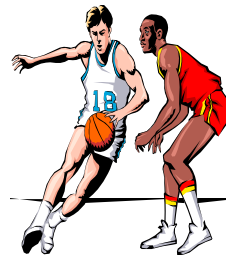
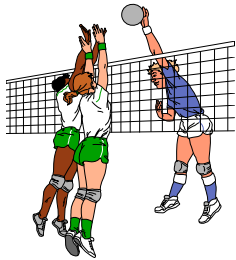
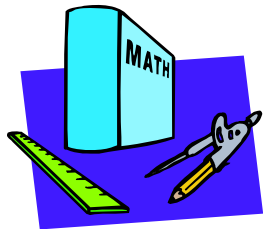


# GERBER UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2011 - 2012



## 6TH, 7TH, & 8TH GRADE STUDENT HANDBOOK

## *SIXTH, SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE HANDBOOK*

Welcome to the sixth, seventh and eighth grade years at Gerber Elementary! This handbook is a summary of what you can expect in sixth, seventh and eighth grade. It describes your educational program, expectations that apply to you, and various rules and regulations to help all of us have a successful year.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth grades are different from the kindergarten through fifth grades at Gerber School. Students may have up to four teachers throughout the day. They will change classrooms, may be issued lockers, and be expected to take more responsibility for their learning.

Because students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade are expected to be more responsible and mature, some of the citizenship standards are higher than those for our kindergarten through fifth grade students. Please take time to read this brief handbook carefully so that you will understand what is expected during sixth, seventh and eighth grade years.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

School hours are from 8:12AM to 2:25PM. The school day includes Language, Literature, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Geography, Physical Education and Study Hall. Music and/or Band will be available for those students who qualify.

### **HOMEROOM**

Each student is assigned to a homeroom to start the day. Your homeroom teacher will make sure that you are kept up to date about school events and other important information. If you have special needs or problems, talk to your homeroom teacher who, in turn, can make sure that the appropriate school staff can help you.

During homeroom your teacher will ask if you are going to have lunch. If you plan to eat lunch, your teacher will issue you your personal lunch card. You are expected to have that card available when you go through the lunch line. If you lose the card, you will need to pay \$1.00 for a replacement card. If you forgot to ask for your card in homeroom, you will need to come to the office during your **recess** to get it. If you forget to get your card in the morning, and you wait until lunchtime to get your number, you will have to stand at the end of the line for lunch. After several warnings, you will receive a discipline ticket.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXEMPTIONS**

A parental note is sufficient to excuse a student from physical education for up to three days; however, exemptions beyond three days require a doctor's note. Students excused from physical education are not allowed to participate in athletics. If a student is excused from physical education, it is expected his/her recess activities will be limited.

## **SPORTS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Gerber School offers the following team sports: volleyball, basketball, soccer, and softball. These are available to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Coaches will select members of the teams based on academic eligibility, attitude, ability and skill level. The number of students on a team and individual playing time is strictly a coaching decision. Athletes will receive a participation and uniform contract. To be eligible to participate in athletics at Gerber School, students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average, with no Fs.

While on an athletic team, if a student has below a 2.0 or an F on a progress report, he/she will be ineligible for a two-week period. (This means no practices or games.) Following a grade check two weeks later, the student will then be reinstated or removed from the team permanently depending on the outcome of the grade check.

If a student is suspended (half day or full day) while on an athletic team, he/she is automatically removed from that team for ten school days. At the end of the ten-day period, it is up to the coach's discretion as to whether or not the athlete may return to the team. Any questions with this issue will be directed to the Athletic Director.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Representatives elected from grades 4-8 direct the Student Council. Officers are as follows: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Yearbook, Sergeant of Arms and classroom representatives. The group meets regularly and carries on business and plans student body activities. Their activities include play days, dances, concessions at sporting events, Easter Egg Hunt and leadership workshops. In addition, student council members become involved in projects, which will benefit the school, community and total student body. A school staff member serves as the supervisor for this student council. The office of President is limited to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have a G.P.A. of 2.5 or better. The offices of Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Yearbook (2 positions) and Activity Director are for students in grades 7 or 8, with a G.P.A. of 2.3 or better. The student must maintain good citizenship and grades for the entire school year or the student council member could be removed from office. Each grading period grades will be checked. Below 2.3 or 2.5 students will lose their position for a period of 10 school days.

## **YEARBOOK**

The Gerber School Yearbook is a yearly history of our school. It is developed and assembled by seventh and eighth grade students. The group meets on a regular basis during the year. Yearbooks are sold in the early spring and distributed at the end of the school year.

## **SCHOOL DANCES**

School dances are for the enjoyment of our sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Dance rules have been developed to ensure a fun and safe experience for all students. A copy of these rules is included on the dance permission slips and should be read by both parents and students prior to each dance. Students not following the rules at a dance will be sent home and excluded from the next dance. Parents need to pick their children up promptly in front of the school at the conclusion of the dance.

## **GRADE PERIODS**

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are graded on the trimester system. Students receive progress reports approximately every six weeks. The year is divided into three twelve week blocks called trimesters. The grades at the end of each of these trimesters are the ones that count toward honor roll and graduation requirements. Honor roll for students is determined by students receiving a 3.0 grade point average and no “D”s or “F”s on their report card. Students will be rewarded for honor roll at the conclusion of each trimester.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

A weighted average of grades from both the seventh and eighth grade years is used to determine if a student has met the minimum requirements for participation in graduation exercises and related activities. Grades from the seventh grade year will count for one-third of the total. Grades from the eighth grade year will count for two-thirds of the total. Students are required to earn a grade point average of at least 1.75 for the **two** years in order to qualify. An “A” is worth 4 points, “B” 3 points, “C” 2 points, D “1” point, and “F” zero points. Since the requirement is for a two year average, it is important that students who are A “on the edge” make sure they understand their current average so they can set goals for themselves.

Students in eighth grade will have to pass a United States Constitution test. They are given three opportunities to pass this test. A minimum score of 70 is required to participate in graduation activities.

In addition to academic grades and the Constitution test, students must meet citizenship and attendance requirements in order to be eligible to participate in graduation activities with the class. Students who have ongoing citizenship or attendance problems (15 days) will be placed on a contract. If they do not meet the terms and conditions of that contract, they will not be eligible for participation in graduation activities. In addition, students who are suspended from school on the day of graduation, may not participate in the exercises.

Students are encouraged to try out to give speeches at graduation.

Gerber School provides graduation gowns which students must wear when they participate in graduation. A fee to cover some graduation activities may be requested. No student will be excluded from a school-sponsored activity because they are not able to pay this fee.

## **STUDENT DRESS AND GROOMING**

It is the goal of the school not only to provide an academic education, but also to provide education in morals, manners, dress, and grooming. These are elements of good citizenship. Dress and grooming guidelines are intended to define what is appropriate student attire and personal grooming. Their purpose is to prevent disruption of the classroom atmosphere, enhance classroom decorum, eliminate disturbances, maintain safety, and minimize distractions. They are also intended to help protect the health and welfare of each student.

1. Students are expected to attend school in clean, neat clothing.
2. Footwear must be worn at all times. For safety, sandals without a heel strap, shoes with high heels, etc., cannot be worn for P.E.
3. Commercial lettering or printing on clothing is allowed as long as it is acceptable school attire. **Crude and vulgar printing and pictures depicting drugs, alcoholic beverages, and items, which are sexually suggestive, are not acceptable.**
4. **Gang attire, symbols, or lettering of any kind are not acceptable.**
5. The fullness or length of long pants may not interfere with normal school activities. Pants must be secure at the waist and not expose undergarments.
6. Hats may be worn to and from school, and on the play ground. Hats, caps and other head coverings shall not be worn indoors.
7. All clothing will be within the bounds of decency and good taste as appropriate for school. Garments will be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.
  - A. Dress and short lengths shall reach students= fingertips when hands are held by their sides.
  - B. No bare midriffs may be exposed.
  - C. No low cut or revealing tops.
  - D. No off the shoulder blouses or spaghetti straps.
  - E. No garment may be worn that is cut off, ragged, or torn.
  - F. No see-through or fish net type of blouse or shirt may be worn without an undershirt.
  - G. Students shall wear shirts at all times.
  - H. No headbands, bandanas, etc.
  - I. Spiked jewelry, wallet chains, etc. are not acceptable.

When students choose to wear inappropriate clothing, they will be issued a discipline ticket and will be issued school-provided clothing for the day. The second incident will result in another discipline ticket and they will be issued school-provided clothing for the day. All further incidents, third and beyond, will result in **behavior referrals**, and the student will wear the school-provided clothing for the day.

## **DISCIPLINE/CITIZENSHIP**

As with the case of inappropriate clothing, other discipline problems may result in the student receiving a discipline ticket. These offenses include the following: chewing gum, having candy or soda other than at lunch in the cafeteria, playing after the bell, out of bounds, unexcused tardy, and

failure to return required home correspondences. The third discipline ticket may result in a behavior referral. This system allows students the opportunity to correct their mistakes before receiving the referral consequences.

Discipline is a progressive matter; however, in cases of severe problems more serious consequences may be needed. More serious behavior will result in a **behavior referral**; examples of such behavior include the following: rough or dangerous play, fighting, defiance or disrespect toward school personnel, disrespect toward another person, inappropriate language, misuse or destruction of property, sexual harassment, inappropriate display of affection, and cutting classes.

**The consequences of a referral are as follows:**

**(Discipline Referral) First Offense**

- A. Parent notification (Let parent know why student is in the office)
- B. Student will be referred for counseling if available.
- C. Student will return signed referral to the office upon returning to school.
- D. After School or Lunch Detention depending upon grade level.

**(Discipline Referral) Second Offense**

- A. Phone call home/parent notification.
- B. Student will be referred for counseling if available.
- C. Student will return signed referral to the office upon returning to school.
- D. 2 Days Detention

**(Discipline Referral) Third Offense**

- A. Phone call home/parent notification.
- B. Student will be referred for counseling if available.
- C. Student will return signed referral to the office upon returning to school.
- D. 1/2 Day In-School suspension

**(Discipline Referral) Fourth Offense**

- A. Phone call home/parent notification.
- B. Conference with Parent/Teacher/Administrator
- C. Student will return signed referral to office upon returning to school.
- D. Full- Day In-School Suspension

**(Discipline Referral) Fifth Offense**

- A. Phone call home/parent notification.
- B. Off campus suspension (possible referral to DART)

What will happen to my child if he/she commits a major offense such as fighting with the intent to harm, possessing or using drugs or alcohol, or weapons, or threats to students or staff?

**These offenses are major and will be treated as so. The following consequences may occur:**

- A. Phone call home
- B. Parent/Teacher/Administrator Conference
- C. Student may be suspended from school for up to five days
- D. Sheriffs department may be contacted and student cited.
- E. Recommendation to the Gerber School Board for expulsion and/or placement into Community Day School.

**DISCIPLINE/CITIZENSHIP (CONT.)**

If in the event a severe offense occurs, teachers are to notify the office immediately. On occasion, when a teacher has used their existing discipline procedures for school and classroom rules and there

has not been a positive change, “standard” classroom and school rules may not apply. In such cases, the teacher, administration and parents will meet and develop a Behavioral Plan for that student.

All cases of weapons, drugs, and alcohol will be treated with extreme seriousness, including possible suspension and/or expulsion from school. (Fortunately these incidents are almost non-existent at Gerber School.) Students who accidentally bring a knife to school should immediately bring it to the office upon discovering their mistake. Failure to do so could result in serious consequences.

## **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE PROGRAM**

Each homeroom teacher begins each new week with a fresh roll sheet attached to a clipboard. A student is assigned to carry the clipboard from class to class throughout the school day. This roll sheet is affectionately known as the A Discipline Sheet.

The A Discipline Sheet serves many purposes. It serves as an updated roll sheet each week. It allows the teachers to record tardies, absences, suspensions, new arrivals to Gerber School, or students leaving, the school day.

Classroom discipline is recorded in the following way. When a student is disruptive, insubordinate, or simply not following the teacher’s directions, the teacher or classroom aide writes his/her initials by the student’s name on the sheet. If a student receives three teachers’, or aides’, initials in a school week, he/she will receive a behavior referral and sent to see administration. All three marks can come from the same teacher or classroom aide. If a student were to receive three teachers’, or aides’, initials in one school day, a suspension equaling one school day will be issued.

The A Discipline Sheet has proven to be a great record keeping tool not only for attendance issues, but for behavior as well. Most students learn quickly to settle after the first or second warnings. This system also helps the teachers recognize when a student is having a really bad day and can intervene possibly before a referral is given.

## **DISCIPLINE TICKET SYSTEM**

The following is a list of infractions that are examples of inappropriate behavior that may result in a discipline ticket.

- \$ Gum, candy or soda
- \$ Failure to return home correspondences (H.A.D. notices, progress reports, report card envelopes, permission slips, overdue library books)
- \$ Playing after the bell at recess
- \$ Being out of bounds
- \$ Unexcused tardy
- \$ Inappropriate clothing (Student will be required to wear a school issued uniform)
- \$ Cell phones use

The third discipline ticket in one **six week period**, may result in a referral and a visit to administration. The first two are considered warnings. This referral must be signed and returned to the office the following day. Additional referrals may be issued after every third ticket. At the end of each **six week period**, all students will receive a fresh start. **For understanding purposes, the six week period will align with progress report and report card times.** Repeat offenders for the same offense (for example, chewing gum) may receive referrals for every offense after the **third** ticket during the entire school year. This is considered insubordination and will not be tolerated.

## **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAM**

Students are expected to line up for lunch in an orderly fashion. Students who do not have lunch will immediately sit in the designated area when entering the cafeteria. Students who bring their lunches will also sit at their assigned areas upon entry. Students may not leave the cafeteria until they are dismissed. They should walk to their assigned lunch recess area.

Gerber School makes free and reduced price meals available to qualified students under the provisions of both federal and state law. An approved application form is necessary to participate in the program each year. There is a three (3) day grace period at the beginning of the school year when students may charge meals while their parents' applications are being processed. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Dept. Of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Wash., D.C. 20250-9410 or call 800-795-3272 or 202-720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. (Reduced lunch .40 & breakfast .30), (Paid lunch \$1.35 & breakfast \$.60)

## **RESTROOMS**

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are assigned the use of the student restrooms in the hallway across from the office. It is out of bounds to use other restrooms without permission from a member of the school staff.

## **LOCKERS**

Students may have lockers. Lockers are to be kept clean. Students are reminded that even though the lockers belong to the school, the students are the ones responsible for all items in the lockers. It is important to remember to keep lockers locked and not allow other students to know your combination. Students are reminded that there is no presumption of privacy in regard to their lockers. The school staff may search lockers when there is a reasonable suspicion that something not allowed at school may be in them.

## **TELEPHONES**

Telephones are available at Gerber School for student use with the permission of the teacher and in emergency situations. Telephones are not available to make last minute social arrangements or the like. Gerber School will allow students to bring a cell phone to school for use **only before and after** school. All cell phones are to be kept off during the school day. If a student is using a cell phone during the school day, it may result in a discipline referral. *First cell phone offense will result in phone being taken away and a parent must come to school and retrieve. Second offense will result in phone being returned to student/parent on last day of school.*

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Electronic games, walkmans, i-pods, etc. are disruptive to the education program and are not allowed at school (See Ed. Code #51512). These items will be taken away and can be picked up in

the office at the end of the day by the parent. If this becomes a repeated offense, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

**Classroom Movies:** Teachers are allowed to show movies in their classrooms as per the following guidelines: G & PG movies– teacher discretion no parent note, PG 13 movies – parent note required, R movies – will not be shown at school.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Gerber School's buses are usually full. When students need to ride a different bus, we will work to accommodate your request; however, sometimes that will not be possible. Please check ahead before making such requests.

Providing Gerber School offers tutoring, there will be a 2:25PM and a 3:15PM bus on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. There will only be one afternoon bus at 2:25PM on Wednesdays and Fridays.

**Bike Riding:** If a student chooses to ride a bicycle to and from school, State Law and GUESD Board Policy (BP) 5142.3) require all students to wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet, observe all safety laws and rules, and display courtesy towards other riders and pedestrians.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Students are required by law to be punctual and regular in their attendance. Research shows that regular attendance makes a difference in school achievement; late students miss out on instruction, disrupt the class, and require teachers to do extra work. Furthermore, the school receives state funds only for actual students in attendance. For these reasons, Gerber School works hard to make sure that students are here everyday and absent only for excused reasons. *The only legally excused absences are those for illness, injury, medical appointments, and bereavement within the immediate family.*

When parents make a written request in advance a student may be excused from school for the following reasons: court appearance; observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion; attendance at a religious retreat for no more than four hours per semester; and other reasons requested in writing which are considered legitimate by the principal.

When a student has been absent for unexcused reasons for three times, or has been tardy for unexcused reasons three times, or a combination of both, that student will be declared a truant. Additional unexcused absences or tardies will result in a referral to the District Attorney's Welfare and Attendance investigator. Absences are reported to the Welfare Department when appropriate. **Excessive absences and tardies can affect family aid.**

## **STUDENT/PARENT SERVICES**

### **THE DART TEAM**

DART stands for Disciplined Attendance Review Team. The DART team is a committee of school staff and parents which reviews student cases and develops plans of assistance for students who have recurring, serious violations of school rules or who have excessive absences. Students who have 15 absences in the seventh or eighth grade will meet with the team. **NOTE: DART may recommend to the Superintendent that a student be considered for expulsion in extreme cases.** The team can also make recommendations for students to be placed in the Gerber Community Day School.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND REVIEW BOARD**

The School Attendance and Review Board, called SARB, is composed of representatives of various community agencies, including law enforcement. Students who have persistent behavior problems and parents who are not able to assure their students will attend school regularly appear before this county committee which acts as an agent for the court. SARB also coordinates attendance problems with the Welfare Department so it can adjust family aid when appropriate.

## **STUDENT STUDY TEAM**

The Student Study Team is a committee of school staff and support personnel which reviews the cases of students who are having problems learning. The SST may recommend learning strategies, suggest parental activities, or refer the student for assessment for special services.

## **THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL**

The School Site Council is a committee of parents and school staff which oversees a wide range of programs, monitors school progress, and makes recommendations to the School Board. The SSC meets monthly during the school year. Copies of its agendas and minutes are available and posted.

## **THE SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board is the governing body of the school district; it is composed of five members elected from the community who serve four year terms. The Board sets school policy. It meets monthly; agendas and minutes of its meetings are posted in the hallway of the school. Meetings are public, and all are invited to attend.

## **DISTRICT ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DELAC)**

The DELAC is a committee of parents and school staff that meets in an advisory role to represent all English Learners. The committee helps to develop a master plan for English Learner education and school needs.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **BACKPACKS**

Most students bring backpacks to school. Although backpacks are allowed, and are an easy way to

carry books and supplies, they can cause two major problems. Backpacks take up a lot of room on the bus and in the classroom. We just request that overly large backpacks be left home.

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are made available to seventh and eighth grade students for storing school materials and clothing. These lockers are small and will not hold much more than school books and a binder. The school assumes no liability for materials stored in the lockers and retains the right to search lockers when there is reasonable suspicion unauthorized items are inside.

## **LOST BOOKS, VANDALISM**

Students are responsible for school books issued to them. If they lose those books or damage them, they and their parents are responsible for reimbursing the school for replacement costs. Students who owe money for lost books will not receive report cards, diplomas, or transcripts until their obligation is met.

Parents are responsible under state law for up to \$7,500 for vandalism committed by their children. When vandalism occurs, students and their parents are expected to meet their obligation to cover the cost of repair or replacement.

## **TELEPHONES**

There are no pay phones at Gerber School. The telephone in the office is available to students during their recess and lunch periods for emergency calls. Students and parents are expected to make all arrangements for visiting friends and rides to friends' homes before the students come to school.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

All articles of clothing found in the building, on the playground or on the bus will be placed in the large box in the main hallway. Any items not claimed at the end of each quarter will be given to a local charity.

## **STUDENT BILLS**

Students will be billed for one or more of the following items: Lost or damaged library books or textbooks, outstanding cafeteria charges, materials for special projects and willful destruction of school property, or damage to others property. **Students with outstanding bills will not receive report cards, diplomas, or transcripts until their obligation is met.**

## **RETURNED CHECKS**

Returned checks are subject to a \$25.00 Returned Check Fee that will be the responsibility of the party issuing the check.

## **STUDENT/PARENT SIGNATURE FORM**

Please sign below and return this form to let us know that you and your child have read and understand the contents of this handbook. If you have questions or concerns about any item in this handbook, please call Gerber School at 385-1041 to request an appointment with the principal to discuss the issue on the phone.

We recognize that we must have your cooperation if we are to be successful with your child. Working together we can make the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade school years both positive and successful. Thank you!

We have reviewed this sixth, seventh, and eighth grade handbook and are familiar with its contents and the expectations for these grades.

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Parent/Guardian

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Date

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Student Signature

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Date