

Sunset Middle School
Advanced Academics with an emphasis in the Arts

Student Handbook 2010-11

Inspiring and engaging the whole child to become life long learners

Principal Dawn Macy

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Counselors Nan Klibbe (7th grade, 8th grade A thru L)

Arlenda Newsom (6th grade, 8th grade M thru Z)

Building Hours:

Office Hours - 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

Class Hours - 7:35 am - 2:30 pm

Address: 1300 S. Sunset St. Longmont, CO 80501

Phone Numbers:

SMS Main: 303-776-3963

SMS Voice Mail (absences): 303-776-3963 ext.5108

St. Vrain Valley School District Phone: 303-776-6200

Office Fax-303-772-2875

E-Mail: Every Sunset Middle School staff member can be reached through e-mail.

Send to: last name_first name@stvrain.k12.co.us (smith_john@stvrain.k12.co.us)

Website:

For Spartan Highlights, Sunset's daily announcements, and details how to access progress reports/grades please check the Sunset web page at: <http://sms.stvrain.k12.co.us/>

Welcome:

Sunset Middle School is a special place that understands the importance of a rigorous academic foundation with an emphasis of the arts (music & visual), PE, technology and foreign language. Our aim is to help students move not only from elementary to high school, but from childhood to adolescence. It is during this period of growth that students will develop skills, attitudes, habits, and values that will, to a great degree, determine the future student, employee, and citizen - they will become. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are designed to help the school run smoothly so that everyone will have a successful year at Sunset Middle School.

Communication:

From Parents

We strongly urge you to initiate communication with the teachers if you have any questions or concerns. Teachers and administrators are very open to feedback. Please feel free to call, and if we are not able to get to the phone, we will be sure to return the call within 48 hours. Communication through email is highly encouraged, and we are usually able to respond quickly.

From the School

Teachers communicate via e-mail and telephone, or personal meetings. Our Parent Advisor Council (PAC) sends out monthly, school informative e-mails to our parent base, and all other important information can be accessed at our school website: <http://sms.stvrain.k12.co.us/> .

Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home with students at the end of the first semester (eighteen weeks) and mailed home after the second semester. These reports show the final grades in all classes for a quarter at a time. These do not need to be signed and returned.

Infinite Campus:

Infinite Campus or "IC" is our student records management system for the district. Important information for your student can be found through accessing the parental portal; attendance, schedule, grades, class assignments, missing assignments, class content focus and information from each teacher in their newsletter portion when you open a class. We encourage all students and parents to use the IC portal to obtain information and have conversations about what is going on in school. Teachers will upgrade their grade books every Tuesday, this does not mean that assignments done within in the week will be graded and loaded, as some assignments take more time to process. If parents have questions about an assignment or grade we expect conversations to happen first with the student and if more information is needed teachers can be reached through e-mail on Infinite Campus.

Parents can be trained to access the Infinite Campus portal through our registrars office during normal working hours. At the beginning of the year we will have a station and assistance at our Open House/ Back to School night, scheduled for September 14, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Grading System:

Teachers will provide detailed rubrics that explain what a students needs to achieve in order to earn the grade of A, B, C, D or F. We will be aligning closer to high school grading using pluses and minuses to determine the range of the grade. However, a "+" or "-" to the letter grade will not equate at all into the overall grade point average. All middle schools in our district will be using a weighted grading system of all learning activities (classroom work, homework, etc) will be 30% of the overall grade; while assessments (tests, quizzes, major projects) will be 70% of the overall grade.

Homework

Each student will be expected to have homework every night Monday through Thursday. This work will focus on stimulating, engaging activities that can link school learning and knowledge to the home. It should not take more than one hour to complete, one and half hour for 8th graders. It will be up to the student to properly manage their time to ensure they do not exceed the expected timeframe. In the event a student is working over the expected timeframe please communicate with the teachers.

Reassessment or Reworking an assignment or assessment

Our goal at Sunset Middle School is to prepare our students for success in high school and beyond. In order to accomplish this goal, teachers will engage students using a variety of instructional strategies. Students will be responsible for participating in class, studying outside of class and coming to school everyday prepared and willing to work hard. Students will only be allowed to re-assess (re-take a test) under the following guidelines:

- * The assessment was missed due to an excused absence or absence due to being out of the building on a school related activity (however only if prior arrangements have been made with teachers).
- * The teacher determines that more instruction is needed, and would then create a plan or an agreement with the student as to how they will work in order to re-assess.
- * Student reassessments are not a given and will be determined by grade level expectations.

Advance Class Criteria & Gifted and Talented (GT) Classes:

Advanced classes are offered in each of the four core subject areas of Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies based on data including but not limited to accumulated grade in a given content, CSAP scores, placement test results, Scholastic Reading Inventories (SRI lexile scores), and/or criteria met through Colorado State Gifted and Talented. These classes are structured for high performance, advanced, learners. Students not able to maintain a high level of academic performance (A's and high B's) in these classes may be placed in a class that better meets their learning needs.

Attendance/Board Policy:

Sunset Middle School follows the district process and procedure of attendance expectations as detailed in the district attendance policy. A copy is available on the district's website: www.stvrain.k12.co.us/policies/J/JH-R.pdf .

Excused Absences

It is important that students attend school regularly. Students are expected to be on time to classes. Students are to remain on school grounds at all times during school hours. Parents are requested to notify the school office early on any day their child is absent, so there is no need to contact you at work or interrupt your activities at home. Our attendance office will use the SHOUTPOINT, parent telephone, or e-mail notification of a student's absence. You will also be able to check attendance and class tardies through the Infinite Campus parent portal. The building principal or the designated representative **MAY** grant excused absences for the following reasons:

- Absences caused by illness or injury or physical, mental or emotional disability (after 2 days a doctors note will be required for excused illnesses).
- Serious illness or death in the family.
- Family emergencies or hardship.
- Absence required by a legal body (court, juvenile authorities or police).
- Educational experiences when prearranged with the school administration.
- Family vacations when prearranged with the school administration. (Attendance records and academic performance will be taken into consideration.)

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused day is equal to a whole school day or individual classes over several school days that cumulatively add up to one whole school day. **In addition, 3 unexcused tardy occurrences will be considered a one-half day unexcused absence.**

Notification of parents/guardians regarding excused and unexcused absences

The principal or designee will make reasonable efforts to work closely with parents/guardians to identify and resolve student attendance issues. Regardless of grade level, the following actions will be taken if a student's excused or unexcused absences/tardies reach the levels identified.

Excused Absences Notification

- After 6 excused absences - a general letter of concern will be sent to the student's parent/guardian.
- After 9 excused absences - a second letter will be sent indicating that when the student reaches 12 absences that he/she will no longer be excused without documentation from a health care provider.
- On the 13th absence - the student and parent/guardian will be asked in writing to meet with school officials to discuss pertinent issues and develop an educational plan including an attendance contract. This mailing will include a copy of the District policy and state law which will be discussed at the subsequent meeting.
- In all cases, letters sent to parents/guardians will be addressed to the current address on file with the District.

Unexcused Absences Notification

- After 3 unexcused days - a general letter of concern will be sent to parents/guardians requesting a conference with school officials.
 - After 6 unexcused days - a second letter will be sent indicating that the student has violated board policy regarding the number of unexcused absence days allowed before judicial proceeding may be initiated and requiring a meeting with the parent/guardian.
 - After 10 unexcused days - a letter including a copy of the state compulsory attendance law and notification that the student's attendance will be monitored for the next 10 days at which time a decision may be made which may include legal action.
 - In all cases, letters sent to parents/guardians will be addressed to the current address on file with the District.
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- **Please note that the attendance policy states 3 unexcused tardies are considered a half day unexcused absence.**
 - **By signing the memorandum of understanding of this Handbook and Sunset's Expectations you are stating your understanding of the Attendance Policy and it's implications.**

Conferences /Board Policy:

Time is set aside two times during the school year for the purpose of meeting with parents to discuss student progress. Teachers or parents may request appointments at any time by contacting either the teacher(s) or the counseling office. This year fall conferences will be held on November 2nd & 9th, from 3:15-8:15 and November 11th from 3:15-7:15. Spring conferences will be held on February 9th & 23rd, from 3:15-8:15. There will also be special "invitation only" conferences held on February 17th. Sign up sheets will go home with students a few weeks before the conferences.

Health Services /Board Policy:

Limited health services are available through our school. A health clerk (who is NOT a registered nurse) is in the building part time. During the remaining time, our office staff handles all health problems. It is **ESSENTIAL** that each student has their pink colored emergency cards filled out. Only those listed on the card are able to pick-up and check-out students.

Illness

If a student becomes ill in school, the student should report to the office with a signed pass from the teacher. If the student is too ill to remain at school, a parent will be contacted. In all cases where the nature of an illness or an injury appears serious, the parent or guardian shall be contacted if possible. In extreme emergencies, arrangements may be made for a student's immediate transportation to a hospital whether or not the parent or guardian can be reached.

Immunization

All students must be immunized. No application for admission shall be complete without a certificate of immunization or a completed exemption form. State law now requires students have Tdap before entering middle school and board policy requires all 7th grade students to have current MMR vaccination, and hepatitis B. *Those students who have not shown proof of these immunizations may be suspended from attending school according to our districts board policy.*

Dispensing of Medication

St. Vrain Valley District RE-1J employees are not to dispense prescription or non-prescription medication without written consent from the parent and direction from a physician. Before medication is administered, permission for medication form **MUST** be on file in the school. This form is obtained either from your doctor or the front office and must be signed by your physician. All medications are to be kept in the office of the health clerk, never in the student's possession.

Lockers:

Lockers are the property of Sunset Middle School. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time. Students will be assigned an individual locker and combination. Students are not allowed to switch lockers once assigned and are never to share their locker combinations. Students who are on record in the office are responsible for damaged lockers.

Students will be responsible for restoring the locker to its original condition or be charged a fee depending on the extent of the damage. All books and personal items (including cell phones and electronics) are to be kept in lockers. Appropriately decorated lockers are acceptable. No markers or sexually explicit pictures are allowed.

Lockers Cont'd:

Please do not bring large amounts of money, cameras, jewelry, and other expensive items to school, anything in the locker will be the student's responsibility. Any form of misuse or switching of lockers without permission may result in a student's locker privileges being removed.

Bicycles, Roller Blades, Skate Boards, Scooters:

Bicycles are to be parked and locked in the racks at school. The school is not responsible for damage to or loss of a student's bicycle, so please keep bikes locked up. Bicycles, roller blades, scooters and skateboards are not to be ridden on school grounds. Because of the danger of these unsupervised activities, this must include all school property, especially back steps, parking lots and loading docks. Rules of no bikes, roller blades, skate boards and scooters are enforced during school hours AND when school is not in session.

Busses /Board Policy:

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Every bus driver will cover rules and regulations at the beginning of the year. Bus drivers have the discretion to suspend and expel students from the bus. For further information (schedules, problems, etc.) please contact Transportation 303-682-7256.

Lunchroom:

In order to promote a safe, enjoyable break from the rigor of the classroom the following expectations will be adhered to in the cafeteria:

- * Walk at all times.
- * Always be courteous and polite to our lunch staff and your peers.
- * Clean up and wipe the table where you sit, throw away your trash, and then neatly stack your tray in the window when you leave. This includes keeping the picnic area clean and orderly.
- * Please return balls and equipment to the office at the end of lunch.
- * Games involving physical contact or rough housing will not be allowed.
- * Stay within the established lunch boundaries when outside.
- * Electronic items may be used at lunch, however classroom expectations are driven by the teacher.

Federally subsidized lunches are available through application. Please obtain a form through the main office at any time. Students are not permitted to give punches from federally subsidized lunch tickets to other students. All accounts can be accessed through the web with your student's ID number:

www.stvrain.eatschoollunch.com .

Safety Drills:

Safety drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential for students to clear the building immediately and in an organized manner. Activating any fire alarm falsely will result in severe school disciplinary action and/or filing of charges with proper authorities.

Your student's safety is a top concern of the entire Sunset Middle School staff. To that end we are continuing the implementation of a school wide safety plan.

- * Please follow posted signs in the parking lot and drive in designated areas only.
- * All doors will remain locked during the day, except for the front doors into the lobby.
- * All visitors must sign in and wear a nametag.

Safety Drills Cont'd:

- * Please report any situation to the Principal or Assistant Principal that is of concern to you or your student.
- * Students are expected to follow the school rules at all times.
- * Detailed safety plans are available through the main office.

Practiced drills

1. Fire/Evacuation - Sunset Middle School will conduct this drill once a month. The students and faculty evacuate the building to a designated area outside.
2. Off-Site Evacuation - In the event of a significant emergency, students will not be allowed to return to the building. Students and staff will transfer to an off-site facility. Sunset Middle School has three designated sites:

PRIMARY SITE: Longmont Public Works Building -1100 S. Sherman St.

SECONDARY SITE: Career Dev. Center (CDC) Parking Lot ALTERNATE SITE: Twin Peaks Mall

We conduct this drill once every other year. **We will not be conducting this drill this year.** Students will walk to the primary site. In the event of an actual evacuation, we will bring student records and begin contacting parents immediately.

3. Tornado Drill - Sunset Middle School will conduct this drill twice. Students are evacuated from rooms with windows and sit against the wall in a designated spot.
4. Lockdown Drill - Sunset Middle School will conduct this drill twice. Students will move to a spot in their classroom where they are out of sight from any window and secure the door.

School Closings:

In the event of severe inclement weather or mechanical break down, school may be closed or starting time delayed. The same condition may also necessitate early dismissal. School closing, delayed starting time or early dismissal will be announced over radio and TV stations. Please don't count on calling the office, as it may be closed as well. You may call the district information line at (303) 682-7387 if you have questions about a school closure.

Telephone Calls and Cell Phone Usage:

Students will not be called to the office to receive phone calls. Messages from parents will be given to students as soon as reasonably possible. Students need to make prior arrangements with parents to stay for an after school activity. Phones are available for student use during lunch, before and after school. It is suggested that cell phones remain in lockers during school hours. A student who is using a cell phone during classtime may have that item confiscated and kept in the office until a parent can come in and pick it up.

Visiting School:

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit any time. A twenty-four hour notice is appreciated; however not required. Please check in at the office when you arrive sign in and make sure you have a visitor badge on. Sunset Middle School promotes a focused learning environment, therefore discourages other visitors to school.

Discipline /Board Policy: JICH-R:

St. Vrain Valley School District Code of Conduct and Discipline (Copies available at office and will also be in your packets for the beginning of the year)

The St. Vrain Valley School District supports discipline codes, which define standards of conduct. Education proceeds effectively with fair, consistent discipline. Positive discipline promotes the development of self-discipline as a lifelong skill. It creates a safe climate conducive to the learning process and free from unnecessary disruptions.

Building Expectations – Students are expected to be: RASR SHARP!:

Spartan Spirit! Students are expected to be Respectful (R), Achieving (A), Safe (S), and Responsible (R). Sunset implements the Positive Behavior Support created and promoted by the Colorado Department of Education. Students will be taught the expected behaviors for ultimate success at Sunset, we will practice the behaviors and reward students for exemplifying what is expected from every Spartan. Students are recognized for RASR SHARP behaviors every Wednesday over the announcements and given a symbol of excellence. Our goal as a school is to create a community of one, where every student is excelling, everyday.

Rules are not made to confine you, but to assure a positive and safe learning environment for everyone. Our work and efforts will be around establishing clear, teachable behaviors for the various learning areas within our school.

General Expectations and Rules of Order:

1. All people are to be treated **respectfully** and politely. Insubordination and/or disrespect to any adult will not be tolerated.
2. All students are expected to display a learning behavior in all classes working towards their personal highest **academic** potential, **achieving** being the focus.
3. **Safety** in and around our school is a top priority and will be taught, as well as adhered to at all times.
4. Students will be expected to be **responsible** for their learning, their school community and how we will all work together in order to be the BEST middle school.
5. We encourage students to be individuals, however there are certain dress code expectations that promote a safe, public and professional learning environment; students will adhere to the following:
 - Coats, hats, gloves, hairnets, bandanas and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building or classrooms under normal conditions.
 - Backpacks and other clothing items are to be stored in your locker and not taken to class.
 - At no time is clothing which reveals any part of the torso allowed (i.e. midriffs, see-through shirts, spaghetti straps (less than 1 inch), clothing with large holes, etc.).
 - Shorts shall be an appropriate length measuring at least 2 inches from the inseam and skirts may be below, but not above the ends of the student's fingertips if the arms are extended down.
 - Clothing that "advertises" alcohol, drugs, profanity, or disloyalty to our country, etc. is not to be worn on school grounds during the school day or during any school-sponsored activity.
 - Hanging items such as long belts (min. 6" in length), chains etc... are also not permitted. Pants must be worn around the waist with no undergarments showing at any time.
 - Students will be asked to change their attire if the administration deems any piece of clothing as inappropriate, a distraction, gang related or gang affiliated.

6. Students are expected to solve their disagreements in ways other than fighting, bullying, or name-calling. Seek out a teacher, counselor or administrator to assist with the resolution.
7. Public displays of affection are not allowed.

SPARTAN SPIRIT!



SPARTANS RULE!