

***Pajaro Valley Unified School District***  
294 Green Valley Road \* Watsonville, California 95076  
**2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR**

**PARENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Children in the public schools of California and their parents have certain rights protected by law. Some of those rights are described in this letter. For additional information, contact your child's principal or the proper administrator mentioned below.

**If you have questions or comments regarding the Education Code (E.C.) or District Policy, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 786-2100 Ext. 503.**

- Advanced Placement. Students may apply for state funds to cover the costs of advanced placement examination fees pursuant to Education Code section 52244. Contact your child's high school principal for more information. (Ed. Code 48980(m)).
  
- Non-discrimination in District Programs and Activities. The Pajaro Valley Unified School District is committed to providing programs and activities that are free from discrimination based upon sex, sexual orientation, ethnic group identification, race, national origin, age, marital status, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, physical size or characteristics. Members of the school community are expected to treat each other with dignity and mutual respect and to accept the rich diversity which makes up the community. The Board shall promote programs which ensure that discriminatory practices are eliminated in all district activities (Ed. Code 260 and Labor Code 1102). The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in vocational education programs or any other district-sponsored programs.
  
- Harassment: The District, in compliance with the law, prohibits harassment of any kind by any student, or by anyone in or from the District (Policy Range 2540-2549). This includes harassment based on:
  - Racial/Color Harassment
  - Religious/Creed Harassment
  - National Origin Harassment
  - Marital Status Harassment
  - Sexual Orientation Harassment
  - Age Harassment
  - Disability Harassment
  - Size Harassment

All students are entitled to an academic environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment (Board Policy 2540 is attached.) Sexual harassment is a form of personal misconduct that undermines the integrity of academic relationships. No individual, either male or female, should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical. Any student who engages in the sexual harassment of anyone in or from the District may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any student who feels that he/she is being harassed should immediately contact a teacher, or the principal or designee or another district administrator (District Policy 2542). The administrator, with the student, shall comply with all procedures in the District Complaint Policy and Procedures (District Policy and Regulation 1312.3).

- Uniform Complaint Procedures: The District will investigate and follow uniform complaint procedures in responding to complaints from parents or students alleging unlawful discrimination or failure to comply with state or federal law in adult basic education, vocational education, childcare and development programs, child nutrition programs, special education programs, and all K-12 programs, including Migrant and Categorical (English Language Learners, SIP, Title I, Title VII, etc.). District Policy and Regulation 1312.3 is attached.
  
- General Complaint Forms: The Board of Trustees of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District has adopted policies for parents and community members to follow in filing complaints against school district personnel; district practices, policies and procedures, or curriculum and textbooks. These policies and associated forms are available by calling 786-2100 Ext. 503 (Board Policies 1312 –1312.2).
  
- Serious Offense Reporting: In order to assure safe and orderly schools, state law provides that certain offenses by students must be reported to the Governing Board. Expulsion or other severe disciplinary measures will result from the following: causing serious physical injury to another except in self-defense; possession of any firearm, knife, explosive (including firecrackers) or other dangerous objects; sale of any controlled substance. **Please avoid hardship and embarrassment by immediately discussing this matter with your child.**
  
- District Rules and Consequences: You are entitled to see the District rules pertaining to student discipline. To obtain a copy, contact your child's principal. A complete student code of conduct is distributed to each student during the first week of school. You may be required to attend your child's class if he or she is suspended for unruly or disruptive conduct (Ed. Code 48900.1, 48914). **Please review this document with your child.**
  
- Student Records: This school district complies with all state and federal laws pertaining to the privacy of students and to the rights of parents to full access to student records. When a student moves to a new district, records are forwarded to that district upon request. Certain student information (directory information) is also released to the media or other sources in regard to athletic teams, drama groups, student government, etc., unless the parent requests in writing that such information be withheld. Student information provided on school lunch applications will be retained by the District in a manner most useful to the administration of the lunch program. (Ed. Code 49075).
  
- Open Enrollment/Transfer Requests: District Policy 5116.1 provides Open Enrollment Intra-District Transfer opportunities for students within the district to meet individual needs and interests. For open enrollment intra-district transfers, parents need to apply between January and March 15<sup>th</sup>. For other intra-district transfer requests, parents can apply throughout the year. The number of open enrollment transfers will be based on individual school capacity. Parents will be notified of the results of the intra-district transfer drawing by June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. If you are interested, you may receive information about employment-based school attendance options. Please contact your principal for further information.

- Meal Assistance: This District provides free lunches, or lunches reduced in price, to financially needy students. Breakfast programs are also available in some schools. For more information, contact your school or the Director of Food Services, 786-2100 Ext. 519.
  
- Medication: You are required to inform the school nurse if your child is on a continuing medication regimen for a non-episodic condition (Ed. Code 49480). The school nurse or other designated school official may assist your child in taking medication only with the written consent of the physician and parent. The physician shall provide written instructions detailing the method, amount, and time schedules for taking the medication. For more information, please contact your school (E.C. 49423).
  
- Student Medical Insurance: The District does not provide medical coverage. If you need medical coverage for your child, inexpensive coverage is available and relevant forms are enclosed in this packet. **For insurance to cover student injuries, review the enclosed information, complete all the relevant forms, and return them to your child's school.**
  
- Immunizations: With your consent, the District may permit a physician or registered nurse to immunize your child against certain diseases (Ed. Code 49403).
  
- Health Screenings: School nurses will perform health screenings (vision, hearing, dental, scoliosis) at certain grade levels during the year. Parents may file a statement annually denying consent. However, where there is good reason to believe that your child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, your child will be sent home and will not be permitted to return until school authorities are satisfied that any contagious or infectious disease does not exist (Ed. Code 49451 / 48980). Contact the school nurse for more information.
  
- Student Use of Tobacco: Use of tobacco products is not permitted on school grounds or at any time students are under the jurisdiction of the school. Suspension, mandatory participation in "Stop Smoking Clinics," and/or other measures will result from violation of this rule (District Policy 5420).
  
- Use of Tobacco: All California public schools are tobacco-free. This includes a prohibition against tobacco use by students and adults on all school district property and within school district vehicles (Board Policy # 5420).
  
- Serving Student with Disabilities: The PVUSD and Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) provide a comprehensive continuum of services for students with identified disabilities. Please contact the SELPA Director (786-2100 Ext. 530) for specific information. NOTE: If you have a complaint concerning alleged violation of law regarding the education of the disabled, procedures and forms for filing that complaint may be acquired from the SELPA Office (786-2100 Ext. 530) or Office of the Superintendent (786-2100 Ext. 503).

- Section 504: Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1983 prohibits discrimination against handicapped person (including students) by school districts receiving federal funds. Included in Section 504 are the requirements that handicapped students be provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education. These regulations require identification, evaluation, and provision of appropriate services and procedural safeguards. The Pajaro Valley Unified School District Coordinator responsible for assuring that the District complies with Section 504 is:

Catherine Hatch, Assistant Superintendent, Central Zone  
Street Address: 294 Green Valley Road  
Watsonville, CA 95076  
(831) 786-2100 Ext. 502

- Confidential Medical Services: Pupils in grades 7 through 12 may be excused from school for the purpose of obtaining confidential medical services without the consent of the pupil's parent or guardian; however, District staff will make every effort to encourage pupils to confide in their parents/guardians when releasing pupils for confidential medical services (E.C. 46010.1 and District Policy 5041).
- Allowable Absences: At your written request, and upon approval by the principal or designated representative, your child may be excused to appear in court, observe a religious holiday, attend a religious ceremony, funeral, or employment conference and for other purposes as listed in Education Code section 48205 (attached). He or she shall be allowed to complete all assignments missed during the absence.
- Temporary Disability: Notwithstanding Education Code 48200, a student with a temporary disability who is in a hospital or other residential facility, excluding a state hospital, which is located outside of the school district in which the pupil's parent or guardian resides shall be deemed to have complied with the residency requirements for school attendance in the school district in which the hospital is located, pursuant to Education Code 48207. Once the parent has notified the District in which the qualifying hospital is located of the student's presence in that hospital, the District has five working days to notify the parent if individualized instruction shall be made available. If the determination is positive, individualized instruction shall commence within five days after the determination has been made (Ed. Code 48208).
- Continuing Medical Conditions: Parents are obligated to notify appropriate school personnel (e.g., school nurse or designated employee) of their child's continuing medication regimen for a nonepisodic condition. With parental consent, the school nurse may communicate with your child's physician any may counsel school personnel regarding the possible effects of the drug on the child's physical, intellectual, and social behavior, as well as possible behavioral signs and symptoms of adverse side effects, omission, or overdose (Ed. Code 49480).
- Sex Education, Family Life, AIDS Education: No school will require a student to attend a sex education, family life or AIDS education class against the wishes of the parent. Upon your written request, your child shall be excused from any instruction in health or family life classes which conflicts with family religious beliefs or moral convictions (E.C. 51550 & 51240). You will receive information from the principal if any of the subjects covered in these sections are to be taught in your child's classes.

- Alternative Schools: Pursuant to Section 58501, you may receive further information about Alternative Schools. California state law authorizes all school districts to provide for alternative schools. Section 58500 of the Education Code defines an alternative school as a school or separate class group within a school which is operated in a manner designed to:
  - (a) Maximize the opportunity for students to develop the positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, spontaneity, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, responsibility, and joy.
  - (b) Recognize that the best learning takes place when the student learns because of his desire to learn.
  - (c) Maintain a learning situation maximizing student self-motivation and encouraging the student in his own time to follow his own interests. These interests may be conceived by him totally and independently or may result in whole or in part from a presentation by his teachers of choices of learning projects.
  - (d) Maximize the opportunity for teachers, parents and students to cooperatively develop the learning process and its subject matter. This opportunity shall be a continuous, permanent process.
  - (e) Maximize the opportunity for the students, teachers, and parents to continuously react to the changing world, including but not limited to, the community in which the school is located.

In the event any parent, pupil, or teacher is interested in further information concerning alternative schools, the County Superintendent of Schools, the administrative offices of this district, and the principal's office in each attendance unit, have copies of the law available for your information. This law particularly authorizes interested persons to request the governing board of the district to establish alternative school programs in each district. Alternative Schools in the PVUSD include the Pacific Coast Charter School, Linscott Charter School, Alianza Spanish Dual Immersion Elementary School, the Watsonville Charter School of the Arts, Academic Vocational Charter Institute, Middle Community Day School, New School, Renaissance Continuation High School, and Rising Star Elementary School.

- Destructive Use of Animals: You have a right to substantiate your child's moral objection to dissecting, destroying or otherwise harming animals as part of an education project. Teachers of courses utilizing dead animals or animal parts will inform students of their right to object to participate in a particular project involving the harmful or destructive use of animals. Your written note attesting to your child's objection may, at the teacher's option, entitle your child to participation in an alternative education project or to be excused from the project altogether. (Ed. Code 32255 et seq.)
- Open Campus (Watsonville High School): The Governing Board of the PVUSD, pursuant to Section 44808.5 of the Education Code, has decided to permit pupils enrolled at Watsonville High School to leave the schools grounds during the lunch period. Section 44808.5 of the Education Code further states: Neither the school district nor any officer or employee thereof shall be liable for the conduct or safety of any pupil during such time as the pupil has left the grounds pursuant to this section.

- Title IX: The Pajaro Valley Unified School District is dedicated to ensuring an equal opportunity for both male and female students. The Title IX Coordinator is:

Dorma Baker, Director  
Certificated Personnel  
Street Address: 294 Green Valley Road  
Watsonville, CA 95076  
(831) 786-2100 Ext. 505

- SARC: The District is required to provide you with a copy of the annual School Accountability Report Card upon your request (E.C. 35256).
- Failing Grade. You have a right to have a conference scheduled when a teacher has determined and informed you that your child is in danger of failing a course. (Ed. Code 49067)
- Minimum and Pupil-Free Staff Development Days: Each school is allowed to schedule three non-student days for staff to plan curriculum and instruction and to ensure that all is being done to provide a safe campus for students. In addition, elementary and middle/junior high schools will notify parents of the minimum/restructured day schedule and calendar for the year. These minimum days are scheduled to provide teachers time to plan lessons and to develop skills to improve student achievement.
- High School Exit Exam: Commencing with the 2003-04 school year, and each school year thereafter, each student completing 12<sup>th</sup> grade will be required to successfully pass the high school exit examination. (Ed. Code 60851.) Passing the examination is a condition of graduation. Parents will receive notice of the exam date, the requirements for passing, and information concerning the consequences of not passing the exam.
- Asbestos Management Plan: School District Facilities undergo a comprehensive inspection for Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) every three years. The last Tri-Ennial Inspection was completed by a Cal/OSHA Certified Asbestos Consultant in July, 1999. Surveys of the ACM identified materials are completed every six months. The last survey was completed in January, 2001.

Parents may request to review the inspections and surveys for asbestos containing materials at any site by contacting the Director of Maintenance and Operations at 728-6248 x291

Asbestos Abatement projects are planned during the 2001/02 school year at Aptos High School, Watsonville High School, and Rolling Hills Middle School as part of the continuing Classroom Modernization Projects at these sites.

- Pesticides. The District implemented a Habitat Management Program through its Maintenance and Operations Department in October, 1998. This program reduces to the lowest possible levels the District's reliance on pesticides. Instead, the District attempts to resolve the problems with nontoxic solutions and to manage the factors to prevent pest situations from developing.

In September 2000, Governor Davis signed into law the Healthy Schools Act of 2000 (Assembly Bill 2260). This law requires the District to notify parents, guardians and school employees about pesticides used in their schools and encourage the adoption of programs in schools similar to our Habitat Management Program.

All parents will be receiving a detailed notice of pesticides that may be used at their individual school site during the school year. Additionally, parents will receive a card that they may return if they want to be notified prior to any individual pesticide application at their school site.

Parents, guardians, and school employees may find further information on the District's Habitat Management Program on the District Website ([www.pvUSD.net](http://www.pvUSD.net)) under the Environmental, Health and Safety Department. Please contact Department Manager John McCann at 728-6248 if you have any questions on the District's program or use of pesticides.

For additional information regarding School Integrated Pest Management Programs (IPM) or the Healthy Schools Act of 2000, please visit the Department of Pesticide Regulation's web site at [www.cdpr.ca.gov](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov) and click on the School IPM Program.

- Internet Use: For information on Internet use, please contact the principal of your child's school.
  
- Surveys Regarding Personal Beliefs, Sexual Practices, Family Life, Morality or Religion: Parents will be notified if a test, questionnaire, survey or examination relating to personal beliefs, sexual practices, family life, morality or religion is to be administered. Parents must give written consent.

We hope your experience with the schools of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District will be pleasant and that your children will profit from the opportunities provided them. Teachers, administrators, and other district staff are dedicated to this goal.