

***Students should carry this Handbook with them at all times.***

## **Admissions**

The admissions process begins when a family requests information about Oak Meadow School. Normally an Information and Enrollment Packet for the current school year is mailed or given to the enquiring family, which is read and considered. If there is further interest in the school, an appointment is scheduled which must involve parent(s) and prospective student(s). This meeting is not designed to determine eligibility for the program, but to explain face-to-face exactly what independent study entails, and how our local program operates. Questions on both sides are asked, and a free and open discussion occurs. The family is then free to make a decision regarding enrollment having gathered all available information, and the School can use this opportunity to evaluate if the program offered would benefit the prospective student.

Oak Meadow School is only able to offer limited enrollment into its programs. When the school is at capacity, families are offered a place on the Waiting List.

## **Community Service**

High school students are required to complete 13 hours (minimum) of community service per school year of enrollment in the school. Mid-year enrollees have those hours pro-rated. No grade is given for community service, and grades in academic classes are not at all affected by this program. Oak Meadow School wants to work diligently at producing well-rounded, aware and involved students. A notation at the bottom of the student's high school transcript will state "Community service requirement met."

## **First Aid and Insurance**

The school is not allowed to give any oral medication, including aspirin and Tylenol, without written permission from

parents. External first aid is available for small cuts and bruises. In an emergency, students must try to remain calm, do not move if you are injured, and do not try to move an injured student, go get help from a teacher immediately. If a student feels ill during a class day, report this to a teacher. There is a place to lie down; if the student feels too ill to stay at school, parents will be called using the contact numbers given on the Emergency Form filled out at enrollment.

Oak Meadow School does NOT have health or accident insurance to cover its students, as clearly indicated on the Disclosure of Risk form signed at enrollment. If students are injured at school and emergency medical care must be called (ambulance, etc.), the costs must be borne by the parents of the affected student.

## **Honors Program**

Qualified high school students may elect to take certain courses in the Honors Program. In addition to the regular course requirements, honor students are required to complete supplementary projects designed to demonstrate their superior grasp of the material and skills related to the honors subject area. Students should see their teacher for the course in which honors work is desired. It is perfectly acceptable for students to receive the honors supplementary assignments, but then to change their mind about doing it and to simply proceed with the course as a regular academic course.

## **Academic Awards**

The top academic student in each of the 9th, 10, and 11th grades, as well as the top academic student in the graduating class, will receive an award for his/her achievement. Criteria for winning the award are as follows: winner of the lower division awards (9th, 10th, and 11th grades) will be based on GPA for work in academic classes only (PE, work experience, and all other classes taken outside a formal academic setting will not count toward GPA), in the current school only; winner of the graduating senior award will be based on the cumulative GPA for the entire high school career (grades 9-12), for academic classes only, (see above). Decisions as to which courses

count as “academic” will be made by the High School Director, and is final. Incomplete courses will not count in the calculation. Students completing less than four academic classes in the current school year (except for seniors who may not need that many units in the senior year to graduate) will not be eligible for the award. All awards are announced at the High School Graduation Exercises in June. All Oak Meadow High School students are encouraged to attend the Graduation Exercises to participate in honoring fellow classmates and especially graduating seniors.

Names of winners will be inscribed on the Perpetual Plaque, and notification of the award will appear on the student’s high school transcript.

## **Grading Guidelines**

Oak Meadow teachers have authority to determine the grading standards in their own courses and classes. Generally, however, students are expected to produce work at the C level or above to be acceptable. Rarely, teachers may pass a student in a class with a D. Teachers are free to utilize a plus or minus on a grade to indicate important distinctions. There is a greater difference between a B+ and B- than there is between a B- and a C+.

Work that is not submitted is not given a grade; it is marked Incomplete in the teacher’s grade book, and must be completed before a grade for the course can be issued.

*Work submitted that is unacceptable will normally be returned to the student to be redone.*

Parents of high school students will be sent Six Week Progress Reports every six weeks, indicating what lessons the student ought to have accomplished, and what was actually accomplished, and the grade average at that point in the course.

Actual grades are issued after the 18th lesson (1st semester) and 36th lesson (2nd semester). These, and only these, grades are entered onto the student’s high school transcript.

Middle School students receive grades only in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8th grades, and then only if specifically requested by a parent. Middle School students generally meet biweekly with the Middle School

teacher for evaluation and progress report, and receive a Quarterly Evaluation (after every 12 lessons) in narrative format.

## **School Activities and Private Parties**

The school sponsors only the annual high school prom. Normally this is held in May of the year. The prom is designed to be an end-of-the-year party for the high school. Dates are optional; attending with friends is encouraged. Oak Meadow students may invite a friend from outside the school, but students outside of the school must be accompanied by an Oak Meadow student. The tuition covers the cost of one ticket per student to the prom. The cost of additional tickets will be published as the date of the prom approaches.

All other parties are not school functions and will not be supervised by the faculty or staff of the school. The parents of a student hosting a party for his/her classmates are legally responsible for all minors attending such parties. The social interaction between students at private parties has an effect on the ability of students to develop in a healthy manner. Alcohol and drugs definitely inhibit such growth. We request that parents who allow their children to host parties see that they are chaperoned to make sure that alcohol and drug use does not occur. It is the responsibility of the parents to satisfy themselves that any private party attended by their child is adequately supervised. Remember that if an event is not the school prom, it is NOT sponsored by the school.

## **Parent Volunteers**

The efficient operation of our school will be greatly enhanced if we have (strict!) consistent parent volunteers to assist in the Learning Centers. Please let us know if you can help, and we will set up a schedule.

## **Tuition Contracts**

Parents must sign a Tuition Contract *before their student(s) will be allowed to attend class*. This is necessary because the school must pay its teachers on a regular monthly basis, along with all required taxes, etc. This requires that monthly, quarterly, or annual tuition payments must be made as agreed in the Tuition Contract.

Late payments (due the 10th of the month) incur a \$25.00 Late Fee. Returned checks incur a \$25.00 fee.

## **College Counseling**

Once each year, in October, the High School Director plans a College Evening, in which college entrance and all the processes surrounding it are discussed. ALL students and their parents considering college are encouraged to attend College Evening.

The High School Director is available to discuss colleges and entrance requirements and the process toward that goal. Call for an appointment if your specific needs require more than the College Evening can supply.

The Director can assist college-bound students to prepare for the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test required by most colleges for entrance).

The PSAT is administered by the school in October. For 11th graders, the PSAT is also the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test--the National Merit program is the largest single scholarship program in the nation. All 11<sup>th</sup> graders are required to take the PSAT.

## **Graduation Exercises, Diplomas, and Official Transcripts**

Seniors must complete their course work according to the specific formula published in the current Information and Enrollment Packet, in order to participate in the graduation exercises.

For seniors who do complete their course work for graduation, participation in the graduation exercises in June is required. Actual diplomas are not distributed at the graduation exercises; they are

received in the mail, along with a valid transcript, usually in the summer after graduation.

No student will be allowed to participate in the graduation exercises, or receive a diploma, unless all outstanding fees--including enrollment, tuition, books and supplies, and damage fees--have been paid in full. This is because the school does not officially record grades until fees are paid. Thus, courses with unpaid fees are simply recorded as "Incomplete" on the high school transcript.

Official transcripts should be requested from the school. Normally, official transcripts should be sent directly to the requesting school, college or university. Transcripts sent to students/parents will normally be clearly labeled as "Unofficial." Requests for official transcripts must be made in writing (because the school must keep a record of where records are transferred).

## **Room and School Care**

Oak Meadow School does not have a janitorial staff, and thus each student must take personal responsibility for cleaning up after him- or herself. This includes both inside and outside the building. A clean-up schedule will be set up requiring students to be part of a clean-up crew on a rotating basis. Students who refuse to participate with their assigned clean-up crew will be assessed a \$15.00 financial penalty (for each missed clean-up day), with the proceeds split among the rest of the crew to make up for their increased work load. Parents must be aware when their student(s) is required to stay after class to clean up, and support this process.

## **Lost and Found**

The school is not responsible for lost or damaged articles. To claim lost items, check with the High School Director

# Personal Conduct

## Philosophy

At Oak Meadow School (OMS) student discipline is designed to provide and promote the following:

- ◆ the growth of self-discipline;
- ◆ personal development;
- ◆ acceptance of legitimately constituted authority and development of a cooperative spirit;
- ◆ classroom situations conducive to the learning process; and
- ◆ a safe and secure campus environment.

In a small school community such as ours it may seem that student conduct is less crucial, because it is easier to maintain order with a smaller group. We have found through the years that we have to be every bit as diligent about conduct as any other school environment if we are to be serious about our mission of training young people for life. Every student must learn that every decision or choice made in regard to personal conduct, not just while a member of the Oak Meadow community but throughout life, will result in some consequence. We intend to be full partners with parents and families in mentoring students to achieve the above goals.

At times the school may judge that a student can no longer remain at Oak Meadow School because the presence of the student is not a positive force contributing to the good of the student or the good of the school. This decision would be made only after fair and impartial procedures had been followed. In the process of helping the student grow to maturity, the student may be asked to participate in counseling, do work for the school community, or enter a period of evaluation. Through the system of discipline, OMS hopes to reach the underlying goal of helping students master the internal forces of their personalities and encourage self-direction so that they will become responsible and accountable members of the human family.

Parents and students are responsible to read the following areas of Personal Conduct, and to understand the procedure and consequences for each.

## Conduct Causing Immediate Suspension or Expulsion

ABUSE / HARASSMENT, THREATS OR INTIMIDATION (physical or verbal attack on district employee or student) (E.C. 44810, 48900 (a)(1), (a)(2), 48900 i and o, 48900.4, 48900.7; P.C. 71)

ASSAULT AND BATTERY (assault or battery upon another student or upon school personnel; threat of force or violence toward school personnel, at any time or place related to school attendance or functions) (E.C. 44014, 44810, 48900 (a)(1), (a)(2), 48915 (c-2), (a-1), (a-2), (a-5); P.C. 240-243, 245)

EXTORTION / ROBBERY (taking possessions from another person by threat or force) (E.C. 44014, 44810, 48900 (a)(1), (a)(2), e and g, 48915 (a-4); P.C. 240, 241, 524)

FIGHTING (involvement in fighting either in groups, gangs, or as an individual on school premises or elsewhere under authority of school personnel) (E.C. 32210, 44807, 44810, 48900 (a)(1), (a)(2), 48915 (a-1))

FORGING (forging notes, signatures, excuses or other school documents) (E.C. 48900 k; P.C. 470)

GAMBLING (any betting, gaming played with cards, dice, coins, or other items of value is prohibited) (P.C. 330)

HAZING / HATE VIOLENCE (committing any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces any fellow student or person attending the institution) (E.C. 32050-32051; 48900.3; 233) (Ref. 610R Admin. Code and AB 1785.

LEWD OR LASCIVIOUS ACTS (engaging in or performing lewd or lascivious acts on school grounds or at school sponsored activities) (P.C. 314)

PROFANITY / VULGARITY (continual or habitual use of profanity or vulgarity) (C.A.C. 300; E.C. 48900 I)

RECEIVING STOLEN PROPERTY (knowingly received stolen

school property or private property) (E.C.48900 l)  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT / ASSAULT (unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the work or educational setting)(E.C. 48900.2, 212.5, 48915 (c-4)  
STEALING (stealing school property or from persons while on school property or at school sponsored events) (E.C. 19911, 35291, 44807, 48900 g; P.C. 484-485)  
ALCOHOL / INHALENTS (use or possession on school campus or at school sponsored events) (B. & P.C. 25608, 25658, 25662; C.A.C. 14251; E.C. 48900 c, 48915 (a-3); P.C. 647 e)  
CHEMICAL SPRAYS(possession of or use of any chemical weapon)(E.C. 48900 b; P.C. 12403.7 (4))  
DRUGS / NARCOTICS(use, possession or sale of narcotics or other hallucinogenic drugs or substances or any other controlled substances on school grounds or elsewhere under the authority of school personnel) (E.C. 48900 c, 48915 (a-3), (c-3); H. & S. C. 11350, 11353, 11354, 11357, 11359, 11361, 11377, 11378, 11380; P.C. 647 e)  
Offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material in lieu of the substance. (E.C. 48900 d; H. & S. C. 11382)  
DRUG PARAPHERNALIA (possession of, offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia)(E.C. 48900 j)  
TOBACCO (use or possession of tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products on school grounds or elsewhere while under the authority of the school)(E.C. 48900 h; 48901)  
WEAPONS OR THREAT THEREOF (possession, sale or furnishing of any firearm (gun), knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil at school, or at a school activity off school grounds) (C.C. 1714.1, 1714.3; E.C. 48900 b, 48915 (a-2), (c-1), (c-2); P.C. 245. 626.9, 626.10, 653 k, 12020, 12021.2, 12301) Possession of an imitation firearm (gun). (E.C. 48900 m)  
It is against the law for students to carry any type of weapon for their protection either on campus, or in their cars. Students found with weapons will be immediately dismissed from OMS, and the school

will contact local authorities.  
LASER POINTERS OR LASER DEVICES (possession, sale or the furnishing of any device that conducts a laser beam such as a laser pointer is strictly prohibited.)(E.C. 48900B)  
DEFACING OR DAMAGING SCHOOL PROPERTY (VANDALISM)(acts which endanger life of students, employees or visitors or result in damage to school buildings, school property including electronic files and databases or possessions of students, staff members or visitors; parent or guardian is responsible for damages) (C.A.C. 305, C.C. 1714.1; E.C. 19910, 48900 f, 48904; G.C. 6201, 53069.5, 53069.6; P.C. 451, 452, 594, 594.5, 602 j)

Please note that there are specific sections of the California State Education or Penal Code attached to these serious misbehaviors; all California schools, public or private, are under the jurisdiction of these codes. A student may be asked to withdraw (suspension) or may be expelled for violations of school rules committed while on school grounds, while going to or from school, or during school or while going to or from a school-sponsored activity. **Oak Meadow School reserves the right to review the conduct and actions of OMS students regardless of when or where such actions take place.** The school will review these actions if they are of a nature that brings danger to the community at large or discredit to the school.

### **Search and Seizure**

Search and seizure (personal or private property on school grounds, adjacent to the school, or while under the authority of school personnel, is subject to search and seizure by school officials)(E.C. 493331; H.& S.C. 11364.7, 11471) To ensure that the school campus remains safe for all students, searches for drugs and weapons can be conducted without warrants. In the process of teaching and training students, the school administration has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of pupils and to maintain order on the school premises and in school activities. In discharging this duty it may be necessary for an administrator to conduct searches.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty of any kind is directly contrary to the philosophy and aims of Oak Meadow School. The faculty interprets cheating as loaning or copying homework and other assignments, whether in class or out of class, as well as giving or receiving or allowing to be given the answers to quizzes, test and examinations. Doing another person's work deprives that person of the opportunity for learning and is, therefore, a form of dishonesty.

**Cheating** is copying from others during an examination/homework; communicating exam answers with another student during an exam; offering another person's work as one's own; taking an exam for another student or having someone take an exam for oneself; sharing answers for a take-home exam unless specifically authorized by the instructor; tampering with an exam after it has been corrected, then returning it for more credit; using unauthorized materials, prepared answers, Cliffs Notes, written notes or information concealed in a blue book or elsewhere during an exam; and allowing others to do the research and writing of an assigned paper including use of the services of a commercial term paper company or material available on the Internet.

**Plagiarism** is intellectual theft. It means use of the intellectual creations of another without proper attribution. Plagiarism may take two main forms, which are clearly related:

to steal or pass off as one's own the ideas or words of another;

to use a creative production without crediting the source.

### Collusion

Any student who knowingly or intentionally helps another student perform any of the above acts of cheating or plagiarism is subject to discipline for academic dishonesty.

### Consequences

Consequences are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> time: ALL students involved will have their work, exams, etc. for the assignment(s) affected destroyed and they will all have to be redone. 2<sup>nd</sup> time: add conference with parents. 3<sup>rd</sup> time: drop-failed from the semester (must be retaken

summer or following year).

## Driving to School

Driving to school is a *privilege* not a right.

1. Students must park in the small parking lot right at the corner of White Oak and Saticoy.
  2. Students may NOT “hang out” in their cars before class, between classes, or after classes. Like all others, they are to be in the upstairs Study Group areas if on campus, or they must leave campus.
  3. Students may NOT leave campus and return for the day, except in the following circumstances: leaving campus *and* returning the same day require a note from parents *each day this is to be done*. One note for the year will not suffice. Destination and date are required on the signed note from a parent. Students who do not return as scheduled will have the privilege of leaving mid-day revoked.
  4. Students may NEVER drive other students to school-sponsored events (especially Science Lab). A parent note will NOT give students permission to drive other students to school sponsored events/activities. It is just too dangerous.
  5. Students driving other students to and/or from school require a note from BOTH parents (one per year suffices), in which both notes hold the School harmless for any mishaps. Parents who choose this (dangerous!) option of transporting students take the risks entirely upon themselves. **THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE.**
- Students abusing the privilege of driving to school will have that privilege first suspended for a week, and then revoked.

## Class Attendance

As indicated in the Information and Enrollment Packet, **attendance by high school students at classes is required.**

1. When students must miss class, parents *must* call the Director either before the anticipated absence, or after an absence, to verify that the absence was legitimate. A note is not necessary, but will substitute for this phone call if desired.
2. Teachers do take roll in their classes, and unexcused absences will hurt a student’s grade in the class, and may even result in

the student not receiving credit for the course. Recognize that classes meet generally ONCE a week. That means that absence has a significant impact on a student. How much class attendance counts in the student's grade and course credit is solely the teacher's decision.

3. **When a student misses class, the teacher is responsible to make the assignment for the week clear, but is NOT responsible to give a "private lesson" of the material taught in the missed class.**

4. It is the STUDENT'S responsibility to seek out the teacher for clarity on the missed material.

5. **Tardiness** is an issue that parents and students MUST take seriously. Tardy students disrupt the class, and miss important material. Teachers have individual authority with respect to tardiness in their classes: some may allow it, some may not admit students to class after a certain "grace" period. In either case, tardy students *may not expect teachers to review what they have missed because they were late.*

By the nature of its modified independent study program, there are not specific consequences to absences and tardiness except as noted above. HOWEVER, please note that information and material missed because of absence or tardiness is the problem of the student and not the teachers. Obviously, exceptional situations will be handled individually by teachers.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Each student should conduct himself in such a way that discipline from a teacher is unnecessary. Students should operate out of an inner discipline which takes into account responsibility for oneself, other students, the class, and the school. If a student is disruptive or disrespectful in class to other students or to the teacher, the step-by-step process which will be instituted is this: 1<sup>st</sup> time, sent to Director for the day. 2<sup>nd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the day. 3<sup>rd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the week. 4<sup>th</sup> time, add conference with parents. 5<sup>th</sup> time, expulsion.

### **Campus Behavior**

Students are expected to be in class OR upstairs in the Learning Center area (High School); Middle School students must be in their classroom upstairs unless they have specific permission to go to the copy room, etc. High School Learning Center is where high school students study before, between, or after classes, or on days when they do not have classes. Attendance is not mandatory; parents may pick up students after their classes are finished, or between classes and return them later.

1. Students not in class and not picked up MUST be in the upstairs Learning Center area. Wandering around campus before or after classes is not allowed.

2. Students may not "come and go" on class days, unless a parent (not a friend) picks them up and drops them off for another later class. If a student leaves the school grounds during the day apart from being picked up by a parent, he or she may not return on that day.

3. At no time will students be allowed to cross the street to the stores on White Oak Avenue or Saticoy Street. Teachers will not accompany students off campus for any reason. This means that all students must bring lunch, including drinks, with them. A refrigerator, microwave and sink are available. Vending machines for snacks and drinks are available.

4. Students are expected to quietly work on their assignments for the week. Disruptive students will be warned to respect the needs of the group for an orderly and peaceful environment. Failure to heed this warning will result in the student being placed under the immediate care of the Director (in his class if necessary).

Students who do not cooperate (found wandering around campus) are subject to the following procedure: 1<sup>st</sup> time, sit with Director for the day. 2<sup>nd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the day. 3<sup>rd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the week. 4<sup>th</sup> time, add conference with parents. 5<sup>th</sup> time, expulsion.

## School Attire

We are not instituting a dress code. Students may dress individually. However, to promote a serious academic environment, students must ***dress appropriately***. Boys must wear pants that **stay up at waist level** (no “baggy pants” revealing underwear), and do not have holes in them revealing underwear. Girls must wear clothing that **covers midriff and chest, and pants or skirts must extend at least below mid-thigh**. “See through” materials such as open knits, organdy, fine cotton or gauze are inappropriate for students. No strapless, backless, excessively torn or frayed clothing is appropriate. No under garments may be visible. Shoes or sandals must be worn at all times.

Students who do not cooperate with this are subject to the following procedure: 1<sup>st</sup> time, warning and scrubbed with full hospital gown. 2<sup>nd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the day. 3<sup>rd</sup> time, add clean up duties for the week. 4<sup>th</sup> time, add conference with parents. 5<sup>th</sup> time, expulsion.

## Food, Gum, Cell Phones, Ipods, Etc.

**No eating or drinking is allowed during class time or Study Group, except for water.** Eating and drinking are allowed during lunch time only. Any food or drink other than water out of backpacks or refrigerator except at lunch will be taken and thrown away.

**No food or drink of any kind are allowed in Computer labs.** Non-cooperation with this VERY important rule will not be allowed in the lab for the rest of the day. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> occasion of disrespect of the computer equipment the student will not be allowed in the lab for the rest of the school year.

**Chewing gum is not allowed at any time, inside or outside the facility.** When students are caught chewing gum, they are assigned cleanup duties for that day in place of the regularly scheduled students. Failure to cleanup will incur the \$15 charge to pay someone else to clean up in his/her place.

**CD players, Ipods or tape players**, etc. are generally NOT allowed at school. Exceptions may be approved by the Director only. Students using these devices without permission, or sharing them with

any other student, will have these devices confiscated and **the earphones/headpiece will have the cord cut and thrown away**. The device will then be returned to the student. Please note that it does not matter who is using the device inappropriately; the earphones will be destroyed.

**Cell phones are not allowed at school.** However, we recognize that some parents want students to carry cell phones for after school. Thus, students whose parents want them to have a cell phone for after school must deposit the phone with the teacher in charge of the Study Group, who will return it at the close of the day. Students who are caught with a cell phone (i.e., not deposited with the Study Group teacher) will have it confiscated and **the battery will be removed and thrown away**. The phone will then be returned to the student. Please note that it does not matter who is using the device inappropriately; the battery will be removed and discarded.

If students must make phone calls during the day, permission must be sought from a teacher to **use the school phone**. Parents who must reach students at school may call on the Study Group line (818-343-8224). Normally (except in emergencies), outgoing student phone calls will be allowed only at lunch time and after school, and only for “business” purposes (i.e., not to call a friend, etc.). Students abusing the privilege of using the school phone will have that privilege revoked.

## Parent Pick Up at the End of the Day

Students waiting for parents to pick them up at the end of the day must wait on the cement on campus property. Wandering around the parking lot, onto the sidewalk on the south side of the facility, or elsewhere on the campus is not allowed. If a student refuses to stop wandering around the school campus after school while waiting for his/her ride home, it may become necessary to require that student to wait upstairs until picked up

## **Problem?**

Contact the teacher involved first. See the Information Sheet included in this Parent-Student Handbook for a listing of phone numbers and emails. The School Director is there to listen to one and all, as a last resort. However, please contact us instead of talking about problems with other parents and students, who probably cannot help.

### **Contact Information Sheet**

<b>Gregory Brewer</b>	High School Math, Science teacher	818-675-4488 (cell)
<b>Silvana Kenney</b>	High School Spanish teacher	818-704-1046
<b>Terrence Kenney</b>	5-8 Class Teacher High School English, Social Studies Teacher Director	818-704 1046 818-632-9748 (cell)
<b>Carrie Khoury</b>	Middle School Teacher	818-705 3830