



Parent/Student Handbook 2019-2020

**1100 Thompson Way
Placerville, CA 95667
530-622-0814
Fax 530-622-0532**

www.pusdk8.us/sierra/

**Facebook= Sierra School Placerville
Instagram=sierra_school_**

August 15, 2019

Dear Parents and Students,

On behalf of our staff, I would like to welcome you to Sierra School. We look forward to working with you and your child to create the best opportunities for learning. This partnership involves children, their families, and our staff members working together.

This handbook is designed to assist you in becoming familiar with our school. A clear understanding of the rules and procedures will encourage a school environment that is safe and conducive to learning. Please read and review it with your child. Teachers will also be reviewing the contents with their classes. After you have discussed the contents of the handbook with your child, please sign the acknowledgement form and return it to your child's teacher.

We strongly encourage you to become involved at Sierra School. There are many opportunities and capacities to be a part of the team. Our Parent Club, otherwise known as Team Sierra, is always looking for new members, fresh ideas, and helping hands. Ask your child's teacher(s) what you can do to support your child's education at Sierra School. Volunteer in your child's classroom or find ways that you can help from home. Sierra has always benefited from a strong home-school connection. We hope that you will be actively involved in our school community in whatever capacity you are able to do so. We look forward to working with you this year. We know that together we will make the 19/20 school year DRAGON-TASTIC!

Sincerely,
Patty Horn

Patricia Horn, Principal

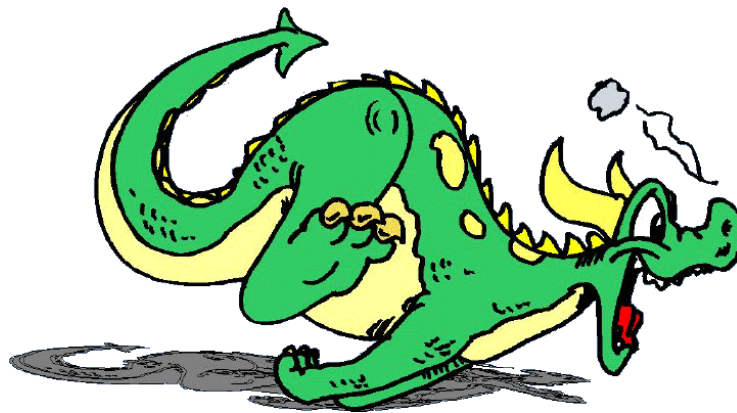
Sierra School

Vision and Mission Statement

Sierra School, in a working partnership with families and community members, seeks to establish and sustain an enriched educational environment. We are committed to empower all children to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world with unity, responsibility, and success.

School Colors: Green and White

School Mascot: Sparky



Every Student! Every Day!

Sierra School Hours & Daily Schedule



Early Release Monday 8:45-1:45

Tuesday - Friday 8:45-2:55

Morning Recess Schedules

TK & Kindergarten	10:20-10:40
1st-3rd Grades	10:45-11:00
4th-5th Grades	10:25-10:40*

Lunch Schedules

TK & Kindergarten
1st Grade
2nd Grade
3rd Grade
4th Grade
5th Grade

At Tables

11:45-12:05
11:50-12:05
12:10-12:25
12:10-12:25
12:30-12:45
12:30-12:45

On Playground

12:05-12:25
12:05-12:30
12:30-12:50
12:30-12:50
12:50-1:10
12:50-1:10

Total Time

11:45-12:25
11:50-12:30
12:10-12:50
12:10-12:50
12:30-1:10
12:30-1:10

Afternoon Recess

TK-2nd Grade	1:50-2:00
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Student Dismissal Times

TK-3rd	2:55
4th-5th	2:57

***Early Release Monday Schedule is the same as above with the exception of no morning recess for 4th and 5th grade students.**

Minimum Day Schedule 8:45-12:25

Morning Recess Schedules Lunch Schedules

Total Time

TK-3rd Grades	10:25-10:35	TK-2nd Grades	11:25-11:55
4th and 5th Grades	10:45-10:55	3rd-5th Grades	11:55-12:25

Minimum Days for the 2019/2020 school year

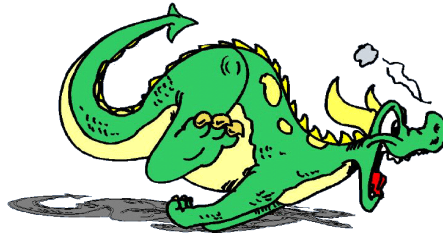
November 19, 20, 21, 22

December 20

March 12,13

May 29

Sierra Pride



- P** Provide a safe environment.
- R** Respect everyone that I meet.
- I** Influence others by example.
- D** Demonstrate care and kindness.
- E** Expect the best in myself.

Placerville Union School District Policy for Prevention of Bullying

The Placerville Union School District believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The district, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance.

The Placerville Union School District will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

Sierra's School Discipline Plan

Rules for Conduct and Safety

In support of the Placerville Union School District Policy for Bullying and with the desire to create a Bully-Free environment, the staff at Sierra School considers the implementation of our school discipline plan a top priority. We believe that positive student behavior is of great importance and sets the tone for a safe and healthy learning environment. We do not look upon this as solely the responsibility of the school. We feel that by working together with parents, we can create an atmosphere in which children have the optimum opportunity to learn, to develop self-discipline and problem-solving skills and to form lasting social relationships with their peers.

Teachers in each classroom have established their basic classroom rules. At the beginning of each school year, the principal and teachers review our school rules and consequences. Please discuss classroom rules with your child. It is important for both the school and home to be consistent in enforcing rules for responsible behavior. We have found that when the rules and consequences are clear, as well as consistently enforced, students have a feeling of security and are more successful in school.

**At Sierra School we have four school rules that insure
*Sierra students will be successful:***

- 1. Be Kind**
- 2. Be Safe**
- 3. Hands Off**
- 4. Do Your Best!!**

The Sierra staff will train students to ask themselves if the choices they are making are kind, safe, and their best. Helping students to reflect on the choices they make helps to minimize poor choices in the future.

School Wide Rewards and Consequences

PAT's on the Back

Children caught doing good deeds that benefit the school, help their classmates, or assist staff, are given a PAT on the Back. Students who collect 20 PAT's receive a Dragon Tag and are recognized at Morning Stretch.

Dragon-Tastic Student of the Month

Each month the students from each classroom that best exemplify the word of the month or demonstrate remarkable growth in the area are recognized at our Dragon-Tastic Assemblies. Students receiving the award are greeted by our mascot Sparky, the principal and our 4th and 5th grade Principals for a Day.

Principal's for a Day

Once a month two outstanding 4th or 5th grade students are nominated by their teachers to spend a day working as the principal's assistants.

Peacemakers

Students who demonstrate the ability to help solve problems, promote peaceful play and support our efforts to rid our campus of bullying behavior are identified each month as Sierra Peacemakers.

Community Service

During recess and lunch times, Sierra has a community service referral system in place to allow playground and lunch supervisors to communicate behavior concerns with the classroom teachers, and/or office.

Discipline Referrals

For more serious infractions or for behaviors that are chronic and not remediated students will be referred to the office. Examples of office referrals are:

- fighting
- inappropriate language or gestures
- defiance and/or disrespectful behavior
- disruption of class activities
- any other infraction that deserves serious attention

At that time, a referral will be initiated. It is important to realize that teachers and other staff members give fair warning, remove the child from the situation, give a time out and counsel a student before issuing a referral. Parents/guardians will be notified if their child receives a referral.

School Guidelines

Absences and Tardies

Well planned classes provide important learning opportunities for students each day. Classroom situations not only provide an opportunity for students to ask questions and receive assistance, but also allow students to benefit from the thinking and questions of their classmates. Students who are

absent from class cannot make up this type of learning experience. As of July 1, 1998, we receive funding only for the days your child is in school or is on an independent study contract of 5 days or more. Independent study contracts of 5 days or more will be used for illnesses as well as other times your child needs to be out of the classroom. An “excused” absence is not funded by the state. Even though we are not funded for absences, absence notes or phone calls confirming the absences are still required. **You may send in a note explaining the absence or call the school office at 622-0814 and press 1 for the attendance line to clear the absence.**

If your child is sick, please do not send him/her to school where other children might be exposed to the illness. If it is an extended illness, please contact the school to arrange for an independent study contract.

If you must take your child out of school for 5 or more days, please pick up an independent study contract form from the office so work can be provided. These forms should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the planned absence. The student is responsible for the completion of the independent study contract. The contract, along with the work, must be returned to the students’ teacher on the day the student returns to school.

Arriving at school on time sets a positive tone and a good daily start for every student. Students who arrive on the blacktop after the 8:45 a.m. bell are considered tardy and must get a late slip from the school office.

By law, we must notify parents that all students are subject to compulsory full-time education (Education Code 48260). Any combination of unexcused tardies/absences totaling three will result in your child being considered truant. Appropriate excused absences include; illness, death in immediate family, and medical appointments for the student that cannot be made before or after school hours. Excessive absences and tardies are subject to review by the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

Arrival/Departure Times

Before school supervision begins at 8:15 a.m. Students who need to arrive prior to that time must be enrolled in our on-site Extended Day program. Information for this program can be obtained from the County Office of Education at (530) 622-7130 ext. 298.

Children are not to remain at school after their dismissal time. Supervision is not available unless a student is participating in an after-school activity or the Extended Day program.

Students may ride bikes or skateboards/scooters to school. Bikes must be parked and locked to the bike rack on campus. Skateboards and scooters must be checked into the office upon arrival. There may be no skateboarding on campus at anytime. Skate shoes or “wheelies” may not be worn to school.

It may sometimes be necessary for students to leave school before the end of the day. Students must be picked up in the school office and signed out by the parent or guardian. Please keep in mind that “early outs” and the number of days tardy are tracked and count against a student’s attendance percentage.

Pick Up/Drop Off

If you are driving your child to school please be aware of other children who are walking in parking lot areas. Parents may drop off and pick up children at the front of our District Office, located just below the campus at 1032 Thompson Way. Supervision for drop off begins at 8:15 a.m. and immediately after dismissal at 2:55 p.m. Should you wish to **park and walk** your child to campus you may find space in the upper lot at Federated Church or behind the District Office in a parking lot accessible from Fowler Way. Please be aware of medical patients that may be in the parking areas along the way. **At NO time may students be dropped off or picked up in front of the school or along Thompson Way.** The area is posted as a non stopping area and you may be ticketed for failing to comply with this city ordinance.

Bus Riders

Placerville Union School District Board Policy No. 3541 (a) and AR5131.1 (a,b,c) state, in part: "The following student actions may interfere with the safe driving ability of the bus driver or may harm a person and will not be allowed:

- Abusive body contact (slapping, hitting, poking, shoving, pulling hair, fighting, etc.) in or when loading or unloading bus.
- Using profane language, obscene gestures, or excessive noise.
- Putting any part of body out of bus window at any time.
- Any movement out of seats while bus is in motion; or legs, feet, or other objects obstructing the aisle, or students facing the rear of the bus while seated.
- Any improper bus stop procedures (rock throwing, property damage at bus stop, etc.)
- Unauthorized opening, closing or tampering of any kind with bus doors, windows or emergency exits.
- Any type of damage or defacing of bus.
- Lighting of matches, cigarettes, or smoking on bus.
- Eating or drinking on the bus, unless authorized by the bus driver.
- Giving improper identification when requested by the driver.
- Tampering with radio or bus controls.
- Other unauthorized or unsafe actions.

Bus Infractions

The student, for infractions of rules and regulations, will be reported to the administrator of Transportation. Suggested guidelines for discipline are listed below:

1st Citation – Written warning letter sent home to parents/guardians.

2nd Citation – Up to five days of suspension. Parents/guardians will be contacted.

3rd Citation – Loss of transportation for an extended period of time. Parents/ guardians will be contacted.

4th Citation - Loss of transportation for remainder of school year. Parents/Guardians will be contacted.

Riding an Unauthorized Bus

There are times when it is necessary for students to ride a bus other than their usual bus. In these cases the child must have a note signed by the parent/guardian specifying the bus to be ridden and the stop to get off. This note must be taken to the school office early in the day of the change. One way tickets for the occasional bus rider may be purchased in the school office for \$1.00 per trip with written notification from the parent/guardian.

Transportation State Law Safety Plan

Vehicle Code Section 22112 requires procedures be in place to ensure the safe transport of pupils. The Placerville Union School District Safety Plan requires all bus riders to have a bus pass prior to riding the bus for identification and bus stop location. Failure to complete the application and/or carry a pass will result in denial of Transportation.

The Transportation Safety Plan is in place to keep all District students safe. Without students having proper identification and bus stop location, we are unable to determine eligible bus riders and insure that we deliver each student to their correct stop. Safety for all District students is our priority.

Emergency Information Forms

Emergency information forms were sent home for returning students and completed at registration for new students. Each child must have an updated form on file. This is required by law and allows us to follow your directions if your child is sick or has an accident at school. Please notify the school promptly of any changes, such as telephone number, doctor, person to contact in case of an emergency, and parents' work places and phone numbers. If you have a court order stipulating that one parent may not have access to a student at Sierra School, you must notify the teacher, office and transportation department, and provide the office with a current court order. Be sure to include all carpool members' names and phone numbers. **Your child will only be released to a person(s) whose name appears on the emergency form.**

Communicating with Sierra Staff

All teachers and school staff have voice and email available. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, you should have a response back within 24 hours of leaving a message. Please do not leave voice/e-mail messages regarding change of after school plans for your child with the teacher – contact the office with that information.

Messages During School Hours

Parents are encouraged to send notes to school or leave voicemail or email messages a day ahead if there are known appointments or changes to after school routines. Whenever possible, please pre-arrange doctor and dental appointments before or after school hours. The following procedures will be observed if you must leave a message:

1. **If there is an emergency, press “0” to speak to an office staff member.**
2. **You may leave a message on the automated voice mail system and office staff will send a note to your child prior to 2:45.**
3. **Except in the case of an emergency, no messages will be delivered after 2:45 p.m.**

Cell Phones

Student cell phones are allowed to be carried to and from school in backpacks.

**PHONES MUST REMAIN OFF AND IN BACKPACKS DURING SCHOOL HOURS.
NO EXCEPTIONS.**

If a student is using an electronic device when asked not to use it, it will be confiscated until picked up by the student's parent.

Health Services

Students who are ill should be kept at home. Medication, including over the counter medication, cannot be given to students at any time by school personnel, except with written doctor's permission. If the doctor prescribes medicine which is to be taken while at school, you will need to have a permission slip signed by the doctor, which is available in the school office or on the district website. All medication must be in prescription bottles or packages.

Students who become ill or injured while at school should report to the office. A nurse generally is not on duty, but office personnel have been trained to deal with medical emergencies. Depending on the seriousness of the office visit, a decision will be made to call home, have the student rest in the office, or clean an injury and encourage the student to return to class.

Sierra School as well as all sites in the Placerville Union School District offer counseling services. Should you feel your student is in need of assistance please contact the counselor or principal. You can also contact the El Dorado County Mental Health Department at 530-622-3345.

Breakfast and Lunch

Breakfast is available for purchase every morning before school from 8:15 to 8:35 a.m. Each child has a lunch account in which you may deposit money. You can access their account using the link on our school website. Children bringing money to pay for breakfast or lunch should do so before school or during their first recess. Free and Reduced Meal Applications were mailed out prior to the first day of school. If you need a new application, they are available in the school office and on our district website.

For your child's health and safety, we request that you do not send soda, energy drinks, gum or candy to school with your child. Gum/candy will damage the floor. As well, soda pop and other carbonated beverages get shaken up, inadvertently, and make a sticky mess when opened.

Field Trips

It is the desire of Sierra School to involve every child every child in learning experiences away from school. It is also our desire and intent to ensure the safety and well-being of every child participating in every field trip.

A field trip permission form is sent home with your child for each field trip. This form must be returned with a parent signature in order for your child to attend the trip. Parents who attend field trips must be fingerprinted.

Students who consistently cause problems, or maintain poor peer relationships while at school may

lose field trip privileges. In some cases students may be permitted to attend field trips only if a parent or guardian can participate and take responsibility for his/her child. This strategy will be used in cases where a child's behavior is thought to be a danger to him/herself or the group as a whole.

TEAM Sierra provides funds to classrooms to offset the field trip costs (Entrance fees, busses) for students. If an additional specific donation is requested for the field trip, no student will lose a field trip privilege because of inability to contribute financially to the trip. In the event parents are attending the field trip, they are responsible to cover their own costs. For the safety of everyone, younger siblings are not allowed to attend field trips.

Please be respectful and responsible with the use of photos and videos. Sierra students, parents and employees reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. For the safety and privacy of everyone please do not take or post photos or videos of anyone without their permission. Do not share photos or videos of any student, other than your own, without permission from parents/guardians or the teacher.

Extreme Weather

Extreme weather or other emergency conditions may cause school to be canceled or to operate on a different schedule than usual. If a decision is made to cancel school or to change the starting time or to dismiss early due to extreme weather or other conditions, notifications will be made to parents through our automated School Messenger Service as well as on all school social media sites.

Emergency Practice Drills

Fire and other emergency drills are held monthly. Since these drills are designed to acquaint students with emergency procedures, students should follow directions carefully. Students are trained to remain quiet and walk quickly to designated areas. **Campus visitors should have signed in at the office and wear a visitor sticker and should follow staff directions and participate in the drill.** In a true emergency, parents will be contacted by our automated School Messenger System and given details about the emergency.

Technology

The Internet is available for all students. We believe in the educational value of technology and recognize the potential of such to support school curriculum and student learning. Our goal in using technology is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. All student users and staff who supervise children on the network are continually on guard to avoid inappropriate and illegal interactions with the information service. Participation requires student and parent completion of our Parent Internet Permission form. This form is available on our district website <http://www.pusdk8.us> and will be available through the Aeries Portal during data confirmation.

Dress Code

School clothing is, to some degree, a reflection of one's attitude about self and school. At Sierra School, we try to maintain a professional, friendly atmosphere in which teachers can teach and students can learn. Inappropriate clothing does not facilitate this process.

The following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities:

- Shoes must be worn at all times. Sandals must have heel straps. Flip flops, or backless shoes or sandals are not acceptable. Sneakers or athletic type shoes should be worn on days when students have Physical Education.
- Clothing, jewelry and personal items shall be free of writing, pictures or any other insignias which are crude, vulgar, profane, disrespectful or sexually suggestive; which bear drug, alcohol or tobacco company advertising, promotions and likenesses; or which advocate racial, ethnic or religious prejudice.
- Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. See-through or fishnet fabrics, halter tops, tops with string straps, off the shoulder or low cut tops, bare midriffs and skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.

If school staff determine that a child's dress or personal appearance falls outside the stated dress code guidelines they will be given a change of clothing, asked to remove offensive items, or parents may be called to provide an alternative clothing selection. We appreciate your support in this area.

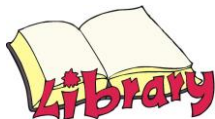
Toys

Students are not allowed to bring toys from home. Please help your child keep toys at home. Toys from home often become a distraction in the classroom and disrupt student learning. As well, we cannot be responsible for toys that might get lost, broken, traded, or stolen. Trading cards (e.g. Pokemon, Yugioh, and baseball cards, etc.) are prohibited at school. Play equipment is available for student play on the playground. Toys from home are not needed on the playground. Students are prohibited from selling or purchasing items from other students while at school without prior principal permission.

Library

Sierra is fortunate to have an excellent school library, full of materials for students to use for class and research projects, plus books to read just for fun and to practice new reading skills. Each class has a scheduled time every week to use the library. Materials for all grade levels are available as well as resource materials for teachers and parents/guardians. Our Library Supervisor, and the classroom teacher help students as they select and check out books. The library is open every day and most days during recess and lunch times. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the resources available in our library. You are welcome to set up your own library account.

We encourage you to talk to your children about what they are reading and, especially, to read to them. Not only will you be providing an excellent model for them to follow, you will find lots of opportunities for meaningful conversations and "teachable moments!"



Lost or damaged books must be replaced by the student to whom they were loaned. Charges will be based on the replacement costs.

Homework

Homework is defined as school-related assignments by a teacher, or through mutual agreement of the students and teacher, which will require time and effort outside of the regular classroom for successful completion. The Board of Trustees considers homework to be an important part of the instructional program. When it is properly implemented, students will:

- Develop regular study habits, the self-discipline basic to effective study, and the ability to work independently
- Gain more information than would be possible in the classroom situation alone
- Have more opportunities to develop a personalized, creative approach to projects and other schoolwork
- Learn to budget their time more effectively
- Become acquainted with out-of-school learning resources

Recognizing the individual abilities of children, teachers will generally assign homework that will reinforce skills and lessons taught in class. In addition, to meet our Board Goal for reading, students should read at least 30 minutes per night. Students will participate in the Accelerated Reading Program, participation requirements are based on a student's reading level. If you have a question about homework or the Accelerated Reading program please consult your child's teacher(s).

Study Habits

Parents/Guardians can aid in the formation of good study habits if they:

- Provide a definite and regular time to study, complete homework and read.
- See that students have a quiet atmosphere, necessary for good studying.
- Encourage students to work regularly on long-term assignments. Book reports, science projects and other long-term assignments are assigned and communicated to students and parents/guardians well in advance of the due date.
- Set a positive example by reading or being involved in writing activities.
- Control student's access to television and video/computer games.

Be aware of:

- The importance of your opinions in the formation of your child's attitudes toward school.
- The increasing ability of intermediate grade school children to care for themselves and work independently.
- Attendance laws, school policies and procedures.
- The value of good home study habits.
- The importance of regular attendance.
- How much homework your child brings home. If you have questions about the homework or specific assignments you should contact your child's teacher. If your child is in grades 4 or 5 you may access the online grades program, AERIES. You may set up a parent account through the link on our school website.

Grading and Reporting

Parent – Teacher conferences will be held for Sierra students in November, after the first trimester of school. Conferences will be held at other times if the parent requests one or the teacher feels there is a need.

Report cards will be given out at the first conference, and after the second and third trimesters. If at any time you are concerned about your child's progress, please call the teacher's voice mail (622-0814) or send an email to set up an appointment with your child's teacher.

Parent/Student School Involvement

School Site Council

The School Site Council (SSC), a governing body within our school, is composed of parents and school employees.

The main purpose of the SSC is to monitor the progress of the School Improvement and Library Program and to provide the best possible program for the students. The SSC meets three times a year at the school. Although only elected members of the Council may vote, all interested people are welcome to attend.

Parent Club – Team Sierra

Team Sierra is very active and supportive. They help organize volunteers, plan school-wide family events, and raise funds for educational supplies, equipment, and special activities. Parental support of this fine organization is greatly appreciated by the staff and students. TEAM Sierra coordinates the iWalk, the Fall Festival, our Walk of FAME, and many more wonderful family activities, as well as individual classroom support. TEAM Sierra meets each month to discuss upcoming activities. Meeting dates are posted in the Sierra Scoop. **Together Everyone Achieves More.**

Volunteers

An important part of Sierra School is our volunteers. **If a parent would like to volunteer for field trips, work in the classroom, or the library, they must be fingerprinted.** The school office can provide parents with the form and information about the fingerprinting process.

Volunteers on campus need to sign-in and out at the office. To serve as a volunteer, it is not necessary to have a student at Sierra—grandparents and other members of the community are a valuable part of our program. In addition to fingerprinting, please review and complete an Expectations for Volunteers form and return to the classroom teacher or school office.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Each year students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular opportunities organized by classroom teachers. Some of these include Cross Country (3rd–5th), Oral Interpretation Festival (3rd–5th), Spelling Bee (1st–5th), Student Council (4th–5th), Talent Show, GATE (3rd–5th), and Band (5th only) . Watch for flyers and bulletins for more information throughout the school year.

**ALL CAMPUSES ARE DESIGNATED AS TOBACCO FREE AND DRUG
FREE ZONES PER THE SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES ACT OF 2002.**

A Message to All Families...Improving Home -School Communication

We believe that productive home-school communication is:

One of the most important variables in guaranteeing school success, as parents/guardians, you can help keep communication open and productive by:

- Taking time to read the weekly Sierra Scoop that comes out on Friday. It contains timely and important information about school programs and events.
- Making a commitment to attend Back-to-School Night, Open House, and Parent Conferences.
- Returning correspondence in a timely fashion. You may need to work with your son or daughter to ensure they return notes on time.
- Talking with teachers and the administration about positive things happening at school. Calling attention to successful practices is important for reinforcing them.
- Discussing questions or concerns with the teacher as soon as they arise. Teachers appreciate honesty and early communication.
- Discussing concerns not resolved at the classroom level with the principal. Bringing unresolved issues to the attention of the principal will usually result in a satisfactory resolution

We are looking forward to another great year at Sierra School. We value the partnership between school and home. The more we work together, the more successful the students will be. Thank you for your support and participation. We are happy you are part of the Sierra School family!

