

FUERTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

2023-24



Mission

Fuerte Leaders come to school to learn new things, support each other, and be the best we can be.

Website: <http://www.cajonvalley.net/fuerte>

**From the district website, select
"Fuerte Elementary School"**

Address: 11625 Fuerte Drive
El Cajon, CA 92020

Telephone: 619.588.3134

School Hours

8:00-1:00 Monday
8:00-2:00 Tuesday-Friday

The 7 Habits of Happy Kids



Habit 1- Be Proactive: You're In Charge

I am a responsible person.
I take initiative.
I choose my actions, attitudes, and moods.
I do not blame others for my wrong actions.
I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking.

Habit 2- Begin with the End in Mind: Have A Plan

I plan ahead and set goals.
I do things that have meaning and make a difference.
I am an important part of my classroom and school.



Habit 3- Put First Things First: Work First, Then Play

I spend my time on things that are most important.
I say no to things I know I should not do.
I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan.
I am self-disciplined and organized.



Habit 4- Think Win-Win: Everyone Can Win

I want everyone to be a success.
I don't have to put others down to get what I want.
When a conflict happens, I look for a third solution.
I believe that we all can win!



Habit 5- Seek First to Understand Then to be Understood:

Listen Before You Talk

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings.
I try to see things from their viewpoints.
I listen to others without interrupting.
I share my opinions and ideas.



Habit 6- Synergize: Together Is Better

I know that everyone is good at something.
Everyone needs to get better at something.
We can all learn something from each other.
Working in groups helps to create better ideas than what one person can do alone.



Habit 7- Sharpen the Saw: Balance Feels Best

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising and getting sleep.
I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school.
I take time to help others.



General School Information

Principal's Message

Welcome, Falcon Students and Families!

This handbook contains valuable information about Fuerte policies and procedures. It has been designed to ensure the success of all Fuerte students. Please take time to review this information as a family and call our office with any questions you may have.

As you know, our Fuerte community is built on strong relationships. We are dedicated to knowing every child's story. Our goal is to ensure students feel safe and happy at school so they can learn and grow every day. Through a collaborative effort between home and school, we strive to help every child find their strengths and passion for learning both in school and in the world around them.

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,
Roberta Ewing, Proud Principal

Communication

Communication is the key to Safety and Success!

Each Friday, Principal Ewing will send The Falcon Flash via Parent Square with weekly updates on school events, calendar items and general information. Occasionally, separate alerts or messages are sent via Parent Square with important information. This is also the way we will reach you in an emergency situation. Please call our office if you are not receiving updates to ensure we have your most current email and phone number. [Click HERE for our Parent Compact and Engagement Policy.](#)

Health Services and Medications

The Health Office is open each school day to service students who are sick, injured or require medication. If a student is injured on campus, the Health Office will provide first aid.

Health Services It is very important for the school to have correct, current information about every child regarding health concerns. If there has been a change in your students health, please let us know or update the information in the Parent Portal.

Medication

Fuerte staff are prohibited from providing or administering any medication, including aspirin and cough drops, to any student without a physician's note. Students needing medications, such as antibiotics etc., for colds, earaches, and sore throats, are to take these medications at home if possible. If it becomes necessary for a student to take any type of medication, prescription or non-prescription (over the counter), at school, the parent must have their physician complete Form CH-41 – "Physician's Recommendation for Medication". This form is available in the office. **All medications must be delivered by the parent/guardian** and will be kept in and dispensed through the Health Office.

Illness at School If a student has a fever or displays other symptoms of illness, his/her parent will be notified. If the parent cannot be reached, the person(s) listed under emergency contacts will be contacted. The student should then be picked up as soon as possible within 45 min or longer with Admin permission. **Students must be fever-free and diarrhea-free for 24 hours without the use of medication before returning to school.**

****We are currently following our COVID guidelines, please contact the school office for more information.***

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Arrival

- Students can arrive at 7:40 am for free breakfast or Running Club (1st-5th grade students at Running Club).
- There is no outside supervision until 7:40 am; please do not leave your child(ren) unattended.
- The school gates will open at 7:40 am each morning to receive students.
- School begins promptly at 8:00 am each morning.
- Students who are not in their classroom by 8:00 am will be marked tardy. All tardy students must enter through the Main Office gate.

Dismissal

- Students will be walked to their dismissal areas by their teachers at 12:55pm on Mondays or at 1:55pm on Tuesday through Friday.
- Students who are walking home are expected to leave campus immediately at dismissal unless they are participating in an after school activity supervised by a Fuerte staff member.
- Please follow the direction of all school personnel, signage, and safety cones to ensure that traffic flows safely and efficiently.

Late Pick Up (15 to 60 minutes after dismissal or 3:00pm), we will start calling ALL emergency contact numbers as needed after 15 minutes or the Sheriff's Department as appropriate at 3:00pm.

Fuerte Traffic Plan

Please remember: Cell phones, children and cars are a dangerous combination. Please hang-up before arriving at Fuerte.

1. The Red Zone is NO Parking - BUSES ONLY!
2. The Yellow Zone is for loading! We will load the first 9 cars (first three in each lane) at a time then all 9 cars will exit together. It is your child's responsibility to look for your car and come to the loading zone at the crosswalk. **If your child is not in the loading zone when your loading group exits, you will need to exit the parking lot, turn right on Damon Lane, right on Fuerte Farms, and right on Fuerte to get back in line.** NO PARKING, pick up only. Stay in your car at **ALL times** while in the traffic circle.
3. To avoid traffic delays, please DO NOT arrive before 7:45 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. There will be **no stopping** in the westbound left turn lane (no stopping/cueing) entering the traffic circle.
4. If you need to travel west (left) on Fuerte Drive, please turn right on Damon Lane, through Fuerte Farms, then left on Fuerte Drive. If you need to travel east (right) on Fuerte Drive, please turn left on Damon Lane then right on Fuerte Drive. Do not turn left onto Fuerte Drive from Damon Lane.
5. If you have business to conduct during school or picking up your child early, please PARK across the street from the school, or on Damon Lane. Please respect, and do not use, the painted/posted staff spots. Parking is limited and we appreciate your understanding.
6. **Damon Lane parking:** Be sure to obey posted "No Parking" signs. You may be ticketed.
7. **Fuerte Drive - NO PARKING:** **Do not park, stop, drop off your child or pick up your child** in front of the school on eastbound Fuerte Drive between 7:30 am - 9:30 am and 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm. You may be ticketed. If you are picking up your child, please park and walk onto campus or pick up your child in the traffic circle.
8. Respect our neighbors and do not block driveways and always obey posted signs, speed limits and parking rules.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in following this plan. We are working with the county and CHP and your cooperation is necessary in ensuring our plan is as safe and efficient as possible.

Visitors and Volunteer/Involvement Opportunities

Visitors Other than parents/guardians, students may not have visitors on campus during school hours or at school dances. Parents/guardians may visit the campus at any time with prior notification to administrative staff. Visitors and volunteers should plan to park on Damon Lane or Fuerte Drive. Due to limited space, our parking lot is reserved for staff only. Please observe all parking signs to avoid the possibility of receiving a ticket from law enforcement. **All visitors must sign in at the office upon arrival and must obtain a Visitor's Pass from the office staff.**

PTA The Parent-Teacher Association is the largest volunteer child advocacy association in the nation! This association creates an opportunity for each Fuerte parent to be part of this powerful organization on behalf of every child, as well as, providing tools to help their own children be successful students! Join today!

School Site Council (SSC) The School Site Council is an elected group of parents and staff members, who meet regularly to plan, implement and evaluate the School Program. Meetings are open to all parents and

residents of the Fuerte community. Meeting dates and times are posted in the window of the school office, in Falcon Flash and on our school website.

Parent Volunteers Many parents and community members are involved at Fuerte School as volunteers. If you have an hour a month, an hour a week, an hour a day, or whatever time you can volunteer, please contact your child's classroom teacher to schedule. **When you come to volunteer, please sign in at the office. Bring your government issued identification. Without it, you will not be permitted on campus.*

Everyone a Reader (EAR) Program Parents and community members can volunteer their time helping children to read. Students who would benefit from extra time and support from a caring adult may be enrolled in our EAR Program. Volunteers will always check in at the office.

Safety Patrol Safety Patrol members are selected from students in the 5th grade. Jointly sponsored by the school and the CHP, patrol members are responsible for school crossings. **Students and adults crossing the street with the assistance of our Safety Patrol are expected to follow the directions of the patrol members on duty at all times.**

Chromebooks

Students are issued a district Chromebook each year. Parents complete paperwork each year that outlines expectations for our 1:1 Digital Learning program.

We strongly encourage closely monitoring your student's use of the chromebook for the following:

- using appropriate educational websites
- limiting screen time

Students and families are responsible for the care and safety of the chromebook and for any damages that occur. Voluntary Chromebook Insurance is available for \$20 per school year and includes **two** visits to the Chromebook Hospital per year for accidental Damage. Damage will be assessed by the IT Department at the District Office, you may be charged for repairs deemed non accidental. Chargers are **NOT** covered under the Chromebook Insurance and replacements must be purchased from the School Site.

Cell Phones & Electronic Devices

In accordance with CVUSD Board Policy 5131, students may possess cell phones at school; however, they **must remain turned off, and in backpacks during the school day and while students are on campus.** *Cell phones may be used to contact a parent or guardian after students exit campus.* This policy also includes watches that may be used as cell phones **must remain turned off, and in backpacks during the school day and while students are on campus.**

Dress Code

Students will dress in a manner that positively reflects themselves, their families, and their school. We have the highest expectations for students academically and behaviorally. California Education Code, Section 48907, Students should dress in clothes that are appropriate for school and allow for active movement during physical education. Sweaters, jackets, hats, etc. should be labeled. **It is inappropriate to wear or possess anything that is distracting or disruptive to the learning environment.**

- Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Flip-flops, backless shoes, sandals, and heels are **not** permitted. Shoes with wheels are not allowed.
- Pupils must be cleanly dressed so as not to promote unhealthy or unsanitary conditions.
- Text or clothing that promotes violence, vulgarity, alcohol, tobacco or drugs is prohibited.

Recess and Lunch

Lunch: In addition to free breakfast, every student is provided lunch at no charge. Your child(ren) may bring a healthy lunch from home whenever you choose. *Please do not pack soda, candy, or other non-nutritious beverages or snacks for your student.* **Due to health reasons, students should not share food.**

Recess Procedures & Expectations

Students will:

- eat snacks at the snack tables.
- walk to their designated playground.
- be responsible for their own trash and that of their lunch table companions.
- encourage others and be respectful to each other.
- use kind language.
- freeze at the first whistle and walk to line at the second whistle.
- use the [“Debug Method”](#) to solve small problems.
- report any BIG problems (hands on, foul language, threats, or other serious behavior) to the nearest staff member or by completing this form - [Reporting BIG Problems form](#).

Lunch Procedures & Expectations

Students will:

- walk to the cafeteria if getting a school lunch or the designated lunch tables and follow the directions of staff.
- remain seated with their feet under the table when in the table area.
- use table manners and appropriate language.
- remain in the lunch area until dismissed by a staff member.
- throw away their own trash and clean their area before playing.
- stay off chromebooks.
- eat their own food only (no sharing).
- keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- follow directions of any staff member the first time.
- freeze at the first whistle and walk to line at the second whistle.

- use the [“Debug Method”](#) for small problems.
- report any BIG problems (hands on, foul language, threats, or other serious behavior) to the nearest staff member or by completing this form - [Reporting BIG Problems form](#)

Attendance Information

95% Rule: A student is required to be in attendance at least 95% of days that classes are offered. Failure to meet the 95% rule may cause a student to fall behind in their classes and lose out on their education. Absences, excused and unexcused, that exceed the 95% rule will be referred for review. Excessive absences will result in a letter to the parent or guardian and/or may result in the student being referred to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB).

All absences, including tardies, must be verified by a parent/guardian by phoning the Attendance Office that day or by sending a note when the student returns. **Please contact our office at (619) 588-3134 to report any absences or tardies.**

Chronic Absenteeism

When a student misses 10% of school days, whether excused or unexcused, they are considered chronically absent. When a student has had **14 excused** absences, each subsequent absence **must be verified** by a physician or district nurse. Each absence after 14, which is not verified by a physician or district nurse, is **Unexcused**. Three unexcused absences are considered truancy.

Truancy

A student missing more than 30 minutes of instruction without an excuse three times during the school year must be classified as a truant and reported to the proper school authority. This is also true when a student has three unexcused absences.

Tardiness

Students are considered tardy if they are **not** in their assigned classroom when the tardy bell rings. The only acceptable excuse is a written note from a staff member or parent excusing the tardy.

Early Release

A person picking up a student early **will need to have photo identification** with them and must be listed in our student information system in order to leave with the student.

Independent Study Contracts

Students who will be away from school for three or more days may request for an Independent Study Contract at the Attendance Office **at least one week before the first date of the absence**. Students will be required to complete and turn in work to their teachers on the day they return to school. Extended independent study contracts may require synchronous instruction online. Students will receive attendance credit for work completed.

Emergency Procedures

Fire and Emergency Drills

In all drills, students will follow these procedures:

- Students are to follow the instructions of their teacher.
- Drills are to be carried out in a silent, orderly manner.
- Students are to leave the room in single file.
- Students are to return to the classroom when instructed by their teacher.
- Should the fire alarm sound during lunch or at recess, students are to report to their homeroom teacher.
- Treat every drill as the real thing.

Emergency Procedures

During a crisis, Fuerte staff will implement the Crisis Response Plan for that particular emergency. Students will be responsible for following the directions of staff members. Staff members have been trained and will know the correct response to any crisis. Students also will be taught the correct response to emergency situations.

Fuerte School has a Crisis Response Plan to deal with emergencies, including earthquakes, fires, bomb threats, active shooter on campus, intruder on campus, or any disaster.

Each response includes procedures for safely evacuating students from classrooms and for articulating with law enforcement or other emergency agencies. The school has a plan for uniting students with their parents, setting up a first aid center, establishing a command center, and providing for the comfort and security of students.

What do students do during an emergency?

Follow the directions of staff members, since they are trained to handle emergencies. If you are not in a classroom, find the nearest adult and follow their directions.

How will students be reunited with their parents?

During an emergency situation, the school will establish a Family Reunion Area where parents can pick up their children. **Only your parents or others listed on the permanent record card may pick up a student. They must have photo identification.**

What happens when a student needs their medication that is kept in the office?

All student medications will be taken to the First Aid Center so students needing their medication will have it available.

What happens if parents are unable to pick their child up?

During an emergency situation, students who are still at school at the end of the day will be released to the Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department would reunite children with their parents. In the case of a severe disaster or emergency, Fuerte will follow the directions of the Cajon Valley Union School District Emergency Operations Plan. All students will be cared for until reunited with their parents or placed in the care of the appropriate emergency agency.

Student Leadership and Behavior Expectations & Discipline Plan

Parents are encouraged to participate in the education of their children. Without the cooperation and support of parents, Fuerte Elementary School cannot effectively help a student reach full potential. We strongly encourage all parents to:

- A. Be actively involved in your child's education. It gives them a greater incentive to strive for excellence.
- B. Be a positive role model by following The Golden Rule and all school rules, at all times. Your child(ren)'s eyes are always watching your behavior for cues on how they should behave. Breaking even the smallest traffic or school rule sends a clear message that it is okay for your student to do the same in the future.
- C. Please utilize social media in a fun and responsible way. Social media usage can be a model for students to learn responsible, positive social media practices.
- D. When you are unable to be at the school site, demonstrate your interest in what your student is learning in school. Instead of asking, "How was your day?" Ask your student to describe their favorite thing that they learned at school that day.
- E. Support our staff in the education of your child. We all want your child to be successful. We will be able to accomplish that goal if we all work together.


Parents may periodically be asked to support their student's teacher by supporting their child with additional practice while they learn student independence, individual responsibility (remembering homework), how to self-monitor and take responsibility for their own actions, or how to address frustration in an appropriate way. If there is a higher-level or recurring behavioral concern, parents will be asked to support the school in reinforcing an alternative set of behaviors. By working together, parents and staff can help students demonstrate behaviors that will increase their academic and social success.

Show The Falcon Way by following our Leadership and Behavior Expectations*

- Be Kind
- Be Safe
- Be Productive

CVUSD Expectations for Student Success

Through a collaborative effort with the school community, district leaders, families and students, CVUSD developed a set of expectations that will create the necessary conditions for success, provide instruction and implement a response to address social, emotional and behavioral challenges. This document includes links to California Ed Code and CVUSD Board policy. You can view our District Safety Plan here:

 **DSC Printable Copy 08.03.2023 DRAFT.pdf**

Sometimes students and families need to share concerns that can be followed up on by Fuerte staff. To get help with a big problem, please complete this [Reporting BIG Problems form](#).

School Wide Goal

We will all practice integrity as part of our Falcon community.

Students who DO follow the CVUSD Expectations may earn:

- Verbal praise
- Falcon Tickets
- Positive notes or phone calls home to parent(s)
- Classroom rewards
- Individual rewards
- School wide recognition and rewards
- Falcon Stickers
- Lunch in the Garden with Mrs. Ewing and Mrs. Levesque