

# **Santa Maria Middle School**



## **Student Handbook *Hybrid* 2020-2021**

### **Foundations**

#### **OUR VISION**

The vision of Santa Maria Middle School is to:

- Promote a positive, safe, and nurturing environment that supports learning, mutual respect, and cooperation for students, staff, and community so that all students grow academically.

- Demonstrate high expectations for student performance among staff and students that promote high student achievement.
- Prepare all students to meet the challenges of high school graduation and beyond by providing curriculum and instruction aligned with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards through multiple paths to learning.
- Promote parents and community as active participants in the education and decision making process at Santa Maria Middle School to create a collaborative environment that supports academic achievement.

### **OUR MISSION**

In partnership with parents, and our community, the mission of Santa Maria Middle school is to promote a safe and positive learning environment that is committed to high expectations for academic performance and personal integrity. We are dedicated to the challenge of preparing young adults for high school graduation, and we are proud to work with young people who become lifelong learners and productive members of society.

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Arizona Revised Statutes grant authority for the development of school district policy to the elected Board of Trustees. Based on the direction of the Board, the superintendent is responsible for the implementation of Board policy, both directly, and through the site administrator.

The Board of Trustees for the Fowler Elementary School District holds regular monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month.

### **LAW**

Arizona laws are considered part of the policies of Santa Maria Middle School. Whatever is in violation of Arizona Revised Statutes (AZ Title 15-341 & 13-2911) is in violation of school policy.

### **APPLICATION OF THE HANDBOOK**

All Policies listed in this handbook apply at all times while school is in session and at all school related activities.

Students present on any property operated by the Fowler Elementary School District are subject to the policies found in this handbook and the District Code of Conduct.

Additionally, school rules may be enforced for conduct occurring off campus. Refer to the District Code of Conduct on page 14 section 2 – Good Neighbor Policy.

*Santa Maria Middle School reserves the right to make changes to the student handbook to preserve the safety of our children and to promote the learning environment. Parents will be notified when changes to the student handbook are made.*

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT IN ENROLLMENT**

When a student enrolls at SMMS, the school must have the signature of a parent or guardian on all enrollment forms.

Students who are not residing with a legal parent or guardian will be asked to provide the school with proper documents that establish custody or Power of Attorney. Without these documents, the school may not disclose information concerning the child to the supervising adult.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Fowler Elementary School District is committed to a policy of non-discrimination in relation to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, and disability. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning staff members, students, the public, educational programs and services, and individuals with whom the Board does business.

Individuals who believe that they have been subject to violations of this policy are to direct their concerns to the school principal 623-707-1100 or to the superintendent of schools 623-707-4500.

## **School Safety**

### **SCHOOL SAFETY**

We are dealing with a pandemic that has caused a national health crisis. Student and staff safety is the top priority when considering a return to in-person learning. All individuals will be held to CDC, Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Department of Education and Fowler Elementary School District guidelines. This includes temperature checks, face coverings, social distancing and other measures aimed towards minimizing the spread of COVID-19. It is imperative that all students follow these guidelines at all times while on buses and school campuses.

Students and parents who become aware of information regarding weapons on the school campus, the potential of bombs, or bomb threats, or anticipated harmful or violent activities are urged to contact school district officials and/or police to report the information.

The school principal may be reached at 623-707-1100 and the superintendent may be reached at 623-707-4500.

## **Attendance and Tardy Policy**

During virtual learning, students will be expected to be on camera and participating in the virtual classroom. Non-compliance with reasonable requests for students to be visible during class sessions may result in disciplinary action.

The office handles absence and tardiness records. Parents should call the school at 623-707-1100 no later than 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence to report a student being absent or tardy. If you wish to call during non-school hours, please leave your message on voice mail at 623-707-1100. This service is available after office hours.

Absences will be marked as unverified on the student's attendance record if a parent call is not received or parents cannot be reached for verification.

Any student who misses school for any reason is required to make up the work missed during the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to get the assignments and submit them to the teachers within the specified time.

Medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours.

If an absence is pre-planned, please contact the office ahead of time. Students are responsible for obtaining school work for the time absent.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

An absence is excused when the school receives notice, by phone or by note, from the parent explaining the student's absence. Arizona Revised Statutes require all children ages 6-16 to be at school. The law provides that a parent is "excused from the duties prescribed by the law" (ARS 15-802 Sec. D) if they can show to the satisfaction of the school principal that their child was ill. Santa Maria Middle School will excuse absences for the following reasons:

- A. Illness

- B. Doctor/dental/legal appointments
- C. Death in the family
- D. Court appearances
- E. Family Emergencies
- F. Religious Holidays

The school reserves the right to ask for documentation for absences.

Repeated absences for illness will result in the school asking for proof of illness, and a doctor's visit. A note from the doctor/dentist or other professional involved will excuse absence for reasons of appointment.

Absence for religious holidays should be cleared with a note to the office prior to the holiday.

Absences for reasons other than those listed here need to be excused by the principal. Parents may be required to meet with the principal to discuss the situation.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

Absences that are not excused by phone or by note, and that do not apply to the categories listed above, will be unexcused.

Absences that are not excused within 48 hours of the absence will be marked as unexcused.

Unexcused absences are considered as truancy by the law. Students who are considered "habitually truant" as defined in ARS 15-803 will have their parents notified that a referral has been made to the School Truancy Program.

Habitual truancy as defined by ARS 15-803 as any student who is truant for at least five days during a school year.

### **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

ARS 15-802, Section B states that parents are responsible to ensure that their child is in attendance for the allotted time school is in session.

ARS 15-803 states that "Absences may be considered excessive when the number of absent days exceeds ten percent of the number of required attendance days."

When students are absent more than 18 days in which school is in session the school will consider the student to have excessive absences and the student will be referred to the School Truancy Program and may risk retention.

### **TARDY POLICY**

**A student is deemed tardy when he/she is not in the meeting room when the teacher takes attendance.**

Students who are late to class by more than fifteen minutes will be counted as absent for that class period.

A parent note or phone call does not automatically excuse a tardy, unless it pertains to one of the approved areas, or is approved by an administrator. Approval of any absence is up to the discretion of the school.

Late admission to class may be excused if it involves:

- Medical, dental, legal appointment, or
- Meeting with a counselor, nurse or principal.
- Unavoidable/emergency situation (Must be approved by the office)

Late admissions based on an allowable situation should submit a note from the individual, medical, dental or legal firm involved.

All other late arrivals will be marked as unexcused.

# Student Life

## **GRADES / REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS**

The grade received for yearly work is the only one recorded on the permanent record card and represents a cumulative score of the student's work over two semesters.

A progress report form will be sent to the student email address on file every Friday. Parents should review the progress report and direct questions to the specific teacher. Parents are also encouraged to utilize the Parent Portal to view student grades. Information can be obtained from the school's office.

Student Grades are reported in letter grade form. The letter grades equate to the following percentages:

100% to 90% = A

89% to 80% = B

79% to 70% = C

69% to 60% = D

59% to 00% = F

P/F = Pass or Fail (IEP/AE)

R = Student Refusal

NHI = Not handed in

I = Incomplete

NG= No Grade has been entered at this time

## **BOOKS AND SUPPLIES**

The only supplies students will need are their chromebooks. Students should be sure their chromebooks have a full charge when coming to school. Students should be sure to bring their chromebooks every day in the carrying case provided by FESD when the computer was checked out.

Parents will be notified of the incurred cost of lost or damaged chromebooks. 8th grade students must pay these costs in order to receive a promotion certificate.

## **LATE WORK**

No late assignments will be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Upon returning to school after an excused absence, STUDENTS MUST ASK each teacher for work missed. Parent requests for assignments due to a pre-arranged excused absence are to be made with the individual teachers.

Assignments that are given out prior to a student's absence are not considered make-up work, and will be due on the designated date.

## **ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE**

Academic assistance services are offered after school. Please check with the school office for the location and times of services.

## **PROGRAM OF STUDY - ACADEMIC COURSEWORK**

Students who fail core classes may be considered for retention, except, if the student successfully makes up the failed class(es).

Make-up courses may be completed through summer school, an approved correspondence course, or other course approved by the principal.

## **REVIEWS OF PROMOTION/RETENTION DECISION:**

A.R.S. 15-521 states that every teacher shall make the decision for promotion or retention of students.

Parents do not have the authority to overturn the decision of the teacher.

If a parent or legal guardian chooses not to accept the decision of the teacher as provided in SEC. 15-521, the parents or legal guardian may request in writing that the Governing Board review the teacher's decision.

The pupil has the burden of proof to overturn the decision of a teacher to promote, retain, pass or fail the pupil.

In order to sustain the burden of proof, the pupil shall demonstrate to the governing board that the pupil has mastered the academic standards adopted by the state board of education. (ARS 15-342). The decision of the board will be made on the basis of adopted promotion and retention guidelines.

## **DRESS CODE**

Uniforms are not required. Face Masks (full coverage- cloth or medical) are required Students will still adhere to dress code guidelines.

- **Tops:** Shirts must have sleeves (short sleeves are permissible); symbols, slogan, writing, etc. must be appropriate; offensive symbols, pictures, and language on clothing is not allowed
- **Bottoms:** Shorts (must be length of the middle fingertip when relaxed) are permissible; jeans may be worn but must not have holes that expose the upper thigh (anything above the length of the middle fingertip when relaxed); sagging/bagging bottoms are not allowed (no exposed undergarments); basketball shorts, sweatpants, spandex, leggings and tight-fitting clothes are not permissible.
- **Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes are required for all students; flip-flops, slippers/house shoes or slides are not allowed on campus.
- **Accessories:** the following are not allowed: belts that hang down below the waistline, headbands/bandanas, piercings in nose, brow, tongue, or other visible parts of the body (other than the ears); hoop earrings shall be no larger than a fifty-cent coin; dangling earrings shall be no longer than 1.5 inches long; make-up products shall be left at home, and in no case should makeup be used during class time.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Although this is a different modality of learning, the expectation is students will still comply with reasonable requests from staff. Students will still be subject to school disciplinary action if there are issues that cannot be resolved through conference, contract and remediation.

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE & INTERVENTIONS**

**1st Offense (DISCIPLINARY / EXCESSIVE TARDY / UNEXCUSED ABSENCES):** phone call to parent/guardian.

**2nd Offense (DISCIPLINARY / EXCESSIVE TARDY / UNEXCUSED ABSENCES):** conference with student, parent/guardian and staff.

**3rd Offense (DISCIPLINARY / EXCESSIVE TARDY / UNEXCUSED ABSENCES):** contract with specific metrics, rewards and consequences signed by student and parent/guardian.

**4th Offense (DISCIPLINARY / EXCESSIVE TARDY / UNEXCUSED ABSENCES):** conference with student, parent/guardian to discuss eligibility of different learning models

## Signature and Attestation

I attest that I am the parent or legal guardian of said student attending the Santa Maria Middle School in the Fowler Elementary School District. My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined herein.

By signing this I understand that attendance, behavior and participation are key factors in a student's growth. I also understand that in this unique environment of COVID-19, attendance and behavior become even larger factors given the stringent guidelines students must follow to ensure safety of all members of the school family. A failure to demonstrate citizenship, attendance concerns and discipline issues could have a negative impact on a student's eligibility to continue hybrid education.

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Name of Student

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Name of Parent / Guardian