

SEQUOIA MIDDLE SCHOOL
2855 Borchard Road
Newbury Park, CA 91320
Main Office – 805.498.3617
Counseling Office – 805.498.8152
Fax – 805.375.5605
Vivian Viña, Principal



August 2011

Dear Sequoia Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2011–2012 school year. We hope your summer has been enjoyable and that you are ready for an exciting year. Our staff of talented and dedicated people is ready to help you experience a successful year at Sequoia.

This letter should answer questions about Sequoia's opening activities. It includes all opening school information and other necessary items to ensure a smooth start for a successful school year. Additionally, our website provides a calendar of events and other pertinent information. The website can be accessed at www.sequoiamiddle.org.

School will begin on Wednesday, August 24, 2011. If you do not receive a schedule at orientation, **you must pick one up at 8:00 a.m. on the first day of school in the auditorium and proceed to Period 1 class. "O" PERIOD CLASSES WILL START ON MONDAY, AUGUST 29.** On Monday, August 29, all students with an "O" period class will report to Period "O" at 7:55 a.m. This year's bell schedule will be as follows:

A Day/SURE

O Period	7:55 - 8:40
1st Period	8:45 – 10:21
Nutrition	10:21 - 10:30
2nd Period	10:35 - 12:05
Lunch	12:05 - 12:45
SURE	12:50 - 1:20
3rd Period	1:25 - 2:55

B Day/RTI

O Period	7:55 - 8:40
1st Period	8:45 - 10:21
Nutrition	10:21 - 10:30
2nd Period	10:35 - 12:05
Lunch	12:05 - 12:45
3rd Period	12:50 - 2:20
RTI	2:25 - 2:55

ORIENTATION

The following will take place during orientation:

1. Emergency Cards collected (must be returned to receive a schedule)
2. Schedules distributed only at your designated orientation time
3. Temporary ID cards will be distributed
4. Supplies will be available for purchase
5. Students will receive locker assignments and may put locks on their book lockers

(returning students need to bring their locks with them to orientation to record serial numbers)

ALL students should plan on attending. Parents are invited to attend along with their son/daughter but are not required to attend orientation. Parents of incoming sixth graders are strongly encouraged to accompany their child to orientation. **WE WILL MAKE A SPECIAL PRESENTATION AND GIVE A TOUR OF THE CAMPUS DURING THE DESIGNATED SIXTH-GRADE ORIENTATION TIMES.**

Orientation Schedule

Orientation for **all** grade levels will take place on **Monday, August 22**, at the times listed below:

8 th Grade	8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	A–K
	8:45 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	L–Z
7 th Grade	10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	A–K
	10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	L–Z
6 th Grade	12:30 p.m. – 1:25 p.m.	A–G
	1:35 p. m.– 2:30 p.m.	H–O
	2:40 p.m. – 3:35 p.m.	P–Z

Student schedules will be distributed on orientation day. They were completed by the counselors with careful attention to test scores and grades. Every effort has been made to accommodate student elective choices; however, this is not always possible. The only program changes that will be made will be grade level errors or those needed to balance classes. No changes will be made based on preference for a different teacher, different order of classes or the like. If parents have questions about their student's program, please contact the **counseling office at 498.8152**.

If student schedules are not available at orientation, or are not picked up at orientation, they will be distributed the first day of school at 8:00 a.m. in the auditorium. Any student arriving after 8:45 a.m. on the first day of school should report to the office.

HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

Incoming 7th Grade Students: If you received an exclusion letter from the health office regarding incomplete immunizations, you must bring verification that these vaccinations have been received prior to orientation. If we have not received this information, your child's schedule will be withheld and your child will be excluded from school until it is received. If there are any questions, please call our health office at 498.3617 extension 1008.

Please note that for the 2011–2012 school year, ALL STUDENTS entering grades seven through 12 will need proof of a whooping cough vaccine. This can be a Tdap, DTP or DTap and must be administered on or after the student's seventh birthday. Please bring a copy of the vaccination as proof or your child's schedule will be withheld.

Administration of Medication: Any student, who is required to take medication during the school day, whether prescribed by a physician or any over-the-counter medication, may be assisted by school personnel if the **Authorization for Any Medication Form** is completed and signed by the physician and the parent. If your child requires more than one medication, a

separate form for each medication must be completed. Return the completed form to the health office with the medication in its original bottle. All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the health office (excepting asthma inhalers and/or EpiPens, if so stated by the physician). **No medication, including over-the-counter, is allowed in students' lockers or in students' possession.** The Authorization for Any Medication Forms may be obtained in the main office.

Health Screenings: If you do not want your child screened for vision, hearing or scoliosis, please send a note stating so. Eighth-grade classes and all special education classes are routinely screened for vision and hearing. Seventh-grade girls and eighth-grade boys are screened for scoliosis.

Included with this letter is a blank **EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION CARD. PLEASE COMPLETE THE CARD AND RETURN IT TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR STUDENT ON ORIENTATION DAY.** It is very important that we have several local emergency contacts listed in the event of an illness or injury and we are unable to contact parents. Because of the importance of having up-to-date information, new cards must be submitted each year. **Any student who has not returned the completed card WILL NOT RECEIVE A CLASS SCHEDULE.** Please keep this information updated as necessary throughout the school year.

ATTENDANCE

Student Absences: If your student will be absent for the entire day or coming in late, please call the attendance line at 498-3617 and choose option #1. Leave your name, your child's name, the date and the reason for the absence. Attendance policies have changed within the district and the state. The Conejo Valley Unified School District gets funding only when your child is in attendance. Legally excused absences are for illness, doctor or funeral services for a family member. **ABSENCES MUST BE CLEARED WITHIN 72 HOURS; OTHERWISE, THE ABSENCE WILL BE RECORDED AS TRUANCY AND CONSEQUENCES WILL BE ASSIGNED.** All other absences require prior approval from the attendance office before the day of the absence. If permission is not obtained, then the absence will be recorded as truancy. Bring your written note to the attendance office for administrative review as soon as you know your student will be missing class.

If your student must leave at any time during the school day for an appointment, you must write a note explaining the partial absence and the time requested for your student to check out. Have your student bring the note to his/her teacher so he/she can be released to meet you in the office where they must be signed out.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Study skills are necessary for all successful students. Attending classes prepared to work is essential. Enclosed are lists of suggested supplies needed for school. Teachers may request additional materials after the first day of school.

Enclosed is an order form for supplies, which lists all the items available from Sequoia. Please be prepared with cash or a check made payable to Sequoia Middle School. Supplies may also be purchased using a credit or debit card from our on-line student store at **www.sequoiamiddle.org** beginning August 11th. **Please be sure to print out your receipt and bring it with you to orientation so you can pick up your supplies.** Sixth-grade students please note that on the enclosed WebStore information sheet the student's name and identification number has been printed along with information for online ordering. Students who cannot afford the required items may apply for financial assistance through the main office.

The physical education uniform consists of navy shorts and a heather gray shirt with the school emblem. All incoming 6th, 7th and 8th graders should plan to secure a uniform at orientation unless they have one available in good condition. Returning 7th and 8th graders may wear last year's uniform or purchase a new one. If you wish to purchase physical education clothing from a local store, the uniform guidelines are as follows:

- Tennis Shoes
- Solid navy blue mesh shorts with a 5" – 7" inseam
- A plain light-gray short-sleeve shirt

LOCKERS

Book Lockers are assigned to all students at the beginning of the year. Students may not carry backpacks during the school day. Lockers will not be changed during the school year. Students using lockers other than those assigned to them will have their lock and contents removed. Violations will result in a referral to the assistant principal's/dean's office. All students new to Sequoia may purchase a book lock and PE lock with the same combination (\$16.00). For returning students, individual book and physical education locks will be available for purchase for \$8 each. Once purchased, the lock becomes the student's property and may be used every year at Sequoia.

Locks, along with their care and security, are the responsibility of the student. The items in the locker are also the responsibility of the student. **THE SCHOOL DOES NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANYTHING STOLEN FROM LOCKERS.** Valuable items should not be left in the lockers.

Students may not decorate their lockers. This includes no stickers, no contact paper, no painting and no changes to the physical appearance on the inside or the outside of the locker.

Lockers are the property of Sequoia Middle School and may be searched if deemed necessary by the administration.

Backpacks may be used for carrying books and supplies to and from school only. They must be able to fit into the student's locker and are not allowed to be stored in the classroom, counseling or main office. Students will be able to go to their lockers during the passing period to get their books/supplies for the next class.

TEXTBOOKS

Each student will be issued textbooks, when available, to be kept at home. In June, students will return their textbooks, which will be assessed for damage. Students will be required to pay for damaged or lost textbooks before they receive their yearbook. Please be aware that most textbooks cost approximately \$55.00 each. To protect their books, many students choose to cover them.

CAFETERIA

A large variety of hot and cold items are available for purchase as well as snack items such as milk, ice cream, chips, yogurt and juice for those students who bring lunch. The breakfast combo is \$2.50 and the lunch combo is \$4.25. These prices are subject to change with school board approval.

Parents who want to pre-purchase lunches at orientation should make out a separate check. The cafeteria will only accept checks for \$25 and over. Additionally, you can add money to your child's cafeteria account using a Visa or MasterCard (credit or debit) by going to EZSchoolPay.com (see enclosed flyer). Students **MUST present their I.D. card at all times** to use their student account.

PROCEDURES, POLICIES AND MISCELLANEOUS

Forgotten Lunches and Supplies: Students must check at the office at the beginning of the lunch hour to see if parents have delivered forgotten lunches or money, as we do not have the personnel to deliver or send messages about these items to classrooms. Students may NOT leave campus for lunch unless their parent(s) pick them up at school and sign them out in the office.

To minimize class interruptions, we do not deliver messages during class time. Parents and students are requested to discuss any deviations from routine, such as medical appointments, transportation, etc. the previous evening or before school. It is the student's responsibility to check in the office for any forgotten items such as homework or school supplies. Students will not be called out of class for any forgotten items.

Cell Phones: May not be turned on or used between the hours of 8:45 a.m. and 2:55 p.m. under any circumstances. First-time violation of this policy will result in the student receiving detention (trash pick-up) and the student may pick up the cell phone in the office after school. A second offense will result in detention (trash pick-up) and the parent must pick up the cell phone. Subsequent offenses may result in a Saturday Work Study, suspension and/or loss of cell phone privileges.

Change of Address and Phone Number: If you have moved, a change of address and/or phone number must be submitted in writing to the counseling office as soon as possible. You must submit two current utility bills (gas, water, electric or lease agreement). Telephone or other bills are not accepted. Please indicate if any change is for one or both parents. It is essential to have updated phone numbers for automated telephone messages from our school. This way you will receive current communications and emergency messages from Sequoia.

Discipline procedures and standards: These will be similar to last year. Procedures and standards are explained in the student assignment notebook, which will be handed out on the first day of school. Please review all of these materials together, as it is important for you to understand the behavior standards and expectations at Sequoia. Students **must** include the student assignment notebook in their three-ring binders, which should be brought to each class every day.

Sequoia Dress Standards: Students must be neat and clean, and wear appropriate clothing for all classes and school events. Skirts, dresses and shorts lengths must be at least finger-tip length (as measured by the tip of the middle finger with arms down held at the sides). Undergarments must be covered at all times. **All** visible straps on skin must be at least one inch wide and must completely cover undergarments and not be revealing.

T-shirts with writing and/or pictures must be in good taste as determined by school administrators. Shirts with writing that advertise drugs, tobacco or alcohol are not to be worn. Students are not allowed to wear oversized or baggy clothing of any kind. Pants must fit appropriately and are to be pulled up to the waist and fastened so they remain in that position.

Only school hats, or a solid black or solid blue baseball cap with no logo, are permitted to be worn on campus. Hats are not to be worn in the classroom. Sweatshirt hoods are not to be worn over the head. Gang-type clothing, as determined by the Sheriff's Department, will **not** be permitted.

Electronic Communication: Information on our policy regarding electronic communication can be found on the Sequoia Middle School website under Parent Involvement – Internet Safety – Electronic Communication Acceptable Use Policy.

I.D. Cards: Students are provided with identification cards, which they are expected to carry and produce when requested to do so by any staff member. The identification card is required for attendance at school dances, activities, library book check out, lunchtime equipment check out, bus transportation and cafeteria lunch account usage. If lost, replacement identification cards may be purchased for \$5.00.

Picture Day(s): Picture Day is August 30 and 31 during physical education classes. Students must be in dress code for their photograph.

We have some notable changes to our picture day program. All packages will be mailed directly home, so you can be sure that if you order pictures they will not end up in a locker. You may now view your photograph before you order at www.campusschoolphoto.com approximately 30 days after picture day. Campus Photography will mail a flier out approximately two weeks before picture day with all the necessary information.

Sequoia's ASB Membership: Associated Student Body (ASB) membership is sold at the beginning of the year as a source of revenue to help finance student activities. Students who purchase ASB membership will receive free admittance to all dances/sixth-grade socials. The cost of the ASB membership is \$25.00 and is a great bargain for students who want to be involved in the dances, carnival and other activities at Sequoia. Purchase of an ASB membership does not mean a student is a member of the ASB class.

Volunteers Needed: If you are interested in helping with the distribution of class schedules, distributing supplies and the purchasing of registration items at orientation, please contact Nancy Gerdes at 805.498.3617, ext. 1004.

I look forward to seeing all of our parents at our **Back-to-School Night** on **Thursday, September 15, 2011**, and I know that with your support this will be another excellent year. Please call or email me at vvina@conejo.k12.ca.us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Vivian Viña
Principal