned. A great time is had by the whole community!

### **PRESENTATION OF 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PROJECTS**

A highlight of March is the presentation of 8<sup>th</sup> grade projects. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Project is an independent study from October to March of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. It is an opportunity for students to go outside of the curriculum, to pursue something of personal interest, and to work in depth around a subject of their own choosing. It extends their own sense of what they are capable of achieving. Projects can include internships or apprenticeships; doing research about a field of interest (architecture, alternative medicine, law); building something, making films, learning a language; or acquiring a new skill such as piloting, cooking, blacksmithing. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Project includes regular meetings with an expert mentor, work on their own between their mentor meetings, and a presentation by the student to the school community in Pine Hall. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade project schedule is published well ahead of time so parents can attend. Once all 8<sup>th</sup> graders have presented their projects, an Open House evening is scheduled so that parents who weren't able to attend in the day can see the projects and talk to the students about their experience.

### **SPRING BREAK**

The Siskiyou School takes one major break during the January through June stretch. It is two weeks long and usually includes the last week in March and the first week of April. The Easter and/or Passover holiday may or may not fall in that time. Check the school calendar for exact dates.

### **MAY DAY**

Siskiyou School children celebrate the coming of spring by making May crowns and dancing around the Maypole. On May Day, the mood is set by all teachers and all children dressed in dazzling white and bouquets of flowers everywhere! Children spend the first part of the morning making flower crowns in between their lessons. Then after recess, grades 1-8 process out to the Maypole, where they take turns dancing accompanied by singing and instrumental music provided by the other students, teachers and parents. The morning ends with a huge round of the Virginia Reel in which all parents and visitors are invited to join. After the morning celebration, children go home with their parents or stay for a picnic at the park. Area Waldorf preschools and kindergartens often join our May Day celebration.

### **GRADUATION**

Graduation is a major rite of passage at the Siskiyou School. For 8th graders it marks not only the end of their time together as a class but their transition to young adulthood. Students shape the

## **PART IV. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN OUR SCHOOL YEAR**

graduation program with their class teacher to include songs, speeches and tributes. Every graduate shares a reflection of their time at the school, in keeping with our belief that to have good closure every student needs to say goodbye and thank you for themselves; it's not something someone can do or speak on their behalf. In recent years, graduation has been held on our campus, followed by a light buffet with food and drinks. Graduation day is a half day for the whole school.

### **THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL**

The last day of school is a half-day. It begins with an all-school goodbye assembly in Pine Hall with teachers and students. Each class offers a goodbye song, verse, or reflection to the 8<sup>th</sup> graders; 8<sup>th</sup> graders acknowledge specialty teachers. Departing teachers are also acknowledged. When the children return to their classrooms, they have their own class ceremony. The whole school then participates in a Field Day at Clay Street Park. At the end, the children go back to their classrooms for a closing with their class teachers before dismissal and...summer!

### **MOVING DAY**

On the afternoon of the last day, parents come to help class teachers get the classroom cleaned and all supplies and furniture moved to their new classroom for the following year.

## PART V. COMMUNICATION

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### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE OFFICE

#### **The Tuesday Notice**

The Tuesday Notice (TN) is a newsletter emailed to all school families each Tuesday. Parents are expected to read or at least scan it; the TN is a way of ensuring that everybody has the same information about school matters. It is the school's main vehicle for communication about upcoming events, school and classroom news, and topics affecting the school community as a whole. It includes updates and messages from class teachers, and several times a year from the specialty teachers as well. The last section of the TN provides a link to the classifieds section posted on our website. If you want to include something in the classifieds, email your text only, a few lines in length, to Kristin Beers ([kristin.beers@siskiyouschool.org](mailto:kristin.beers@siskiyouschool.org)) no later than Monday by 3:00pm. We may edit it for space purposes; classifieds are included for two weeks.

#### **Photo Release Authorization**

We use photos from class plays, classroom activities, and school events for our website, fliers, newsletters, or other school literature. If you do not want your child's photo used for school purposes, please email the office.

### COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEACHERS

#### **The Parent-Class Teacher Partnership**

The parents of a child and the class teacher form an important partnership and can be of great help to one another in their shared work of supporting the child. When they see eye-to-eye about what a child needs, the child feels it and progress can come quickly. Parent-teacher conferences are invaluable for sharing reflections and getting on the same page. The social and emotional development is often a big component of those conversations. In between the thrice-yearly parent-teacher conferences, please keep your child's teacher informed of important household developments, such as a change in living situation, a death in the family, or a shift in health or sleeping pattern. For their part, class teachers will be quick to notify you if they feel something is going on that requires more immediate attention.

#### **Parent-Teacher Communication Guidelines & FAQs**

Time is precious for every one of us. The guidelines below are intended to ensure parents have information about how their child is doing in a timely way, that information-sharing between parents and teachers happens efficiently, and most importantly, that genuine quiet space is created for the big conversations teachers and parents need to have together if and as issues arise.

#### **How will I know what's going on in my child's classroom?**

- Class teachers will email parents about class developments and updates as needed.
- Class teachers will post monthly class updates in the Tuesday Notice.
- Class teachers will email to share special news, such as to describe a field trip or a special class event.

## PART V. COMMUNICATION

- Parent Evenings throughout the year will offer longer opportunities for sharing about the class.

### **How will I know how my child is doing? That everything is all right?**

Class teachers and/or the office will be prompt to call or email in the following circumstances:

- if your child is hurt at school or feeling sick
- if your child is involved in a significant incident or conflict with another child during the day
- if the teacher thinks something merits a conference prior to the three official Parent-Teacher Conferences (October, February, & May)

In sum, assume that no news is good news; that said, teachers do not see or catch everything that goes on with and between all their students. They count on parents to share with them concerns their child brings home as feels relevant, so they can promptly address those as well.

### **How to communicate questions and concerns or share information with class teachers**

If you have a concern, leave a voicemail. If you have brief information to share, send an email.

#### **When to leave a voicemail**

Leave a voicemail for your teacher *if you have a concern that merits a longer conversation*. State your concern in a sentence or two, knowing you will have opportunity to talk in depth when your teacher calls or emails you back. Examples of messages:

- *Juan is complaining he is being bullied. I'd love to talk.*
- *Bryar is feeling he doesn't have enough time to eat his lunch. Can we check in?*
- *Jasmine came home upset about something that happened at recess. Please call.*

#### **When to email**

Email to share information or news that requires virtually no response such as "Sam sprained his ankle last night." "Jenny is missing her dad who is traveling overseas." Trust that the class teacher will know how to respond to your child in a supportive way as needed.

Email to ask a logistical question that can be answered in a few words. "Can Janie bring her new puppy for Show & Tell?" "Are jeans okay for Joey's costume?"

#### **When parents can expect a response to a voicemail or email from their class teacher**

- Your class teacher will return your call or email within 24 business hours, Monday - Friday between 8:00 and 4:00. (If you leave a voicemail on Friday, you can expect a response on Monday.)
- According to the question or concern, your class teacher may call you back either to talk it through or to suggest a meeting in person.
- If the teacher feels an in-person meeting is best, they will email times they are available.
- Your class teacher will not call in the evenings or on weekends.

#### **Boundaries to Respect When Communicating Concerns**

- Always contact the teacher through their school extension or via email; never text or call the teacher's cellphone unless you have received specific permission to do so.

## PART V. COMMUNICATION

- Refrain from trying to get the teacher’s attention around concerns in the presence of your child or other children, or at arrival or dismissal times or between classes.
- Refrain from detailing your concern in a lengthy email, tempting as that might be. Your class teachers does not have time to answer in kind and may not even read it through. Class teachers are deluged with information they need to keep up with and cannot both fulfill their obligations to prep for their classes and devote hours to reading and responding to lengthy emails. In short, we respectfully ask parents to follow the communication protocol above; it will ensure best results and ultimately cause the least stress for all parties.

### **How do parents communicate with specialty teachers?**

*(Handwork, Woodworking, Games, Music, & Foreign Language)*

If parents have a concern regarding one of their child’s specialty classes, contact the class teacher. The class teacher will follow up as needed.

If parents have a practical, logistical question for a specialty teacher or relevant information to share, send the specialty teacher a brief email.

### **How do parents communicate with subject teachers?**

*(Math, Language Arts Skills, Literature)*

Communicate directly with the subject teacher by sending a brief email or leaving a brief voicemail as per guidelines above. Use the teacher’s school extension or school email. The subject teacher will get back to you within 24 hours.

### **How do parents communicate in an emergency situation?**

On school days, call the office. The office will communicate with the teachers and staff. On weekends, contact the administrator. The administrator will then communicate with teachers and staff.

## **COMMUNICATION AMONG PARENTS OF A CLASS**

### **The Class Social Email List: What to use it for and what not to use it for**

Parents of each class have access to a class email list to use among themselves. The Siskiyou School created these emailing lists as a way for parents within a class to organize social events and class projects. It is intended for inviting folks to an open playdate or organizing a class party. Some classes also use them to share information about summer camps or other fun events. Anyone on the social mailing list can send messages to everyone on the list. The social lists are also “opt-out” if you would rather not participate in them. Parents can email the office, and we will remove your email from the class social list.

These lists are lightly moderated and as such we do ask that you not use them for personal business, political messages, to share concerns or generate discussion about concerns related to school matters or solicit information from other parents about a class or school issue or an incident that happened in which their child was involved. The administrator, class teacher, or office are the places to direct questions, get facts clarified, and submit concerns as outlined in the Protocol for Concerns. Respecting these boundaries of communication is the surest way parents can contribute to the social health of their class community.



## PART V. COMMUNICATION

### **The “Joining Forces” versus the “Speak for Yourself” Approach to Bringing Concerns**

Occasionally, parents try to join forces outside of school to bring a concern together to the attention of the administrator. Historically, these attempts have been disruptive and counterproductive, and we ask that you refrain from being drawn in should this kind of occasion present itself to you during your time at the school. Inevitably within any class or within the parent community there are many points of view about any given issue. While some parents may hold a similar view, not all do. A group that represents a point of view inevitably leaves out and possibly alienates those who do not want to proceed in that way. What was once one is now fractured. By following the proper school protocols, the objective sought can be achieved without any negative side effects.

To this end, as per the Protocol of Concerns, we ask that parents speak for their own child based on their own child’s experience and/or speak for themselves based on their own experience when they have a concern. If the administrator receives concerns of a similar nature from several parents in a class or from parents across several grades, the administrator takes action accordingly – hosting a group meeting, bringing in a facilitator, etc. The administrator’s role is to make sure concerns are addressed in a way that is responsive to parent concerns but also supportive of the teachers and school so that the experience of the children remains consistent and positive.

Should parents log complaints with the administrator but feel they haven’t gotten a response, they may take the concern to the board president as is also outlined in the Protocol. The board president will not respond to a concern prior to the parent following the first steps outlined in the protocol. The school is now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year. Experience has shown us that following the Protocol of Concerns and respecting the “Speak for Yourself” approach to bringing concerns is the most effective and healthy way to move the needle for all involved.

## PART VI. EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

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Meeting the range of needs and abilities of students within a class is the challenge of every teacher. When students who need extra support can be helped by trained teachers outside the main classroom, the whole class benefits. Through the grades we try to accommodate the range of needs, with support tailored in various forms as described below. Please note, we do offer educational support for kindergarten students.

### GRADES 1-4

In first grade the class teacher and class assistant support children as needed with their book work and with their social and academic challenges, giving the children time to “learn the ropes.” Formal assessments are conducted in September of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to determine which students need ongoing support in what areas. The school offers a range of accommodations and plans including:

- Classroom Accommodations Plans (CAPs) are written up for students who can keep pace in mainstream classes but who still need minor accommodations, such as special seating, movement breaks, organizational support, etc.
- Personalized Education Plans (PEPs and PEP plus plans) are written up for students needing remedial support in language arts or math.
- Group Math classes for students needing remedial support in math join Small which meet 2x/week at same time as the rest of their class is doing math.

Formal assessments are administered in spring of 4<sup>th</sup> grade to determine reading/math level and plan for transitioning students into mainstream academic classes in 5<sup>th</sup>.

### The Ohana Program

Developed by founding teacher, Nina Gallwey, the Ohana program is intended to provide support for students needing further remedial education in reading and writing. Ohana classes meet 4 times per week and replace 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade-level foreign language and reading groups. Our Educational Support Teacher (Ohana Teacher) uses specific sensory integration techniques along with traditional directed teaching methods to strengthen remedial skills. All students in Ohana, are given a Personalized Education Plan (PEP).

### GRADES 5-8

As of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we integrate all Ohana students and Small Group Math students into their grade-level language arts, literature, and math mainstream classes. We provide them with accommodations as needed to ensure success. Examples of accommodations include the following:

- Use of audible books to complete reading assignments
- Use Google spell check to look up words
- No grading of spelling on tests
- Permission to type assignments instead of writing by hand

## PART VI. EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

- Use of voice to text dictation to generate assigned compositions
- Modified homework load
- Modified class assignments
- Modified vocabulary workbook assignments
- Use of calculators for all math work
- Study hall in lieu of foreign language class, as deemed necessary

Additionally, we seek to integrate students into our foreign language program. Ohana students continue to receive Ohana support two times per week through November of 5<sup>th</sup> grade. By the beginning of February, the former Ohana students will either join their classmates in foreign language class or have a study hall.

### **The PEP Plus Program**

Ohana Program is in place to support children with diverse learning profiles in grades 2-5. If a child needs support in the middle school years (grades 6-8), the teacher will recommend tutoring and make specialized accommodations for the child in the classroom to support the child's needs. All students in Ohana, or with tutors, are given a PEP that notes the accommodations being made and records the services the child is receiving.

If a child is significantly behind their peers in any academic subject in grades 2-5, and it is deemed that the Ohana program is not able to meet the needs of the child, a PEP Plus Plan will be put in place to ensure that the student has the support they need to make continued progress with their academic subjects. The same applies for middle school students that are significantly behind in an academic subject. The PEP Plus Plan requires that the parents pay for individualized tutoring. Siskiyou School endorses tutors that can meet with the child at school, during school hours. These tutors have a history of helping PEP Plus children make the progress needed to help them function at their highest level possible. These tutors work closely with the class teacher and report in at the PEP Plus update meetings.

The PEP Plus Plan is carefully crafted with input from the Educational Support Teacher to make sure the student's tutoring schedule happens during the optimal periods, so the child does not miss out on enrichment specialty classes when possible. It also ensures that the student is being supported by a tutor during periods that would be too academically stressful. In addition, the accommodations needed to support a PEP Plus student are put in place so all teachers are aware of how to best ensure success for the PEP Plus student. We always have the best interest of the child at the forefront of this planning.

When a child is on a PEP Plus Plan, an update meeting is held with the parents 3 times a year (autumn, winter, spring) with the class teacher and tutor giving progress reports. Our Educational Support Teacher (Ohana Teacher) also attends the meeting to make sure all is recorded, and goals are being met and set. The administrator may attend some of the meetings as well.

Siskiyou School has a core value of helping each child unfold their unique gifts while gaining academic skills necessary to be successful in high school and beyond. If the parents are not able to support the individualized tutoring needed to help the child make progress, the school reserves the right to release the child. It is our responsibility as educators to ensure each child's academic well-being. In some cases, the public system may be able to provide the support that we cannot.

## PART VI. EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

### **Conditions for Small Group Support for Language Arts/Math to be Extended Past 4th Grade**

If, at the start of 5th grade, 1-4 students within a class are not ready to integrate into grade-level academic classes, the following will occur:

- A small tutoring group is formed.
- The school provides classroom space.
- The teacher is paid by the families.
- The goal is integration back into mainstream class if/as they become ready.

If, at the start of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 5 or more students from a class are not ready to integrate into grade-level academic classes, the following will occur:

- A transition support group is formed.
- The school provides classroom space.
- The teacher is paid by the school.
- The curriculum includes “transition skills” such as use of audible books, typing, etc.
- The goal is integration into mainstream class by Spring Break of 5th grade.

### **Expectation of Parents Whose Children Receive Small Group Support**

- Showing up as an active partner with the school in support of their child.
- Attending all meetings related to the child’s educational support needs.
- Attending presentations offered by the school that can deepen their understanding of the challenges their child faces.
- Following up on all recommendations made by the school, including but not limited to:
  - Providing their child with daily homework support.
  - Providing their child with support for all summer work.
  - Paying for supplemental tutoring if recommended.
  - Getting outside professional assessments if recommended.
  - Getting the child any support therapies prescribed such as vision therapy, sensory integration support, medical support, and/or counseling.

### **Conditions under which Ohana or Small Group Support is Withdrawn**

A music student will not become proficient only by attending a weekly lesson; it’s the support of parents with daily practice at home that makes the difference. Likewise, small group support in the core skills provided by the school from 2<sup>nd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> will not, alone, allow the child to reach the desired benchmarks in math and language arts. Consistent home follow-up is indispensable for the student to make real progress. If parents are unable to do their part – i.e. provide the level of active partnering the school has indicated is needed – the child’s place in the small group will be given to another student, and the school will recommend that the child receive private tutoring in place of the small group support. The school will not carry responsibility for something it knows it can’t achieve without parent support. Before the change is made, teachers will meet with parents, clarify expectations, and define a timeframe to see if an effective partnership can be reinstated.

## **PART VII. HEALTH & SAFETY**

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In the case of a health or safety emergency at school for a child, the school wants to be able to reach the parents ASAP. We ask parents to be tuned in to the possibility of calls from the school at any moment during the school day by checking their phones at regular intervals and having all relevant school numbers in their phones to recognize a school call when it comes in.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION & AUTHORIZATION FORMS**

It is vital that the school have up-to date medical and contact information for each child at all times. To this end, parents are required to fill out an Emergency Form and a Field Trip Permission Form for their child each year before the first day of school. Parents are responsible for notifying the office immediately any time that information changes.

### **IMMUNIZATION**

The school is required by law to have updated immunization records for each child. Parents are asked to fill out immunization forms for their child upon admission. Children without vaccinations may be asked to stay home from school in the event of an outbreak of certain illnesses, as per standard health laws for schools. The Siskiyou School wishes to inform all current and prospective parents that our school population includes a significant number of partially immunized and non-immunized students.

### **WELLNESS POLICY**

Out of consideration not only your child's well-being but for that of all their classmates, please do not send your child to school if they are not feeling well, even if it appears to be a mild illness. The School will follow all communicable disease protocols outlined by Jackson County Health and children need to stay home with any cold, gastrointestinal, and other flu symptoms. Students can only return to school 24 hours after a fever has subsided.

Any child with diarrhea and/or vomiting must stay at home for 48 hours after symptoms subside in accordance with the State of Oregon's communicable disease policy.

### **CHILDREN NOT FEELING WELL AT SCHOOL**

If a child complains in class of not feeling well, they are brought to the office. The office staff assesses the need. Sometimes, the child just needs a moment and then feels well enough to go back to class. If it is clear the child needs to go home, the parents are called and the child is made comfortable until the parent arrives. We ask that parents make every effort to get to school promptly when called as the school does not have an official nurse's station.

## PART VII. HEALTH & SAFETY

### MINOR ACCIDENTS & FIRST AID

Children who receive scrapes and bruises on the playground are treated by staff with traditional first aid supplies, including homeopathic Arnica and Rescue Remedy as deemed helpful in the moment. Parents are not usually called in the cases of scrapes and bruises. Please let the office know if you prefer your child not be given Arnica and/or Rescue Remedy, or if you have special requests with regard to first-aid products.

If a child comes to the office to request an over-the-counter pain medicine or allergy relief during the school day such as ibuprofen (Advil), acetaminophen (Tylenol), or Zyrtec, the office staff will attempt to reach a parent to authorize the dispensation of the requested medication. If a parent cannot be reached, staff will refrain from giving medication unless they deem the request reasonable.

### MAJOR INJURIES & SCHOOL RESPONSE

If your child receives a serious injury at school, you will be called ASAP. In the event you cannot be reached, the emergency contacts on the Emergency Form will be called. As needed, the school will call an ambulance and take your child to the ER.

### MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If your child has asthma, allergies, or other medical conditions that may require medical attention at school or the administration of medication, be sure the information is included on your child's Emergency Form and that you speak in person to your child's class teacher and/or the office about your child's medical needs.

### NUT & BEE ALLERGY PRECAUTIONS

If your child is allergic to peanuts or bees, please make sure that the specific allergy is stated on your child's Emergency Form. Additionally, please take the extra step of speaking in person with the office and your child's class teacher. ***Parents are responsible for keeping a current epi-pen, labeled for their child, in the school's first-aid cabinet.*** Faculty and staff receive regular training to refresh their awareness regarding precautions, symptoms of exposure, and necessary response steps. With the consent of the parents, other parents and children in the class are informed that one of their classmates has a severe allergy and are given information about how to help in the event the child in question has a reaction while at school.

### MEDICATIONS

Students are not permitted to carry or take any medication at school on their own; a teacher or staff member must be on hand. If your child must take a certain medicine during the school day, please hand deliver that medication to the office and brief office staff on how it is to be administered. If the medication is a prescription, the prescription and physician information must be included with

## PART VII. HEALTH & SAFETY

the medicine. Please note any allergies to medications on your child's Emergency Form, as well as medication to be administered in an emergency.

### HEARING & VISION SCREENINGS

The Siskiyou School does not administer vision, hearing, or any other medical screening or testing. Parents are asked to make their own arrangements with family health-care providers. Hearing and vision screenings are sometimes recommended for incoming first graders based on first grade readiness assessments; at times, screenings will be requested by a class teacher or an educational support teacher.

### LICE & COMMUNICABLE MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Dealing with lice is a major headache if not caught early. The school itself does not conduct routine screenings of children for lice. We rely on parent monitoring at home and prompt communication to avoid a class-wide or school-wide lice infestation. It is wise for hair to be worn short or pulled back throughout the school year. If you find that your child has lice, please notify the school immediately and keep your child at home until you have applied for the appropriate treatments. Students will be re-admitted to school only after nits are removed and the family and home environment have been treated.

If a case of lice is confirmed at school, the child's parents will be notified. The child will not be sent home, but all siblings of confirmed cases will be discreetly checked. Parents of a given class will be notified by the office if there is a confirmed case of lice in that class.

The Siskiyou School will not discriminate against any student based on the individual having a communicable disease. Students shall not be denied access to the school solely on the grounds that they have a communicable disease. However, the School reserves the right to exclude a student with a communicable disease from the school based on a medical determination. Such restriction is necessary for the welfare of the child who has the communicable disease and/or the welfare of others within the school. If your student contracts a contagious or communicable condition, such as pin-eye, foot and mouth disease, ringworm, or pinworms, please seek medical treatment and have a doctor clear them before returning to school.

The School will comply with all applicable statutes and regulations that protect the privacy of students who have a communicable disease. Every effort will be made to ensure procedurally sufficient safeguards to maintain personal confidence about children who have communicable diseases.

### SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH CARE

We encourage parents to seek the support of professionals when their child is showing a need for help with an emotional issue that is beyond what the family/teachers can carry. It is vital that parents provide full disclosure to the school of any ongoing therapy their child is receiving so that

## PART VII. HEALTH & SAFETY

teachers can best support the student's life at school. Teachers will ask that a child be kept home and/or not attend field trips if they feel the child's emotional health is too fragile for the activities offered. If a child has a serious emotional health issue before applying to the school, the school requires full disclosure and access to the applicant's therapist to help determine that our program is a good fit. Failure to disclose a pre-diagnosed issue during the enrollment process can result in dismissal from the school.

Our mental health consultant is Nadejda Razi-Robertson. If teachers see a child needs more mental health support, they will request a conversation with parents and possibly recommend a meeting with Nadejda for a professional opinion and guidance for the health of the child.

### HEALTH/WELLNESS PROGRAM

The Siskiyou School has a 1-8 developmental health and wellness curriculum to ensure that all Siskiyou School students have the tools to have conversations around their feelings and have accurate information about topics critical to their personal safety and social/emotional development. Topics covered in the curriculum include personal safety and boundaries, good communication, healthy relationships, healthy choices, diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness, social media literacy and consent. Topics are introduced in developmentally appropriate language and sequencing, with more depth and discussion added as students enter middle school. Classes 3-8 have between 4-8 classes per year that fall under the Wellness Program umbrella. Wellness classes include trust circles as well as information presentations or discussions. We have further developed our Wellness Program by contracting with a guidance counselor to be on campus once a week to provide support as needed to parents, students, and teachers; she is also available at other times as needed.

### MANDATORY REPORTING

All citizens have a responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves. School employees, by law, are mandatory reporters and must report suspected abuse or neglect of a child regardless of whether or not knowledge of the abuse was gained in the reporter's official responsibility. For more information, you can visit the Oregon Department of Human Services at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/ABUSE/Pages/mandatory\\_report.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ABUSE/Pages/mandatory_report.aspx). Other resources the JCMH Crisis Number (541-774-8201) and Community Works Helpline (541-779-4357).

### FIRE DRILLS & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In accordance with Jackson County regulations and our school Emergency Preparedness Plan, we perform all-school evacuation drills, lockdown drills, earthquake drills and fire drills to ensure best possible readiness in case of an emergency. In cases of a school-wide emergency or if school needs to be closed early due to extreme weather conditions, parents will be notified via email or phone calls from the office or the teachers.



## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

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### CLASS TEACHER CONTINUITY & OUR TWO-TEACHER MODEL

Waldorf schools across the globe share certain features. One is that a class has the same class teacher for a period of years. Continuity allows class teachers to get to know their children deeply. This “seeing” serves class teachers well in supporting their students develop their individual gifts and work through their challenges. Teacher continuity also provides predictability and a sense of security for the children, freeing them to develop at their own pace and enjoy childhood.

In some schools, class teachers stay with a class for eight years. At the Siskiyou School, we have a two-teacher model that ensures that a class of students will have at least two teachers over the course of their eight-year journey, with the change coming ideally either after 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In our experience, children benefit from being seen by new eyes at one point in their eight-year journey, and the ideal moment for that is before they enter middle school.

### THE PROTOCOL FOR CONCERNS

*If issues arise with parents or with the administrator, the Protocol of Concerns outlines appropriate steps:*

Bringing mutual needs and concerns to light and having open conversations about them with one another is vital to the health and strength of our school community. The faculty, board, and administration are committed to doing their part to foster better understanding and good communication. The Protocol for Concerns tells parents and teachers what to do when they have a concern. It is one of the school’s foundational documents.

The Protocol provides a roadmap for three possible scenarios: 1) parents with concerns related to a teacher, 2) parents with concerns related to the administrator, and 3) teachers with concerns about parents. Each scenario offers several steps to the concerned party. We encourage anyone with a concern to trust the process and engage in it.

#### **Procedure for a Parent with a Concern Related to a Teacher**

##### **Step One: Go to the teacher.**

Tell the teacher directly what is not working for you and what you need from them. Communicating directly may be difficult, but it is a necessary first step. Ideally, parent(s) and teacher come to a mutual understanding in this first meeting and an agreement about how to go forward.

##### **Step Two: Go to the administrator.**

If you are not satisfied with your meeting(s) with the teacher, share your concern with the administrator. Sometimes parents find that just talking to the administrator and getting more information about the school and curriculum is enough to feel they can move on. If not, another conversation is scheduled, this time to include administrator, teacher, and parent(s).

##### **Step Three: Go to the teacher again, with support.**

If additional conversations are scheduled to include the teacher, parent, and administrator, a professional facilitator may be brought in. A formal prep meeting may be held prior to the facilitated

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

meeting to clarify meeting goals and intentions. Following the meeting, as needed, and agreed upon, the administrator will write up a summary noting decisions made. The report will be distributed to all involved parties.

### **Step Four: Go to the board president.**

If you have engaged in the process outlined above and are not satisfied with the outcome, you may request a review of the matter by the board president. The board president will hear your concern and engage in additional fact-finding and consultation. Another attempt to reconcile differences with formal mediation may be suggested. In this case, teacher and parent(s) must agree to the mediation, and the cost will be shared by both parties. In other cases, the issue may not be resolvable. If the parent and teacher relationship is still intact, parent(s) and teacher may just agree to disagree and decide to move forward as best they can. If this is the case, guidelines are agreed upon for further interaction so that the issue does not continually resurface. In cases where an agreement cannot be reached, a family will need to decide if the school and teacher are able to meet their needs or if they would be better served at a different school.

### **Procedure for a Parent with a Concern Related to the Administrator**

#### **Step One: Go to the administrator.**

Bring your concern directly to the administrator. Tell the administrator directly what your concern is and what you need from them. Communicating directly may be difficult, but it is a necessary first step. The matter may be resolved at this initial meeting. If not, you and the administrator may decide to hold a second meeting, this time with a facilitator.

#### **Step Two: Go to the board president.**

If you are not satisfied with your meeting(s) with the administrator, please share your concern with the board president. The administrator answers to the board, and the board president is the official contact person on the board for concerns from parents about the administrator. The board president will communicate with and involve other board members as necessary. The board president will hear your concerns and engage in additional fact-finding and consultation. The board president or another representative of the board will facilitate a meeting between the administrator and parent(s). In some cases formal mediation may be suggested. In that case, the administrator and parent(s) must agree to the mediation and the cost will be shared by both parties. Our hope is that a mutually agreeable solution can be reached through this process. However, if a resolution cannot be found, then all parties must consider how to move forward based on what the best interest of the child, the family, and the school.

### **Procedure for a Teacher with a Concern Related to a Parent**

#### **Step One: Go to the parent.**

Tell the parent(s) directly what is not working for you and what you need from them. Clearly state what you need from the parent(s) for more effective communication and a better partnership. Ideally, the teacher and parent(s) come to mutual understanding in this initial meeting.

#### **Step Two: Go to the administrator.**

If the teacher experiences no change in the relationship with the parent or the concerning behavior of the parent, they should discuss this with the administrator. The administrator may also ask the mentor to be part of the conversation/solution. They will meet with the teacher and parent(s) together to try to resolve the problem. If needed, the board president may also be brought in to find

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

solutions. In some cases, formal mediation may be considered. In this case, both parties must agree to the mediation and the cost will be shared between the school and the parent(s). In rare cases, an agreement may not be able to be reached, and a family may be asked to leave the school. This decision will be made by the administrator after consultation with the faculty and board. The family will be notified formally by letter, but all attempts will be made to give the parent(s) this information in person first.

### MEDIA POLICY

#### School Philosophy

As a Waldorf elementary school, protecting the kingdom of childhood is core to our mission. We seek to create an environment where imagination, relationships, learning, and play can flourish. In our view, less exposure to media is better for the growing child, and little-to-no media supports the education we are providing. We recommend no media exposure through fifth grade, and strictly monitored access once it *is* introduced, ideally not before middle school.

Our opinions and suggestions regarding media grow out of our view of child development, our collective experience with children, and our mission as a Waldorf elementary school. We find that the less screen time children have, the more receptive they are to the stories brought by their teachers. We also see that, with little-to-no screen time, it is easier for children to enter the imaginative play we consider essential to their development. We see more authentic personal connections. We see a stronger social fabric within classes. We have also observed a correlation between increased levels of attention span, centeredness, and grounded behavior among children who have little to no media exposure. Lastly, research about brain development in children supports this view. (Please contact your child's class teacher for further reading.)

Media is an unfolding reality of our time. As parents and teachers we are being asked to participate in an ongoing conversation about the pros and cons of this new “media-rich” world. Indeed, being open to and engaging in this conversation seems required of us to navigate this uncharted territory. Thus, another central component of our school philosophy around media is the importance of talking together about it.

We recognize that one of the reasons families join Waldorf schools is to find an environment where their values about the media issue can be supported by the school and community. To this end, we communicate our recommendations and provide information through class conversations and parent forums so that parents can be educated and informed.

*\*Recommended viewing: Marin Waldorf School Website: Media & Waldorf Education*

#### School-Wide Recommendation for Play Dates and Sleepovers

- No media/electronics during play dates and/or sleepovers through fifth grade.
- In middle school years, we recommend open communication and agreements about screen time and content among parents prior to play dates. We encourage openness on the part of all parents to honor no screen time if requested by another parent. Good communication around this issue is vital for the social health of the class.

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### **Practices Recommended for Implementation at Home for Children in Grades 1-5**

- Upholding a no-screen-time policy at home during the school week.
- Supervising screen time and monitoring media content if it does happen.
- Installing security software on home computers.
- No social media.
- Encouraging books on tape rather than movies.
- Making movie-watching a family time versus an alone time for the child.
- Modeling independence from screen time and cell use when you're with your child.

### **Practices Recommended for Implementation at Home for Children in Grades 6-8**

- Upholding very limited screen time, if any, during the school week.
- Monitoring amount of time spent on media and devices.
- Monitoring content of all media.
- Installing security software on home computers.
- No social media is ideal. In the cases of exposure to social media, we recommend that it is both limited and very carefully monitored.
- Carefully hand-picking movies and watching them with your child while encouraging conversation after viewing, so your child can better “digest” what was taken in.
- Providing instruction for how to use media as a research tool for educational purposes.

### **Policies Enforced on Campus**

- No cell phones, iPods, smart watches, or electronics are to be used on campus by students at any time.
- No conversations about media or films in the classroom to avoid creating feelings of exclusion.

### **Media Misuse**

In cases of media misuse by Siskiyou School students such as cyberbullying, unwanted sexting, etc. in which Siskiyou School students are impacted, the school reserves the right to take disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

### **Communication among Parents Regarding Media**

Open communication and mutual respect among parents will foster a strong social fabric in the class and a healthy sense of community. We encourage open communication among parents of a class about their choices and values related to media. We encourage conversation, a “Do ask! Do tell!” approach. We encourage parents, led by the class teacher, to make agreements as a class and with one another regarding media. As Waldorf educators our wish is that when children get together outside of school, they just play, entirely media free. If, however, as host of a playdate, you plan to have the children watch a movie, check in with the other parent. Children are so different; what might feel fine to one child may be terrifying to another. Families are equally as diverse; what might feel fine to one family may be unacceptable to another. We want to spare children from feeling caught in our adult struggles about this. We must be willing to have the hard conversations with one another, so that the children can just be children. Key to this is acknowledging our own fears and concerns and talking together.

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### CELL PHONE/SMART WATCH POLICY

Students are not allowed to use cell phones/smart watches during school. If children need to call/text their parents during the day, they must go to the office to use the office phone. If cell phones/smart watches are seen or heard during the school day, they will be collected. If it's the first offense in a semester, the phone/smart watch will be returned at the end of the day. If it's the second offense in a semester, the student's parent will be called, and the phone/smart watch will be kept until the following day. If it's the third offense, the student will not be allowed to bring a cell phone/smart watch to school for the remainder of the semester, and their parent will be called.

- When children walk onto campus, cell phones/smart watches must be off (not in airplane mode) and in a bag/pack. If a cell phone/smart watch is visible in a pocket, it will be taken.
- No earbuds, music, texting, or videos are allowed
- If a student needs to contact their parent after school, they may use their cell phone/smart watch in the office as of 3:20.
- Cell phone/smart watch use in the dismissal area is not allowed.
- If a cell phone/smart watch is seen in the dismissal area, it may be confiscated until the following day.
- Teachers have the freedom to allow students to use their phones for specified and supervised academic tasks in the year.
- If parents deem it necessary, students in grades 6-8 may bring cell phones to school.
- If a child in grades 4 or 5 needs to bring a cell phone/smart watch to school, parents must create a special arrangement with the class teacher and the office.
- We expect that children in grades 1-4 will not carry cell phones/smart watches to school.

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## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

- We expect that children in grades 1-4 will not carry cell phones to school.

These same rules apply at all school-related functions, events, and festivals (Michaelmas, Winter Faire, school dances, etc.) including during set-up times.

### DRESS CODE POLICY

Parent help with enforcing our school dress code is most welcome. Please familiarize yourself with the list of clothes we consider inappropriate for school and ask your child to change them before they leave for school if you think their outfit may be in violation. In keeping with our Waldorf philosophy, we discourage clothing that draws attention to the point that what we see is the clothing, not the child; we want to see the child. Below is a list of clothing, attire, and accessorizing considered inappropriate for school:

- Underwear showing
- Sagging pants below hips
- Very short shorts or skirts
- Shirts or blouses draping off the shoulders
- Inappropriate large logos, graphics, or writing on shirts
- Graffiti-type writing on pants
- Distractingly ripped jeans or pants
- Slippers or pajamas
- Bare midriffs
- Bare feet or flip-flops
- Excessive make-up, tattooing, piercing, and use of hair dyes (without express permission)
- Clothing that restricts full participation in Games class and movement

Additionally, students are to remove caps/hoods/hats as they enter classrooms or Pine Hall.

#### What we encourage

Siskiyou School children engage in a variety of activities and vigorous play every day, so their clothing and footwear should allow them *comfort* and *freedom of movement*. We are also big believers in the importance of *warmth* for the growing child. We thus ask parents to make sure their children come to school with appropriate outerwear when the weather gets chilly. Additionally, it's important that the children wear "solid" shoes. They do a lot of running and jumping on the chips and the blacktop, and we want them to have the best possible footing. Sneakers—or equivalent athletic-support shoe, as approved by the Games teacher—are *required* for Games classes and strongly recommended as footwear for all day/everyday use. Bare feet are not allowed indoors or outdoors.

#### Consequences

It is the Siskiyou School teacher's call whether an item of clothing meets the dress code or not; it will not be up for negotiation or discussion. Within the above-defined spectrum of acceptability, teachers of 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders may allow their students more latitude than teachers of younger students.

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### HAIR-DYEING POLICY

Since we are in a professional school environment, we prefer children to not have any distracting brightly-colored hair. Before any hair-dyeing takes place, students need to check with their teacher and parents as described below. The teacher reserves the right to ask a child to change their hair color if it falls outside our guidelines.

#### Hair-Dyeing Protocol

Middle school students, grades 6-8, are allowed to dye their hair if they get permission from both their parent and class teacher. First, students need to get their parent(s) to agree to their hair dyeing idea and to have their parent(s) sign a permission form that includes a description of their plan. (Please ask the office for the form when needed.) Second, students need to get their class teacher to agree to the plan they discussed with their parent. They are to bring their signed parent permission form to the class teacher, explain their idea, and solicit their permission as well.

The class teacher may or may not approve the original plan and may offer other suggestions during this conversation. As needed, the teacher will be in communication with the parent(s) until parents, teacher, and student are on the same page. When agreement about the plan is reached between teacher and student and/or teacher and parent as needed, the teacher will sign the teacher approval form.

Once a student has approval from parent and teacher and both forms signed, they may move ahead with the hair-dyeing plan.

Siskiyou School students understand that if they arrive at school with their hair dyed, without having gotten prior signed approval from both parent AND class teacher (no matter how low-key the dyeing is), the following consequences will be immediately activated:

1. Students will be sent home before the start of classes.
2. Students will not be allowed back once they have dyed their hair back to their normal color.
3. Students will lose the privilege of dyeing their hair again for the remainder of the year.

Students who want to dye their hair over the summer and start the school year with dyed hair need to get permission from their parent/s and the Administrator either via phone call or by email.

### TARDY POLICY

The morning bell rings at 8:25, and class teachers begin their morning activities with their students promptly at that time. We place great importance on timeliness and very much appreciate parents doing everything they can to get their children to school 5-10 minutes before the bell rings so that the children have time to land. Late arrivals are a distraction and affect the rhythm of the morning for the teacher and class. Arriving late does not feel good for the child either. Please note, Kindergarteners are excluded from the tardy policy.

Any child arriving after 8:25 must stop in the office to get a late slip. The office designates a late arrival as either an *excused tardy* or an *unexcused tardy*. The tardy slip the child receives is marked either

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

excused or unexcused. *Excused tardies* include dentist or doctor appointments, family emergencies, or a car breakdown on the way to school. Please send in a note to your child's teacher or call the office to explain excused absences. *Unexcused tardies* cover a range of possibilities from "I overslept" to "I couldn't find my homework," etc. The child hands the tardy slip to the class teacher when they enter the classroom.

### Protocol for Children in Grades 1-5:

- If a child has **five** tardy slips within one semester, parents will be notified by email from the office.
- **Seven** tardy slips in one semester, parents will be notified by a second email from the office.
- **Eight** tardy slips in one semester, parents will be contacted by phone by the office to check on reasons for tardiness and potential remedies.
- **Nine** tardy slips in one semester, parents will be contacted by phone by the teacher or administrator.

### Protocol for Children in Grades 6-8:

- If a child receives five unexcused tardy slips within one semester, parents receive an email reminding them of our school tardy policy.
- **At the sixth unexcused tardy, parents are notified that the next tardy will result in detention.**
- With the seventh unexcused tardy, parents are notified that their child will be having a detention and is bringing home a detention acknowledgment form for them to sign. The form requiring a parent signature acknowledges the student will stay after school to perform 45 minutes of community service, administered by the office.

## GUM POLICY

No gum chewing is allowed at school.

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: The student receives a warning.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Parents are notified; the student spends the next recess on a cleaning project and is warned that a \$25.00 fine will be levied if the gum rule is broken a third time.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Parents are notified, a \$25.00 fine is imposed, and the student is assigned a reflection piece through which they must demonstrate that they have taken note of the rule.

## VANDALISM & GRAFFITI POLICY

At the beginning of each year, students are reminded, in age-appropriate ways, about the preciousness of school property and our expectation that they will not in any way deface or degrade it by writing on it, carving into it, or otherwise "trashing it." They are told that any graffiti writing or act of vandalism will be treated very seriously and that there will be no first reminder or warning. With the first offense, parents will be called, the student will spend a recess or more cleaning, and a fine will possibly imposed. Repeated offenses may result in suspension.



## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### TRUANCY POLICY

Siskiyou School students caught skipping school face serious consequences. The student is automatically suspended for 1-2 days and is not allowed to rejoin their class until the following requirements have been met:

- The student, with their parent(s), attends a meeting with the administrator and the class teacher
- The student writes a reflection piece, as per guidelines.
- The student writes apologies to those impacted.
- The student commits, with support of parents, to performing three hours of community service at the school, as decided upon by the faculty and administration.
- The incident is noted in the student's record.

If the student skips school a second time, they may be asked to leave the school.

### ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO PRODUCTS

The Siskiyou School campus is a tobacco and drug-free campus. Any student found using, distributing, or possessing drugs, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, tobacco and tobacco products, or electronic smoking devices on school premises or at a school-sponsored function, regardless of location, will face immediate disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion, and the Ashland Police Department may be called. Additionally, any off-campus behaviors related to any of the above that may bring adverse public attention to the school may also be considered a school disciplinary matter and treated accordingly. The Administrator has the right to request that students deemed to have a substance-abuse problem get professionally evaluated.

### DANGEROUS ITEMS AT SCHOOL

The safety and well-being of every individual in the Siskiyou School community is paramount. As such, the school has the legal right and moral obligation to conduct reasonable searches when the situation warrants. These searches may include but are not limited to student purses, backpacks, bags, and clothing. Any illegal or dangerous items including weapons (knives, sharp objects, etc.) and flammables may be confiscated, as will any items that may disrupt the learning environment or violate school policies. Depending on the gravity of the situation, police may be contacted in addition to the parents, and the student may be sent home and face disciplinary action.

### HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Teachers review homework expectations at the beginning of each year with students and parents. Teachers begin to assign weekly homework in third grade and gradually increase expectations. The chart below gives an idea of the upper time limit that parents can expect per night, per grade:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade — 10-20 minutes
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade — 20-30 minutes

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade — 30-45 minutes
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade — 45-60 minutes
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade — 60-70 minutes
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade — 60-90 minutes

Under the best of conditions, children take pride and pleasure in homework well done. We want to encourage self-motivation, care in work, and eagerness to study and learn. Parents can help children gain strength and independence in their study skills by providing them with a quiet place for concentrated study and limiting distractions.

Children are expected to track assignments and turn homework in on time. If they are consistently late, teachers give parents a call to discuss ways to remedy the situation. If you find that your child needs more time than seems reasonable or is having problems completing the work, please schedule a meeting with the class or subject teacher. This is important feedback for the teacher. Parents of 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders may check the Siskiyou School homework site ([hw.siskiyouschool.org](http://hw.siskiyouschool.org)) to track their child's homework.

### **Sending a Child Home**

Teachers reserve the right to send a child home at will. Sometimes a teacher feels this is what is needed to get the child's attention and correct the child's behavior. The situation that might justify such a call is difficult to predict but likely to be about behavior the child has been reminded about repeatedly and has continued to disregard—from poor choices around interactions with peers or teachers to failing to bring in assignments one too many times. Sending a student home is a last resort, designed to get their attention as to what is at stake and to bring about change. We communicate with parents about the decision and ask for parent support, trust, and follow-up in those instances.

### **Conflict Between Child and Teacher**

In the case of a conflict between a child and a teacher, a third party (the administrator and/or mentor) will be brought in to act as a witness and advocate for the student as needed.

## **DROPPING A CLASS**

Careful consideration is given before a student is allowed to drop a class that the rest of the class is taking. A teacher might consider allowing such a shift under the following conditions:

- if a student doesn't have the foundation (prerequisites) to succeed in the class
- if a student is too far advanced in the subject
- if a student needs study halls to keep up with core academics
- if a student has a diagnosed medical condition or learning challenge that interferes with their ability to participate or succeed in the class

In such cases, the teacher brings the situation to the administrator and/or mentor, alternatives are discussed, and parents are notified. Finally, as needed, a meeting is held with the class teacher, parents, and student to finalize an alternative plan.

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### DISMISSAL FROM A CLASS

Occasionally, students are asked to leave a class and are no longer welcome to attend. If a teacher deems the student's poor attitude and behavior are seriously impacting their ability to teach and seriously affecting the experience of the rest of the class in an adverse way, consideration will be given to dismissing that student from that class. The faculty will be consulted, meetings held with the parents, strategies explored, help sought as needed. If after a trial period the behaviors continue, the child will be asked to leave the class.

### DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Occasionally, a child is asked to leave the school. As a private institution, the Siskiyou School is legally within its rights to dismiss a child "at will," precluding discrimination. This literally means that the school has no legal obligation to provide a reason for asking a child to leave. Though we are under no legal obligation, the faculty and administration are committed to making every effort to communicate effectively with parents in situations where teachers have concerns about a child's fit for the school. Ideally, through conversations leading up to the decision, parents and teachers come to a shared perception of what is in the best interest of the child, the family, and the school, and hard feelings can be avoided. But this is not always the case. Decisions regarding dismissal are made by the faculty in conjunction with the administrator and mentor. The administrator communicates the faculty decision to the board and to the family.

#### Conditions for Dismissal

**(1) If a child's teacher(s) feels that our program is not meeting the child's needs**

Though we do our best to individualize our program, we do not have the staffing or resources to provide for the special needs of every child. Sometimes a teacher may conclude that a student may be better helped in another setting. In such cases, teachers will recommend a change of school or an alternative educational plan to the parents.

**(2) If the needs and behaviors of one child are so dominant that the ability of the teachers to deliver the program to the rest of the class is seriously and continuously compromised**

This is a case where a student's teachers conclude that the behavior of one student is too disruptive or coming at too great a cost to the rest of the class to justify having that student continue as a member of the class.

**(3) If a child's teacher(s) feels that a child is "caught in the middle"**

The teacher-parent partnership is key to the well-being of the children, especially when children experience difficulty of any sort—academic, emotional, social. When teachers and parents are in agreement about the problem and the course of action to take, the children sense that alignment and are well served by it. When parents and teachers disagree about what is going on with a child and how best to address that need, the child senses that lack of alignment and can feel caught in the middle between these two central sets of people in their life. This is highly stressful and can lead to an aggravation of the child's behaviors. Trust is at the heart of the parent-teacher relationship and when that trust is broken, the child pays the price. If the teacher concludes that the child is "caught in the middle" and that staying on is not in the student's best interest, the parents will be so advised and asked to find another place for their child.

## PART VIII. SCHOOL POLICIES

### **(4) If a child's teacher(s) feel that our program is not a fit with the parents**

The Siskiyou School doesn't work for all parents. This may not be immediately apparent upon a family entering a school. As in all relationships it takes time to get to know one another. But, if after a while, a class teacher or several teachers(s) and the administrator feel that a set of parents are consistently unhappy, find it consistently difficult to support school policies and structures, and frequently express that their expectations and needs for themselves and their children are not being met at one or more levels, the faculty will ask that family to look for another school, accepting that it is just not a good fit, that the cost energetically of trying to 'fix it' is too great to the school, and that it is thus best for both to move on. If a class teacher(s) and administrator reach the conclusion that the relationship with the parents just is not working, the administrator will communicate with the family and ask them to find another school for their family. The decision to dismiss is reached after a careful review of all the information and much deliberation.

## PART IX. MONEY MATTERS

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### TUITION

#### Tuition Options

We offer three payment options to parents:

- a one-time annual payment, due July 1
- two semi-annual payments, due July 1 and January 1, or
- 12 monthly payments, due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month beginning July 1 and ending June 1.

Tuition can be paid by cash, check, or credit card (with an additional fee). Automatic payments may be set up through your bank. Credit Card payments can be set up by our business manager.

Annual Giving payments can also be added to your monthly tuition payment. For more about Annual Giving, see below.

#### Late Fees

A \$15.00 fee is charged for any monthly tuition payment late beyond 10 days.

#### Bounced Check Fee

A \$15.00 fee is charged for a bounced check.

#### Early Withdrawal from School

A 30-day written notice must be received for any early withdrawal of students. Families are liable for tuition during the final 30 days, even if their child is not receiving instruction in the class. Families withdrawing between July 1 and the opening day of school in September are liable to pay for one summer month.

#### Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available to all families who qualify. As do many private schools, we rely on an outside service to assess a family's eligibility for aid. Families apply online by submitting their tax returns to the SSS, the School and Student Services for Financial Aid, an independent service affiliated with the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). The SSS analyzes parent financial information and emails the school to let us know whether the family qualifies. The amount awarded varies according to the sum set aside for tuition assistance by the board for that year and the number of qualified applicants.

Children who have been enrolled the longest receive the most aid, new children the least. Siblings are given additional consideration. Families must submit their applications to the SSS by April 15. The Tuition Assistance Committee meets the first week in May. Award decisions are communicated in writing by May 15. A family with outstanding tuition will not be considered for assistance for the following year. Tuition payments must be up to date for the current year.

#### Financial Emergencies

Should a family's financial situation drastically change during the school year due to a medical crisis, accident, job loss or other circumstance, the family may ask for a review of the terms of their tuition by addressing a letter to the Administrator and Finance Committee. The Committee will review such

## PART X. TEACHER APPRECIATION

cases and make a recommendation to the board for consideration. Such requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Help is subject to availability of funds.

### PARENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL FUNDRAISING

As with all private schools, each year we rely on fundraising and parent generosity to make up the difference between tuition revenue and the cost of running the school, including teacher salaries, tuition assistance, programming, overhead, utilities, maintenance, etc. Tuition payments cover about 88% of our yearly budget. This leaves us with a gap of approximately \$1200 per student to raise every year. We do this through two main avenues; (1) direct parent contributions into the yearly annual giving campaign, and (2) revenue from three big community fundraising events, run by parents of the school: Winter Faire, the Auction, and the Read-A-Thon/Hike-A-Thon.

#### The Annual Giving Campaign

Each fall, the school's annual giving campaign is launched. Every family receives a letter/packet, describing the year's goals and needs. While a family can make its annual giving donation at any time during the school year, we encourage parents to make their donation before December 31<sup>st</sup> to claim their donations as deductions. Donations can be pledged over several months or offered in a lump sum. Donations have ranged from a few dollars to thousands. Each family feels into what the school means to them and their child(ren) and what their finances allow. We call this giving from the heart.

It absolutely matters that 100% of families donate. Being able to say that we have 100% of our families contributing demonstrates to foundations or grant organizations that we are offering something an entire community feels is beneficial and thus something they also might want to support. No gift is too small. Every dollar makes a difference and advances us towards our goal.

#### Ways to Contribute Without Any Cost to You

Through a number of online programs, parents can support our school without it costing them anything. You shop and a percentage of your spending comes back to the school at no cost to you. It's a win-win for all of us. Please sign up for any or all of the following programs:

**eScrip & iGive:** Many grocery stores, restaurants, and online retailers participate in the eScrip and iGive fundraising programs to support non-profits. When you are registered online with eScrip and iGive, a percentage automatically comes back to the school. eScrip, iGive, and the online retailer handle all the details. You just shop as usual!

1. Go to eScrip.com and iGive.com and follow the sign-up instructions. They ask for only a few details, like your name and email.
2. Select the Siskiyou School as the organization to support.
3. With eScrip, register at least one debit or credit card. They only ask for the number—not the security code or the expiration date. It is very safe!
4. With iGive, install the iGive add-on to your browser. This ensures that your online shopping will automatically benefit the Siskiyou School.

## PART X. TEACHER APPRECIATION

**Oregon Cultural Trust:** The Siskiyou School is part of the Oregon Cultural Trust which offers a unique way to leverage your giving. If we use the matched donation option OCT offers, the State of Oregon and the federal government subsidize our school. This is how it works:

1. Donate any amount directly to the Siskiyou School.
2. Donate an equal amount to the Oregon Cultural Trust (or up to the matching limit any time in the same tax year that you made the school donation. You can do that online at [www.culturaltrust.org](http://www.culturaltrust.org)).
3. Report the donations on your taxes. The State of Oregon gives a tax credit of 100% of the amount donated to the Oregon Cultural Trust. Then federal tax and state tax credits for charitable donations reduce your taxes again.

For details, visit [www.culturaltrust.org](http://www.culturaltrust.org) and always talk with a professional tax advisor to completely understand the benefits of charitable giving on your finances and to get the most updated information about tax deductions based on latest tax codes.

## FUNDRAISING FOR THE 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASS TRIP

As per the guidelines laid out by the board, only the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class is allowed to fundraise for its own needs. Every year, a new 8<sup>th</sup> grade class fundraises for its class trip. Students raise between \$250 and \$325 for themselves. Parents also contribute around \$325. The balance is raised by the whole class through running a booth at Winter Faire, selling Singing Valentines, organizing bake sales at class plays starting in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and serving hot lunches to the school 2-3 times a week. The final trip budget depends on the total number students in the class. Typically the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip costs between \$20,000- \$25,000. The class travels either to the Oregon Coast, the Bay Area, the Seattle Area or somewhere in between. The trip usually lasts five nights/six days and takes place within the first two weeks of May. It is a culminating event of the class's journey together, and the memories last a lifetime.

## **PART X. TEACHER APPRECIATION**

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Parents often ask what they can do for their children’s teachers. They feel their child(ren)’s love for their teachers and see the impact the teachers are having on their children’s lives. We tell them that teachers feel appreciated whenever and however parents support the school because teachers understand that parents choose to help out because they value the education their children are receiving. More directly, parents can show appreciation for their particular class teacher by responding to requests for help with plays, projects, or field trips. One tradition initiated by parents that has taken different forms through the years is parents making a meal for the faculty and leaving goodies in the kitchen for teachers to find at snack or lunch. Another Siskiyou School tradition that has proven particularly meaningful and enduring both to teachers and parents is the Teacher Gift Fund in December.

### **THE TEACHER & STAFF GIFT FUND IN DECEMBER**

The Teacher and Staff Gift Fund originated in 2006 at the request of parents who wanted to be sure they were supporting their teachers in a way that was truly helpful to them. It works like this: Two weeks before Winter Break a basket is set up with a card for every teacher in the school and a larger envelope which is labeled Teacher and Staff Gift Fund. A letter goes out to the parent community saying the basket has been set up and encouraging every parent to stop in for a few minutes any day before Winter Break to sign the card of every one of their child(ren)’s teachers and to make a contribution into the Teacher and Staff Gift Fund envelope. People give at whatever level feels comfortable. Who gives how much remains anonymous. The day before Winter Break the money is cashed. The total is divided up among *all* the teachers proportionally, based on the amount of time they spend with the children, with all class teachers receiving the same amount, all specialty teachers receiving a little less than full time teachers, but an equal amount, and so on down. Every teacher is recognized and the system is fair, which all the teachers appreciate. On the day Winter Break begins, every teacher finds an envelope in their mailbox with a card covered with notes from parents and some cash. Teachers treasure the words from parents and the financial gift is so appreciated at the holiday time.

### **END-OF-YEAR GIFTS**

Many parents and children are also moved to give something to their teachers in June. For those who want to, we ask they do so individually, not as part of a class effort. When one parent announces, "*We are doing this, or let's everybody chip in,*" other families can feel pressured. We encourage families who want make a gift at that time to do so in a personal way—a card, a gift card, etc.

### **CLASS GIFTS TO “GRADUATING” TEACHERS**

In our two-teacher model, there are two moments along the eight-year journey when we can predict a class will say goodbye to a longtime teacher: at the end of 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In the spring of 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, a parent from each class takes the lead to organize a class gift for the teacher who has been carrying their child’s class for the past several years. Every parent in the class pitches in. Parents decide together what to give, but often come back to a monetary gift as being the most helpful to



## PART X. TEACHER APPRECIATION

teachers. Sometimes, an item of sentimental value is also presented. A class party is held at the end of each of these chapters. Usually parents, students and the teacher speak and express gratitude for the road traveled together, a slideshow with photos of the kids is shared and an appointed parent presents the class gift to the class teacher on behalf of the class.

## PART XI. ADMISSIONS

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Given that one of the core values of the Siskiyou School is embracing cultural and economic diversity, it is our intention and policy to welcome students from a broad range of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds.

While we do not discriminate against any student for admission based on race, creed, religion, gender identity, or national orientation, we do strive to accept children who have needs we can meet and who will be successful in our school. Children are admitted with all deliberate intention, through careful assessment and evaluation to ensure a good fit for the child, the family, and the school.

### FIRST GRADE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All children applying for first grade must have turned six by June 1st. This pedagogically inspired cut-off date ensures an opportunity for greater social-emotional health and overall maturity in the children. It is a gift to give them more time in childhood rather than rush them forward into adulthood.

#### For current Siskiyou School families:

1. Submit of a completed enrollment application, including \$100 application fee and two photographs (one of the child, one of the family)
2. Have your child complete the First Grade Readiness Assessment with our Educational Support Teacher or other qualified evaluator.
3. Meet with our administrator, if requested.

#### For parents new to the school:

1. **Attend two informational events** to learn about the Siskiyou School and Waldorf education.
  - *Parent Evening/Introduction to Waldorf* – This talk, led by our Educational Support Teacher Nina Gallwey, offers a wonderful introduction to Waldorf education, an explanation of the view of child development that underlies our curriculum, and vivid examples of how our developmental curriculum meets the children through the grades. The evening is for parents only.
  - *Main Lesson Tour* – The tour allows prospective parents to get a sense of our program and see the children responding to it. During the tour, parents visit grades 1-8 during main lesson, the heart of each school day at the Siskiyou School.
2. **Submit a completed enrollment application**, including \$100 application fee and two photographs (one of the child, one of the family)
3. **Meet with our administrator.** This meeting is intended for the administrator to hear about the child and what brings the family to our school and to answer any questions parents may have. Both parents are encouraged to attend this introductory meeting.
4. **Have your child complete the First Grade Readiness Assessment** with our Educational Support Teacher or other qualified evaluator. The visit allows us to get acquainted with the child and get a sense where they are developmentally. It also gives the child a chance to begin to get to know the school to which they may be coming.

## PART XI. ADMISSIONS

### NEW STUDENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. **A determination is made about whether there is space in the class.** Parents call the front office and an inquiry form is filled out by the Office Manager with relevant information about the child and family. This form is then passed to our administrator, who in turn discusses with the teacher and broader faculty (if applicable) the ability of the current class to welcome another child.
2. **The child meets with the class teacher.** The class teacher meets with the child to conduct an academic assessment. The teacher will get to know the prospective student and will get a sense of them and their ability to integrate into the class and into the school in a healthy way.
3. **Parents meet with the administrator.** The administrator meets with the parents to give them an overview of the Waldorf philosophy and a general tour of the campus as well as to answer any questions about the Siskiyou School.
4. **Parents submit (1) a completed application, (2) a Records Request Form, (2) two photographs (one of the child, one of the family), and a (4) \$100 application fee.** The Records Request Form is then sent from the Siskiyou School office to the child's previous or current school.
5. **The prospective student visits the class for two-three consecutive days.**

#### Enrollment Procedure

Once the above steps have been completed, the faculty reviews a child's application and acceptance letters are mailed out along with a New Student Enrollment Agreement. Parents return the completed Enrollment Agreement along with the enrollment fee: \$300 for new families, \$200 for students with currently enrolled siblings. Upon receipt of the signed Enrollment Agreement, parents receive a final packet of enrollment documents, which include other applicable forms.

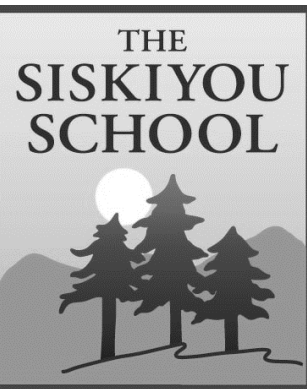
#### Re-enrollment Procedure for Current Families

Each March parents receive a re-enrollment packet that includes an announcement of the following year's tuition and instructions for how to apply for financial aid. Re-enrollment forms are due April 19<sup>th</sup> along with re-enrollment fees. At this time, re-enrollment fees are \$200 per child.

#### Admission of Students with Special Needs

Our school is designed to meet the needs of children with an *average* range of intellectual, emotional, and physical needs. We do not have the resources to address children who have academic and/or behavioral needs that require individualized instruction or assistance. Upon application, our teachers conduct an assessment of the child's abilities. This, along with a review of the child's full previous school records and any relevant medical/psychological/developmental/or educational assessments, help us determine whether or not our school might be a good fit for a particular child. Sometimes the initial assessments do not reveal the full range of a child's needs. Should a child be admitted and it be determined that the needs were greater than originally thought, the class teacher will invite parents to a conference to discuss those needs. Options include parents arranging tutoring outside of school, parents paying for tutorial help to be held during school hours at the school in lieu of another class, or transfer to one of Ashland's public schools where resources are available to accommodate a broader range of needs. (See handbook section devoted to Educational Support at the Siskiyou School.)

*Blessings on our school!*



*To truly know the world,  
look deeply within your  
own being.*

*To truly know yourself,  
look deeply into the world.*

RUDOLF STEINER

