

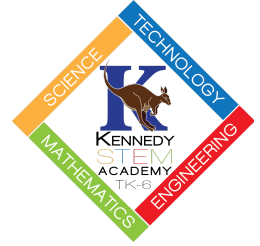


FAMILY-SCHOOL HANDBOOK

26-27

ABC Unified School District
Kennedy S.T.E.M Academy

17500 Belshire Avenue
Artesia, CA 90701
(562) 229 - 7875 FAX (562) 402-9851
Robert Benko, Principal



"Kennedy S.T.E.M. Academy...where a comprehensive curriculum develops a well-rounded child."

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year at Kennedy STEM Academy! As we embark on this exciting journey together, I want to extend a warm welcome to both our returning families and those who are joining us for the first time, especially the families and students coming from Juarez Academy of Engineering and Technology. Our dedicated team of educators are committed to fostering a nurturing and inclusive environment where every child's strengths are celebrated, and their potential is nurtured. This year, we will focus on building strong relationships and providing intentional guidance to support each student's academic and personal growth.

We understand that a successful school year relies on consistent collaboration between the school and families. We encourage open communication and invite you to participate actively in your child's education. Together, we can create meaningful connections that support not only academic excellence but also the behavior and social emotional well-being of our students.

Please take the time to review our Family-School Handbook. This guide provides important information to support you and your child throughout the year. It also helps us ensure the safe and orderly operation of our school which will allow us to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact the school at (562) 229-7875.

I look forward to an enriching and rewarding school year ahead!

Warm regards,

Robert Benko

Robert Benko
Principal, Kennedy STEM Academy

KENNEDY STEM ACADEMY

FAMILY-SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2026-2027

The staff of Kennedy STEM Academy warmly welcomes you and your children to a year filled with many new and exciting learning experiences. We believe that following our school rules and procedures will help us maintain a safe school conducive to a productive learning environment for all our students.

It is very important that you take the time to familiarize your children and yourself with our handbook. This handbook is located on our school website at www.kennedyes.us. Please download it and refer to it during the school year. Please do not hesitate to contact our school office if you have questions or need clarification on a certain matter.

THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH AERIES PARENT PORTAL

My child and I have reviewed the following and agree to abide by these guidelines and policies:

- ▶ Attendance and Tardy Policy
- ▶ Kennedy Code and Expectations Codes
- ▶ School safety (school schedule, access to campus, student drop off/pick up areas, emergency information and traffic laws)
- ▶ Dress Code Policy
- ▶ Anti-Bully Pledge (Student AND Parent)
- ▶ School Rules (items prohibited from school, consequences, cell phone policy, and bullying)
- ▶ Behavior Expectations
- ▶ School - Home Agreement
- ▶ Volunteer Policy

With my electronic signature, I confirm the following: (Parent and Student) I have read and understand the Kennedy School 2026-2027 Family-School Handbook containing the school rules and agree to abide by these guidelines and policies.

(Parent) I have reviewed this information with my child. I will cooperate with school officials to help ensure my child receives the best education and participates in all the wonderful Kennedy STEM Academy experiences possible. I understand it is my responsibility to contact the school if I have any questions or need clarification pertaining to this handbook.

(Student) I have reviewed this information with my parent(s) and understand what is expected from me. I agree to do my part and follow the school rules as outlined in this handbook.

WEBSITE: kennedyes.us

AIM Program

Our AIM Program (Active, Involved, Motivated) is a free after school program which consists of fun and educational clubs led by our own Kennedy teachers. There are (3) AIM sessions per year between October and April and a variety of age appropriate clubs are available during each session. AIM Clubs are generally held twice per week for 45 minutes after school. Registration is required for each participant.

Attendance

Regular attendance is imperative for learning and important for your child's education. Students are deemed truant (in violation of compulsory attendance law) if they have three or more unexcused absences and/or tardies (30 minutes or more in duration) within one school year [Education code section 48260]. If your child is absent, please report it by doing either of the following: 1) Via the link: [Report Absence](#) (also found on ParentSquare) 2) our school website: kennedyes.us 3) Email Mrs. Dina directly to report the absence: dina.martins@abcusd.us 4) Upon return from the absence, your child needs to bring a note, including the following information: teacher's name, date(s) of absence, reason for absence, and a parent signature. Absence notifications to excuse absences will not be accepted after **3 days** from the date of the last day of absence and your student will be marked as Truant. We have found that students, whose parents report an absence online or directly to the office, have a more accurate attendance record than those who just send a note. Law requires absence accountability, therefore parent cooperation is essential.

Important: Should your child accumulate more than 8 excused absences this year, verification will be required for any additional absence. The acceptable means of official verification of an illness would be a doctor's note. If no verification is provided, the absence will be recorded as unexcused (Education Code 46011 and AR5113(b)).

Medical Release Prior to a Student's Return to School: A medical release from a licensed medical provider is required prior to a student returning to school after any of the following: student transported from school via paramedics/ambulance, is hospitalized, suffers a fracture, severe illness or injury (including concussion or TBI), and/or has been receiving home teaching. If sling, boot, crutches, wheelchair, and/ or other assistive medical equipment is needed for return to school, then a letter stating the equipment is needed is required from a licensed medical provider. Please note this documentation must be provided to the school office (not the teacher) before the student returns to school.

Absence - Make-up work

If your child is absent from school, you may request his/her work to be picked up at the end of the school day. Please make your request for classroom work first thing in the morning so the teacher has time to pull the work together. Students have one (1) day to make-up the work for every day they are absent.

Absence - Planned

In cases when a child will be absent for 3 days or more due to a planned absence, parents must notify the teacher and the office staff a minimum of 5 school days prior to the planned absence, in order for an independent study arrangement to be considered. If the arrangement is approved, the parents will then complete the necessary paperwork in order to enter into this agreement and the teacher will prepare work for the child to complete during the absence. **The parents and child must commit to returning the completed work promptly after the completion of the leave. Students will have the number of days out to submit work, after**

their return to school. Example, if a student is out 4 days, they will have 4 days after they return to school, to submit school work. Work must be completed and submitted when it is due in order to receive attendance credit. Please note this may include uploading completed work to Short Term Independent Study Contract on or before the due date. No exceptions will be made.

Early Release

Students may be released during the school day to parents or adults listed on the student emergency contact list only. When picking up your child early, please sign them out via the following link: [Early Release](#) You can find this link on ParentSquare in the Links section as well as our school website: kennedyes.us under the Parents tab. If your child is leaving early for the day due to a medical/dental appointment, or due to an excused reason, please provide a doctor note, medical excuse or documentation supporting the early release. For security purposes, anyone picking up a student must be listed in Aeries Parent Portal and will need to show proper picture identification to office staff. We will then have your child come to the office. For safety reasons, no child can be released directly from the classroom or from a field trip destination.

Student early departures during the last 15 minutes of the school day can make it challenging for teachers and students to remain engaged and complete end of day routines. Therefore, to ensure a smooth dismissal process for all, students will not be released during the final 15 minutes of the day unless there is an emergency or a previously arranged appointment where the teacher has been given ample notice.

Tardies

We expect students to arrive at school on time. **Parents are required to enter the office to sign in students when arriving tardy (arriving to campus after 7:45am/when gates have been closed) to school.** Students who are tardy miss learning and disrupt the learning of others. When your child is tardy multiple times, a letter will be sent home from the school with a copy of the attendance report. Upon a student receiving 15 tardies, a SART Meeting (Student Attendance Review Team) will be scheduled with the Principal and Parent Liaison. In order for a tardy to be excused, a medical note must accompany the student upon arrival the morning of the tardy.

Truancy

Education code, Section 48200 requires students between ages of 6 and 18 to attend school full time. Students are to be seated and ready to work when the bell rings. Habitual Truancy is defined as a student who has three or more unexcused absences and/or tardies (30 minutes or more in duration) within one school year (Ed. Code 48260)

Before and After School Supervision

Our gates open all year at 7:15 a.m. In the case of a rainy day schedule, students should report to the multi-purpose room. Students will remain there until they are dismissed to their classrooms at 7:35 a.m.

Unfortunately, unless enrolled in the ABC EXCELS (Engage, X-Plore, Connect, Empower, Lead, Succeed) after school program, we do not provide supervision after school, therefore students must be promptly picked up or go directly home. Students enrolled in EXCELS must either be picked up at dismissal on time, or report directly to EXCELS as they will not be allowed to wait in the school office to be picked up after school. While we know that traffic and parking are an issue around our school, it is very important that you **not** have your child wait for you at Loma Park behind our campus. There is no supervision at the park and your child's safety is very important to us. While students are expected to be picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal

time, if you know you will not be arriving on time, please instruct your child to meet you in front of the school near the office. Ed Code 44807 states the following: Every teacher/administrator in the public schools shall hold pupils to a strict account for their conduct on the way to and from school, on the playgrounds, or during recess.

Please mark your calendars for all minimum days to avoid late pick-ups. If students participate in any of our after school AIM Clubs, they must report directly to the appropriate club after school. Students not picked up on time will not be allowed to remain in the AIM program. If you would like more information on the EXCELS after school program on campus, which serves students of working parents, you may call them at (562) 229-7985, visit their website at: [ABC EXCELS](#) or email them at: abcexcels@abcusd.us.

Bicycles

Students may ride their bicycles to school if they have a lock. Bicycles are locked in the bicycle rack located in front of Room 5 during the day. All students who ride their bicycle to school must wear a bicycle helmet and have a bicycle parking permit on file. For a bicycle parking permit, please come to the Kennedy office.

Kennedy STEM Academy is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen bicycles.

Birthday Parties/Special Occasions

Sorry, but birthday parties are not permitted. District policy and good instructional practice dictate that we not celebrate individual birthdays with cakes, cupcakes, cookies, candy or balloons. Balloons can be especially distracting during the school day therefore, they will not be allowed on campus during the school day. Teachers generally acknowledge a child's birthday in some way.

Booster Club

Our Kennedy Booster Club is made up of dedicated staff and parent volunteers committed to building a strong school community for our children and raising funds to support enriching activities that benefit our students throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to get involved and join monthly meetings designed to work together to enhance the educational experience of every Kennedy student.

Cell Phone/Smart Watch Policy

While teachers may maintain individual classroom policies that allow or restrict the use of mobile devices during class time for educational purposes, in order to ensure uninterrupted instructional activities and school functions, our policy is that if a cell phone/smart watch is brought to school and is not being used for educational purposes and/or with permission from a teacher/staff member, it must remain turned off and not visible on campus during school hours, including any after school programs (AIM, EXCELS).

If a student does not follow the guidelines, the following consequences will occur:

1st time – Warning issued to the student. Phone/watch removed from student possession for remainder of the day. The phone/watch will be returned to the student upon dismissal from school after parent contact.

2nd time – The phone/watch will be removed from student possession and a parent notified by the teacher. Phone/watch will be returned to the student upon dismissal from school.

3rd time – The phone/watch will be removed from student possession and a parent must come to school to meet with the teacher. After the meeting, the phone/watch will be given to the parent.

4th time - The phone/watch will be removed from student possession and a parent must meet with the principal regarding the student's defiance to school rules. Further defiance of this policy may result in more serious consequences.

Per ABC District Policy (cf. 5131(c)) If a disruption occurs or a student uses any mobile communications device for improper activities, a school employee shall direct the student to turn off the device and/or shall confiscate it. If the school employee finds it necessary to confiscate the device, he/she shall return it at the end of the class period or school day.

Kennedy STEM Academy is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen cell phones/smart watches.

Class Adjustment

Classroom assignments may have to be changed if our projected enrollment declines or increases. We ask for your continued support if class changes are necessary. All changes are finalized by September 23.

Code of Conduct

The code of Conduct is intended to assist parents, students, school employees, and guardians to identify and resolve issues of conduct that may arise at school. It is designed to guide all of us in our dealings with other parents, the school, and the wider community. This Code of Conduct is written as a set of general principles, rather detailed prescriptions, which are in line with the school's values and expectations. It stands beside, but does not, of course, exclude or replace the rights and obligations of individuals under federal or state law. It is essential in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. The Code is intended to demonstrate that both parents or guardians and teachers work together for the benefit of our children. It will remind us to listen to our children as they tell us their reality but that a different reality may possibly exist elsewhere. The Code provides an approach to seek an intervention in bringing about an equitable and peaceful solution to the situation.

Kennedy's School Community Values...

- A non-judgmental attitude towards all people
- Seeking to understand the situation of others
- Adopting a cooperative attitude in working with others
- Developing open communication skills
- Working respectfully with other people
- Working from a basis of trust
- Being responsible for our actions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Respecting differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions

Expectations for students, parents or guardians and staff:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy
- To conduct ourselves in a way that is in keeping with the values of Kennedy
- To maintain a positive and cooperative attitude
- To attempt to resolve issues using calm and respectful dialogue directly with the individual concerned
- To follow the meeting norms if a conflict arises
- To be listened to and clearly communicated with, in regard to the child's education.
- That confidentiality over sensitive issues is respected by staff

Communication

Communication with your child's teacher and the school is essential and will ensure student success by staying informed. Each teacher will communicate with parents through Parent Square so be sure to get connected to the platform so that you are always up to date on your child's classroom information. For up-to-date information on upcoming Kennedy school events, please visit our school website at kennedyes.us and ParentSquare. A monthly calendar of events is also available on our monthly newsletter distributed at the beginning of each month. Mark your calendars and plan ahead! **Parents are encouraged to frequent ParentSquare which is where current news, upcoming events, and reminders are posted.** We also post calendar events on our electronic marquee, and the bulletin board outside the front office.

Aeries Parent Portal:

ABCUSD is requiring parents to activate their online ABC Unified Parent Portal account. Benefits to an account is parent access to student academic progress, attendance, contact information, test scores, access to teachers, and other important student data. It is essential that all parents access and activate the ABC Parent Portal at www.parentportal.abcusd.us and keep the contact information and notification settings updated for ParentSquare at all times.

ParentSquare:

Important: Kennedy uses the ParentSquare feature in the Aeries Parent Portal to communicate with parents via text, by phone or email depending on your preferences. Upon enrollment, ParentSquare automatically generates an account for each parent, using their preferred email address and phone number. We require all parents to access their accounts, and if feasible, download the mobile app and update their preferences on when and how they are notified. **If you opt out of receiving notifications or if you are unable to download the app, it is your responsibility to regularly check ParentSquare for updates and notifications pertaining to your student, so that you are aware of upcoming classroom and school events, activities and other pertinent information.** If you need help downloading or accessing ParentSquare, please visit the link below:

[How to Download the ParentSquare App](#)

Crosswalks

Crosswalks are strategically placed near the school to ensure pedestrian safety. Crossing guards are positioned there to guide and direct pedestrians through the crosswalks during student arrival and dismissal times. Our nearest crosswalks are located on the corners of Artesia/Belshire, 176th St./Belshire, and Koudekerk/Norwalk Blvd. We strongly advise all parents and students walking to and from school to use the crosswalk at all times. Please follow the direction of the crossing guards as their best interest is in the safety of pedestrians as well as drivers.

Dress Code

In accordance with Board of Education policy and CCR Title 5 302, boys and girls at Kennedy STEM Academy are not allowed to wear the following articles of clothing for safety reasons or because they are considered inappropriate attire:

- ◆ Closed toe shoes must be worn at all times. Crocs, backless shoes, platforms, flip-flops, sandals and "skate shoes" can be a safety hazard and therefore are not acceptable.
- ◆ No make-up or long fingernails
- ◆ Clothing must fit and be size appropriate. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times. Ripped jeans must be worn with leggings underneath so as to not reveal skin above the knees.
- ◆ Tank tops, thin-strapped tops, spaghetti strap tops, bare midriffs, backless, see-through or sheer tops are prohibited. As a guide, boys and girls tank tops should have a two inch width on the top of the shoulders.
- ◆ Tops should cover the midriff area completely. Midriffs should not be visible when students raise arms up in the air.
- ◆ Short skirts and short shorts are prohibited. Garment must be at least the length of the student's arms to their fingertips, at their sides. (Leggings can be worn underneath.)
- ◆ No long chains hanging from shirt or pants pockets
- ◆ No long, dangling-type earrings or hoop earrings larger than the size of a dime or any jewelry that creates a safety hazard
- ◆ Hats or head covering on boys or girls are to be worn facing forward and for protection from the sun only. Hats or jacket hoods are to be removed upon entering a school building. Hats or head coverings for medical or religious reasons are acceptable at all times.
- ◆ No gloves (inside rooms), wristbands, bandanas, purses or excessive jewelry
- ◆ No writing/designs/pictures on clothing that is inappropriate for elementary school (ie. smoking, alcohol, violent, sexual in nature/innuendos, etc.)

Any article of clothing or accessory that is a distraction or hazard to the student or others may result in a warning and removal or phone call to parent to bring an alternate item of clothing for the child. Additional dress code violations may result in disciplinary action. It is one of our goals to provide a quality education in a safe and wholesome environment. We appreciate your continued support and cooperation.

Emergency Procedures for Parents

Disaster: In case of a crisis/disaster situation, all students will be assembled by class, outside in the playground/field area. An equipped first-aid station (red-colored canopy) will be set up in case of injuries and other medical demands. Students will be released to parents and other authorized individuals with proper picture identification, only through the release area (green-colored canopy) at the gate on 176th Street as the rest of the campus will be secured. ***It is therefore very important to have your emergency contact information up to date at all times should the need arise to release students promptly during an emergency situation.*** Kennedy will communicate and update all parents through ParentSquare/Aeries Communications as necessary. It cannot be emphasized enough how important it is to have your contact information and notification preferences updated and current at all times

Active Shooter/Lock-Down: In case of a lock-down, students and staff will remain secured inside classrooms or administration buildings until the incident is officially declared over by police or another authorized entity. We ask that you not call the school at this time as this only

ties up the school phone lines and communication with authorities and district officials is essential at this time. We also ask that you do not attempt to pick up your student during a lock-down. To ensure everyone's safety, no one will be allowed to enter/exit our campus during this time. Kennedy will communicate and update all parents through ParentSquare in Aeries Parent Portal and will inform you promptly when the lock-down is lifted. Unless otherwise instructed, the school day will resume normal activities once the incident is declared over and the campus is deemed safe for all staff and students.

Fair Practice

Schools may not make students pay for any educational activity offered by the school, whether curricular or extracurricular. The costs associated with extracurricular programs are considerable. Costumes/uniforms, transportation, equipment, rentals, meals, and supplies are just some examples of the expenses required to offer these opportunities for students. In most cases, the school cannot afford to fund the full amount of these costs. Fortunately, our students have benefited from generous parents and a supportive community whose donations have allowed us to provide a variety of programs and activities. However, programs or activities will have to be curtailed or eliminated if we do not receive enough donations to fund them.

Fever Free Policy

Students will be sent home with temperatures of 100° or higher and must stay home until they have been fever free without analgesics for 24 hours. ABC District Policy supersedes doctor notes when it pertains to the fever free policy, such notes will be honored AFTER the required 24 hour fever-free period.

Field Trips

In order for students to attend school field trips throughout the year, a [Field Trip Permission Slip](#) must be completed and on file. No exceptions will be made. Student participation in all field trips is voluntary. By completing a Field Trip Permission Slip, this will allow your child to participate in any and all field trips for the school year. If you would like to authorize your child to participate in school field trips for the 26-27 school year, please complete the [Field Trip Permission Slip](#). The form is also found on the Forms and Permissions section of Parent Square.

In order for adults to attend school field trips throughout the year, an [Adult Excursion Form](#) must be completed and on file. The form is also found on the Forms and Permissions section of Parent Square.

Ingress and Egress of Students

Ingress

The school will be open with supervision from 7:15am. Breakfast will also be available at this time. Students in grades 1st-6th grade will enter the campus in the morning via the side gate on 176th Street. TK and Kindergarten students will enter the campus through the kindergarten playground gate by the office. Our SDC/Bridges students will enter campus through the parking lot gate. All other students must use their assigned gate. Please contact the office if you have a special circumstance that needs to be considered to use a different gate such as entering the same gate as a sibling. If it is raining, all students will report to the MPR and remain there until dismissed to class.

Drop Off

During morning drop off for 1st-6th grade students, cones will be placed along 176th Street to create a car lane that will facilitate the morning drop-off of students. Please notice this is not a park-and-wait lane, it is a drop-off lane. Be prepared to pull all the way forward, and do not get out of the car to let your child out. Remember, this is a “fast route” to safely drop off students so be ready to drop off students when it is your turn and promptly drive away. If you have to get out of the car to assist your child, please park *outside the cone area*. Also, please be courteous of our neighbors, and *do not block their driveways to drop off children, do not double park, park illegally, speed or make illegal u-turns*. This is unsafe for everyone and is not acceptable. Please follow traffic laws at all times. TK/Kinder families can park in front of the school and walk their child to the entrance gate.

Egress

We have 5 dismissal gates at Kennedy. Students will be released on a daily basis, from the following gates:

TK Gate	TK students only
Kindergarten gate	K1 and K2 only
	<i>*please note that for TK & Kinder pick up, adults must come to the Kinder gate to pick up a child, students will not be released on their own.</i>
Gate near front office	Rooms 9, 10, 12 16 (1st-2nd Grades)
Gate near parking lot	Rooms 11, 13, 14, 23, 24 (3rd,SDC/BRIDGES)
Gate entrance at 176 th St.	Interim Housing rooms IH 1-8 (4th-6th Grades)

Pick Up

During afternoon pick up in front of the school, cones will be placed along Belshire Ave. to create a car lane that will facilitate the afternoon pick-up of 1st and 2nd grade students. Please notice this is not a park-and-wait lane, it is a pick-up lane. Be prepared to pull all the way forward. Remember, this is a “fast route” to safely pick-up students, so be ready to pick-up students when it is your turn and promptly drive away. TK/Kinder parents will need to find a parking spot outside this zone and pick-up at their respective gates.

Fourth - sixth grade students exiting the gate on 176th St. are not allowed to walk through the parking lot. They must walk to the sidewalk then walk down toward Belshire Ave. Also, please be courteous of our neighbors, and *do not block their driveways to pick-up children, do not double park, park illegally, speed or make illegal u-turns*. This is unsafe for everyone and is not acceptable. Please follow traffic laws at all times.

While we know that traffic and parking are an issue around our school, it is very important that you **not** have your child wait for you at Loma Park behind our campus. There is no supervision at the park and your child's safety is very important to us. While students are expected to be picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal time, if you know you will not be arriving on time, please instruct your child to meet you in front of the school near the office.

If you instruct your child to walk home to/from school, please encourage them to use any and all necessary precautions to ensure a safe trip home. It is also in everyone's best interest that they behave properly en route to their destination and not engage in any unlawful activity as they will be held strictly accountable for their actions on their way to and from school. See Ed Code 44807 – “Every teacher/administrator in the public schools shall hold pupils to a strict account for their conduct on the way to and from school...”

Early Release

Students may be released during the school day to parents or adults listed on the student emergency contact list only. When picking up your child early, please sign them out via the following link: [Early Sign-out](#) (link also available on ParentSquare in the Links section and on our school website: kennedyes.us). If your child is leaving early for the day due to a medical/dental appointment, or due to an excused reason, please provide a doctor note, medical excuse or documentation supporting the early release. For security purposes, anyone picking up a student will need to show proper picture identification to office staff. We will then have your child come to the office. For safety reasons, no child can be released directly from the classroom or from a field trip destination.

Student early departures during the last 15 minutes of the school day can make it challenging for teachers and students to remain engaged and complete end of day routines. Therefore, to ensure a smooth dismissal process for all, students will not be released during the final 15 minutes of the day unless there is an emergency or a previously arranged appointment where the teacher has been given ample notice.

Rainy Day Release

Students will be released from their respective gates even on rainy days.

Injured Students

If a student becomes injured and reports to school using any of the following: crutches, splint, brace, bandage, sling, cast, a boot or any other protective medical gear, they must have with them [documentation from a licensed medical provider](#) stating the equipment is needed as well as detailed instructions including restrictions that need to be followed during school hours.

Library Media Center

For success in reading, students need many opportunities to interact with good books by reading them, and by hearing them read aloud both at school and at home. For this reason, we allow our students to check out books and take them home for a number of days. We need you and your child to accept responsibility to return them on time and in good condition. Parents are expected to pay the replacement price for any lost or damaged books. All library payments must be made in the school office.

Lost and Found

To avoid the loss of personal items such as student sweaters, jackets, lunch boxes, etc., please make sure to label all student items. Our Lost and Found area is located on the wall, under the breezeway near Room 7 if you need to locate a lost item. Throughout the year, many articles of clothing are left unclaimed, *therefore we urge you to immediately check the Lost and Found wall as soon as you become aware an article of clothing is missing.* **We will not assume responsibility for lost or damaged items.** ALL items left unclaimed are donated to a local charity three times per year; the day before the beginning of Winter Break, the day before the beginning of Spring Break and on the last day of the school year. Please make a note of this and have your students check this section regularly.

Meals

Breakfast is served daily from 7:15 a.m to 7:40 a.m each morning. In order to give students sufficient time to eat breakfast before the bell rings, breakfast will not be served after 7:40 a.m. Please make sure your child arrives on time to school to receive breakfast each morning.

The daily lunch schedule is as follows: TK: 11:20 - 12:00, Kindergarten: 12:00 - 12:40
4th - 6th grade: 11:20-12:00 p.m, 1st - 3rd grade: 12:00-12:40 p.m. and a school lunch and breakfast are free to all students although students may bring their own lunch.

Lunch Drop-offs are not allowed. A free, healthy breakfast and lunch are available for all our students each day. Please plan accordingly if you choose for your child to bring lunch from home, and make sure they have their meal with them when they arrive at school. If your child at any time forgets to eat breakfast or does not bring their lunch, they will be asked to go to our school kitchen to obtain a free school lunch during their lunch recess or enjoy a breakfast before 7:40am. Please visit [ABC Meal Menus](#) for daily menu options.

Food deliveries for students are not allowed. As food delivery services become more popular, it is understandable that parents would want to have meals delivered to school, however, these are not allowed. Please plan accordingly and send your student to school with a home snack/lunch or take advantage of our free breakfast/lunch option available for all students.

Medicine

The school must have on file an [authorization form](#) signed by parents and physician (1 per medication) to administer medicine to children during the school day. All medicine must be in a labeled container showing the doctor's prescription. Authorization forms are available in the office. Students are not permitted over-the-counter medicines (e.g. aspirins, cough medicines, throat lozenges, vitamins) in their possession at any time.

Parking

Our Kennedy parking lot is reserved for Kennedy staff and school buses only from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. daily.

DO NOT USE SCHOOL PARKING LOT TO DROP OFF OR PICK UP STUDENTS.

Personal Possessions

Please label student's sweaters, jackets, lunch boxes, tumblers, etc. Children should not bring toys, purses, balls, money, or valuable items to school. Toys interfere with learning and often cause problems. If a child brings an inappropriate item to school without teacher permission, the teacher or principal will return it to the parent. *ABC Unified School District is not insured for the loss of personal property belonging to students.* Therefore, we ask that students not bring personal property to school. **We will not assume responsibility for lost or damaged items.** ALL items left unclaimed are donated to a local charity three times per year; the day before the beginning of Winter Break, the day before Spring Break and on the last day of the school year.

Skateboards/Skates/Scooters/Heeleys

Skateboards/skates/manual and/or motor scooters/Heeleys are **NOT** permitted. Please do not allow your child to ride these items to school. These items pose a safety problem.

Technology

Electronic Information Services are available to students throughout the ABC Unified School District. These services include the Internet and other resources delivered through the District's networks. We believe in the value of electronic services as a tool to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication with the support and supervision of parents, teachers and support staff. It is the right of each family to decide whether or not their child is allowed to access the Internet and other network services. The ABCUSD will be diligent in its efforts to protect students accessing inappropriate material. We hold students accountable for appropriate behavior when using the Internet and other electronic services. The use of Electronic Information Services in the ABCUSD is a privilege, not a right. No part of the computer system, including email, personal files, data or programs shall be subject to any right of privacy. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges and other disciplinary action, as appropriate. If an electronic device is damaged or lost, the parent/student will be notified of the cost to repair or replace and it is the student's and parents' responsibility to pay for the device.

Textbook/Electronic Device Replacement Costs

Students are assigned a state-adopted textbook as well as an electronic device at the beginning of the school year. It is the student's and parents' responsibility to maintain the condition of the books and devices. If either is damaged or lost, it is the student's and parents' responsibility to pay for the damage costs or replacement of the item within 30 days.

Traffic Safety

The safety of children is everyone's business. We need to think of children first and our convenience second. *If you are unable to drop off or pick up a child safely, drive around again until you can.*

PLEASE DO NOT DOUBLE PARK IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL. Double parking is dangerous and blocks traffic. Children walking between parked cars can be seriously injured. Please be safe and courteous.

PLEASE USE THE CROSSWALKS. Crossing in the middle of the street is dangerous. It also blocks traffic. Use the crosswalks with the crossing guard.

PLEASE BE COURTEOUS TO OUR NEIGHBORS. Do not block or park in their driveways to drop off children. Do not double park, park illegally, speed or make illegal u-turns. This is unsafe for everyone and is not acceptable. Please follow traffic laws at all times.

PLEASE DO NOT USE THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT TO DROP OFF OR PICK UP STUDENTS. The lot is reserved for staff and school buses from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. daily.

Visiting the School

We encourage parents to visit school and participate in school activities; however, all classroom visitations should be prearranged with the teacher ahead of time (School Board Policy 1250a).

ALL VISITORS must sign-in and out at the office and pick up a visitor's badge when entering the campus between the hours of 7:40 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. ABCUSD's visitor management system is used to verify the identity of a visitor, keep track of check-in and checkout times, and print custom visitor labels. It also provides a consistent system to track visitors and volunteers across the district. The system provides custom alerts and screens visitor information with a database from Megan's Law.

Visitors will need to provide a government issued photo id the first time and any following times will only need to provide their name. All Visitors must check in with the office for all events during the school day while students are in session.

If your desire is to just observe your child's class, we allow no more than 30 minutes a day. If a conference is desired with the teacher, an appointment should be set with the teacher during non-instructional time.

If a conference is desired with the principal, an appointment should be set with Mrs. Evelyn Lopez, Principal's Secretary, in the front office or by email at evelyn.lopez@abcusd.us. **Please keep in mind that if you are interested in discussing your child or a classroom incident or concern, a meeting with the teacher should have taken place prior to scheduling a meeting with the Principal.**

Volunteers

Volunteers who volunteer 5 hours or more per week, are required to provide proof of TB clearance, if working with students. You can contact our nurse to find out the schedule and locations of clinics in our district that provide this service for a small fee. The test must be retaken every 4 years.

For safety and liability purposes, volunteers are not permitted to bring non-enrolled children with them while volunteering on campus or in classrooms. We appreciate your support in helping us provide a safe learning environment for our students.

Fingerprinting

A volunteer who works five (5) or more hours per week must be fingerprinted. The cost for fingerprinting will be taken care of by the school site where you volunteer. Human Resources will process your fingerprints and will communicate with the school site when you are cleared to begin working at the school site. Please refer to the Volunteer Acknowledgement Form at the end of the handbook for more detailed information.

Kennedy teachers welcome and very much appreciate the much needed help they receive from parent/guardian volunteers in the classroom. There is however a certain proper code of behavior which volunteers are asked to follow while in the classroom.

- All volunteers are expected to be discreet/confidential and not share student information with other parents.

- Please consider that teachers pre-plan their days with volunteer support in mind. Therefore, volunteers are expected to attend on the day and time they have agreed to volunteer. If a volunteer is unable to fulfill their assignment on a particular day, it would be most appreciated if they could contact the teacher or office in a timely manner so that other arrangements can be made if necessary.
- Classroom volunteers are there for the **entire** classroom at the direction of the teacher. This is not the appropriate setting to just observe your child in class. Other arrangements can be made for observation purposes (please see visiting section)

Other Important Reminders

Should you be injured while you are volunteering at our school, you are not covered by the District's workers' compensation program. However, it is extremely important that you report all injuries to the school site immediately. An accident report form will be completed by the office staff.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

Kennedy STEM Academy implements the PBIS framework to create positive behavioral and academic environments for our students. Kennedy Kangaroos will follow our Kangaroo Code in all parts of our school. We use a positive acknowledgement system to effectively recognize appropriate behavior, and effective consequences and supports for inappropriate behavior. The following are our school rules and behavior matrix.

KANGAROO CODE

AREA	BE RESPONSIBLE	BE RESPECTFUL	PERSEVERE
HALLWAY/ TRANSITIONS	W - WALKING FEET A - ALL EYES FORWARD L - LEVEL 0 K - KEEP HANDS, FEET, AND OBJECTS UNDER CONTROL 		• PRACTICE SELF-CONTROL 
PLAYGROUND	• FOLLOW PLAYWORKS RULES • REMAIN IN DESIGNATED AREA FOR THE GAME 	• RETURN EQUIPMENT PROPERLY • LISTEN TO ADULTS 	• PRACTICE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP • INCLUDE EVERYONE 
EATING AREAS	• WALKING FEET • VOICE LEVEL 2 	• EAT YOUR OWN FOOD • LISTEN TO ADULTS 	FOLLOW DISMISSAL PROCEDURE 
RESTROOMS	• VOICE LEVEL 1 • GIVE OTHERS PRIVACY 	• WAIT YOUR TURN PATIENTLY • FLUSH THE TOILET • WASH YOUR HANDS 	• PUT TRASH IN THE TRASH CAN • LEAVE THE RESTROOM 
MPR	• EYES WATCHING • EARS LISTENING 	• VOICES QUIET • CALM BODY 	• BE PRESENT AND ENGAGED • LISTEN TO ADULTS 

*See our PBIS Parent Handbook for more information including reward and discipline procedures.

Kennedy is a Bully Free Zone!

We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally, and feel safe, secure, and accepted, regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion or nationality.

We do NOT allow bullying. Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, spitting, name-calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, or excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," "just teasing" or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

We do NOT allow bullying. Bullying can be defined as:

1. The bully is trying to gain control of the target – unequal balance of power.
2. The target wants to stop the bully's behavior; the bully doesn't.
3. Repeated – Happens more than once over a period of time
4. Planned and done on purpose
5. Affected physically, socially, and/or emotionally.
6. Cannot be resolved through mediation.

Many times what parents and students call "bullying" is really a "mean moment".

Mean moments can be defined as:

1. Once or twice – an isolated event (doesn't happen regularly)
2. Someone is being hurt on purpose
3. Reaction to a strong feeling or emotion – usually anger.

In either situation, the adults on campus will appropriately address the student behaviors. Neither situation is acceptable.

Students should:

1. Value student differences and treat all others with respect.
2. Not become involved in bullying incidents, or be a bully.
3. Be aware of the school's policies and support system with regard to bullying.
4. Report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying to a faculty member.
5. Be alert in places around the school where there may be less adult supervision such as restrooms.
6. Support students who have been or are subjected to bullying.
7. Talk to teachers and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying.
8. Work with other students and staff to help the school deal with bullying effectively.
9. Encourage teachers to discuss bullying issues in the classroom.
10. Provide a good role model for younger students and support them if bullying occurs.
11. Participate fully and contribute to assemblies dealing with bullying.

Parents should:

1. Keep ourselves and our children informed and aware of school anti-bullying policies.
2. Work in partnership with the school to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences and promoting sensitivity to others.
3. Discuss regularly with our children their feelings about school work, friendships and relationships.
4. Inform staff of changes in our children's behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child's behavior at school.
5. Alert staff if any bullying has occurred.

School – Home Agreement **For Promoting Student Achievement**

It is important that school and families work together to help students achieve high academic standards. Through a process that includes teachers and parents, the following are agreed upon roles and responsibilities that we, as partners, will carry out to support student success in school and in life.

As a teacher, I will:

- Provide high quality instruction using district-adopted curriculum in a supportive and effective learning environment.
- Endeavor to motivate my students to learn.
- Have high expectations for every child both academically and behaviorally (Kangaroo Code).
- Provide appropriate and meaningful homework to reinforce learning. (K-3: an average of 30 minutes; 4-6: an average of 60 minutes)
- Communicate regularly regarding students' academic and behavior progress.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning.
- Respect the school, staff, students, and families.

As a student, I will:

- Come to school, on time, ready and motivated to learn the content standards for my grade level.
- Bring necessary materials, completed homework, and assignments to school.
- Ask for help when I need it.
- Know and follow school and classroom rules.
- Not engage in any bullying behaviors and will practice Kennedy Kangaroo Code traits.
- Communicate regularly with my parents/guardians and teachers so they can help me be successful in school.
- Take home and give any papers to my parents/guardians that my teacher gives me.
- Limit my time watching TV and playing video games and increase my time studying and reading every day after school.
- Respect the school, staff, students, and families.

As a parent/guardian or family member, I will:

- Provide a quiet time and place for homework, encourage my child to complete his/her work.
- Provide my child a healthy breakfast, lunch, snack in appropriate serving sizes.
- Limit time and monitor TV viewing, video, and computer games.
- Read to my child or encourage my child to read every day (a minimum of 20 minutes grades K-3; a minimum of 40 minutes grades 4-6).
- Ensure that my child attends school every day, arrives on time, and gets adequate sleep.
- Regularly monitor my child's progress in school by communicating any concerns with the teacher, and review any papers my child brings home.
- Participate in school activities such as parent/teacher conferences, Back to School Night, Open House, school decision making and/or volunteering.
- Reinforce our school's Kennedy Kangaroo Code traits at home.
- Respect the school, staff, students, and families.

An electronic acknowledgment and signature through the Data Confirmation Process is required upon review and agreement of the above by all parties.

2026-27 Frequently Used Links

Attendance

[Report an Absence&Student Early Sign Out](#)

Breakfast/Lunch Menu

[Nutrition Services](#)

[Nutrition Services Menus](#)

Field Trips

Parents/Guardians

-Complete [2026-27 Student Field Trip Permission-Voluntary Attendance](#) for their child

Adult Chaperones

are required to:

-have their ID scanned through the RAPTOR system

-complete the [2026-27 Adult Voluntary Excursion/Field Trip Notice and Medical Authorization](#)

These forms can also be found on the Forms and Permissions section of Parent Square.

Volunteers

Volunteers

Please refer to the 26-27 Volunteer Acknowledgement Form below.



ABC Unified School District

16700 Norwalk Boulevard, Cerritos, CA 90703 (562) 926-5566

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Tatiana Yokoyama Bui, Esq. • Mrs. Jean McHatton
Mrs. Leticia Mendoza • Mr. Ernie Nishii • Mr. Francisco Noyola
Dr. Olga Rios • Mrs. Soo Yoo

**Superintendent
Dr. Gina Zietlow**

2026-2027

Dear Volunteer:

Thank you very much for volunteering your time for our students. We truly appreciate your help! The process for becoming a volunteer is outlined below.

Mandated Reporter

SB 848 amended Penal Code Section 11165.7 and Education Code Section 44691 to include volunteers as mandated reporters. All persons, including volunteers, who **“interact with pupils outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupil’s parent or guardian or a school employee”** are required to complete the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act Training.

Fingerprinting

A volunteer who works five (5) or more hours per week must be fingerprinted. There is a cost associated with fingerprinting which may be taken care of by the school site where you volunteer. Human Resources will process your fingerprints and will communicate with the school site when you are cleared to begin working at the school site. Excluded from this regulation will be parents and/or legal guardians who will be under the immediate supervision and direct control of certificated personnel at all times, with the exception of parents and/or legal guardians attending any overnight field trips such as 6th grade camp, Sacramento State Capital trip, band field trips, etc.

The State of California Education Code Section 35021 states that a person, who is required to register as a sex offender pursuant to Section 290 of the Penal Code, **may not** serve as a volunteer in any capacity in a school district. School sites will also verify this information using the Raptor System that screens all visitors who enter a school campus.

Education Codes 45125 and 45125.1 prohibits contact with students by anyone who has been convicted of a serious or violent felony.

Tuberculosis Screening

All persons who serve as a volunteer at a school site and are in contact with students five (5) hours or more per week must provide proof of a current tuberculin test (TB test) to be kept on file at the school site. The screening must be completed within 60 days prior to your assignment and must be retaken every four years. Please see the school secretary for a list of times and sites where you may obtain the test for a nominal fee.

Pre-School Immunization Information

As of January 1, 2016, California adopted Senate Bill (SB) 792 regarding immunizations in day care facilities. The provisions of SB 792 prohibit a person from volunteering at a daycare center if he or she has not been immunized against influenza, pertussis, and measles each year. All volunteers of the District who work in Child Development classrooms in any capacity shall be required to provide verification of immunization against influenza, pertussis, and measles every year. Each volunteer also needs to provide proof of receiving an influenza vaccination between August 1 and December 1 of each year.

A volunteer is exempt from the requirements only under any of the following circumstances:

- The volunteer submits a written statement from a licensed physician declaring that because of the person's physical condition or medical circumstances, immunization is not safe.
- The volunteer submits a written statement from a licensed physician providing that the person has evidence of current immunity to influenza, pertussis, and measles.
- The volunteer submits a written declaration that he or she has declined the influenza vaccination. This exemption applies only to the influenza vaccine. A person cannot decline the pertussis and measles immunization requirement.

COVID-19 Information

At Home Screening for Volunteers

Volunteers must complete an at Home Screening and be symptom-free prior to volunteering each day. Volunteers who are symptomatic or test positive for COVID-19 must stay at home and contact the site supervisor.

Before reporting to volunteer, ask yourself:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Do I have a fever (100.4 or higher)? | or a runny nose? |
| ● Do I have chills? | ● Am I experiencing loss of smell or taste? |
| ● Do I have a cold with a cough? | ● Am I experiencing vomiting, diarrhea or any other symptoms? ● |
| ● Do I have a sore throat? | Am I experiencing any other symptoms of being sick? |
| ● Do I have a headache? | ● Have I been exposed to a person who has COVID-19 or has the above symptoms. |
| ● Do I have any unexplained muscle or body aches? | |
| ● Am I having difficulty breathing? | |
| ● Am I experiencing fatigue? | |
| ● Am I experiencing nasal congestion | |

If your answer is **YES** to one or more of the above questions or test positive for COVID-19, **DO NOT** report for volunteer service, call the site supervisor.

Other Important Reminders

All secondary coaches must follow the District's certification/clearance process for coaching regardless if they are parents or volunteers.

Should you be injured while you are volunteering at our school, you are not covered by the District's workers' compensation program. However, it is extremely important that you report all injuries to the school site immediately. An accident report form will be completed by the office staff.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at (562) 229-7875.

ABC Unified School District
2026-2027
Volunteer Acknowledgement

I will be volunteering in a **preschool** setting. (Required to submit waiver or show proof of influenza **vaccination** between August 1 and December 1 every year.)

I will be volunteering **5 or more hours per week**. (Required to complete **Fingerprinting** Clearance and **TB** Screening.)

I will be interacting with pupils outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupils' parents or guardians or a school employee. (Required to complete **Mandated Reporter Training**.)

By signing below, you are verifying that you have read the District Volunteer Letter and that you are in compliance with Penal Code Section 11165.7; Education Code Sections 35021, 45125, 45125.1, 44691; and Health and Safety Code Sections 1597.055, 1597.54, 1596.7995, and 1596.8662.

If I sustain an injury while volunteering, I agree that I have no rights to workers compensation benefits because I am not an employee. I agree to indemnify and hold ABC Unified School District harmless from any and all liability, claims, debt, damages, demands, action or causes of action arising out of, or in any manner connected with my actions or inaction.

Name (please print) Birthdate (Month/Date)* Signature Home Telephone Number Street

Address City, State, Zip Code

Student Name Teacher Name *month/date of birthdate required for Meghan's Law background check

OFFICE USE ONLY

Requirements (Confirm with HR)	Confirmed by	Date	Notes
Influenza Vaccination			
Fingerprinting Clearance			
TB Screening			
Mandated Reporter			

Instructions for completing the Mandated Reporter Training

Keenan SafeSchools is an online Program that provides district employees and volunteers with regulatory and compliance training. School District Volunteers who interact with pupils outside of the immediate supervision and control of the pupils' parents or guardians or a school employee are required to complete a Mandated Reporter: Child Abuse & Neglect Training.

All **NEW Volunteers** will need to **self-register**. Using a web browser (e.g. Safari, Chrome) navigate

to: <https://abcusd-keenan.safeschools.com/register/106eec3a>

Once the Keenan SafeSchools page appears:

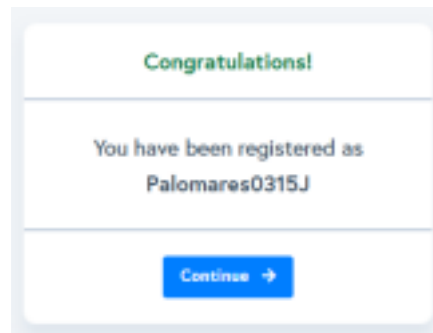
1. Type in your **Username** in the following format, with no spaces:
 - a. **Last Name, Month and Date of Birthdate (MMDD), First Name Initial**
 - b. **Example:** For **John Palomares** with a Date of Birth of **March 15**, the Username will be: **Palomares0315J**
 - c. *If your initial username is already taken, please add the next letter of your first name, for example: **Palomares0315Jo***
2. Type in your First Name and Last Name
3. Type in your Email Address and Click “**Register**”.
4. The following message will appear:

Sign Up

If you have already registered for an account:

Please do not create a second account. Your training progress from your first account would not be carried over. Instead, please go [here](#) and recover your login credentials using your email address.

Username ^{*required}	First Name ^{*required}
Palomares0315.	John
	Last Name ^{*required}
	Palomares
Email Address ^{*required}	Confirm Email Address ^{*required}
kester.song@myabcu.	kester.song@myabcu.
Required input is missing and/or invalid	
Register ✓	



5. Click on “**Continue**”.
6. Your Keenan SafeSchools page will reflect the mandatory training that has been assigned for your position.
7. After you click on the training title, you will need to accept the “Disclaimer”. You must complete the entire course and successfully pass the quiz at the end of the course for credit.

Keenan SafeSchools will track where you left off in your training, as long as you complete the entire segment of the training. In the event you log off in the middle of a segment, you will need to begin at the beginning of the segment when continuing with the training. You will see a green check mark to the left of the segments you have already completed. When logging back in to Keenan SafeSchools, please navigate to <http://abcusd.keenan.safeschools.com>, and type in your **username**.

If you have any questions, please contact: (562) 926-5566, Ext. 21174