



It's a great year to be a COYOTE!

Student Handbook

2022 / 2023

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Cactus Middle School Expectations

School and class expectations will be a focus during the first week of school and will be taught continually throughout the school year. Cactus staff will teach, encourage, coach, and reinforce appropriate behaviors by implementing PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports). Each class will address our school expectations as outlined in this document. Students are expected to participate, engage, and demonstrate the behavior expectations taught by Cactus staff.

Mission Statement

We inspire, educate, and develop successful students who value character and respect.

Vision Statement

Cactus Middle School students will achieve the highest academic standards, preparing them to be successful and well-rounded contributing members of society.

Office

The office is the primary point of communication and entrance to our campus. Cactus office staff are committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

Please adhere to the following:

- ALL visitors MUST sign in and out of the office and are required to wear a Visitor's Badge during their visit.
- Be polite and patient when addressing staff

School Hours: Monday-Thursday

7:55 a.m. Campus Opens

8:27 a.m. FIRST BELL

8:30 a.m. TARDY BELL

4:00 p.m. DISMISSAL

4:45 p.m. OFFICE CLOSES

Student Identification

Students are required to carry their student ID at all times while on campus. A student ID should be presented anytime a student is asked, most notably when loading the bus, entering the campus, and receiving lunch. IDs will be given to all students at the beginning of the year at no cost. We understand there are times when an ID is forgotten at home, in these cases, students will be issued a temporary ID. Once a student has had three temporary IDs, a new ID will be issued. If there is a need for an additional ID, students may be charged a \$5.00 fee for the ID. If students do not pay the fee at the time, they will be charged on their PowerSchool account. IDs will be checked at each entrance on a daily basis. Students are responsible for getting a new ID when the ID is lost or forgotten. Failure to get a new ID may lead to disciplinary action.

Attendance-Tardy Policy

It is important for all students to attend when school is in session and to be on time. Students miss critical learning opportunities when they are absent.

School begins at 8:30 a.m. and promptness to class is expected. The office staff will contact parents of absent students if they have not been made aware of why the student is absent.

A truancy warning letter may be sent home regardless of the reason for the absences upon excessive unexcused tardies or absences. After additional occurrences of unexcused absences, a truancy referral may be sent to the Attorney General's Office for mediation.

In addition, any combination of five tardies and/or early departures may result in a truancy warning letter. Absences will be considered excused only when accompanied by a doctor's note.

Truancy: It's a Crime

Excess absenteeism jeopardizes a student's opportunity to be successful in school, and it is against the law. Absences are excused for illness, death in the family, religious observance, or other unusual circumstances. Absences for reasons such as trips or family vacations are discouraged and considered as unexcused, even with prior notification to the school office.

Pursuant to *A.R.S. Section 15-802(E)*, a parent or legal guardian must ensure that their minor child between the age of six (6) and sixteen (16) attends school for the full time school is in session unless otherwise exempt pursuant to *A.R.S. 15-802(B)(1-9)* or *A.R.S. 15-803*. Failure to send your minor child to school may subject you to violation of city ordinances and Arizona State statutes relating to the same and subject you to prosecution for a class one misdemeanor.

Drop-Off and Pick-up Procedures

Monday-Thursday (No school on Friday)
School Begins 8:30 a.m.
School Ends 4:00 p.m.

Please be courteous and follow all safety guidelines at all times. The student drop-off and pick-up zone is the loop just south of school. The loop in front of the school office is for emergency vehicles only. It is not a drop-off or pick-up zone. You may also use this lot for parking within a designated space. Safety is a priority at Cactus please remember the following:

- Devote more time and be extra cautious on rainy or foggy days.
- Drive with your headlights on, to see and be seen.
- Be conscientious of your speed.
- Be aware and courteous of other drivers, students, and staff.
- Student loading and/or unloading is not permitted along Kortsen Road.
- Do not pick-up or drop-off your student in the dirt lot in front of Cholla Elementary School.
- Cell phone laws apply...please refrain from talking and/or texting on a handheld mobile device while utilizing our pick-up loop or parking lot.
- We ask that drivers remain in the vehicle at all times and keep all driver side doors closed.

Student Drop-Off:

Please do not arrive prior to 7:55 a.m.

- Pull your car as far forward into the loading zone as traffic allows.
- Keep pulling forward and fill in all gaps in the traffic lane.
- Please ensure that students have all school materials (including lunch, projects, papers, backpacks, athletic gear, etc.) ready before exiting the vehicle.
- It is recommended that students unload from the PASSENGER SIDE of vehicles in the right hand lane (closest to the school).
- Once your student has exited your vehicle you may exit the parking lot via the bypass down the middle lane. This lane is for driving only. It is not for loading, unloading or stopping at any time.

Student Pick-Up:

While waiting on Kortsen to enter our pick-up loop, please do not block the bus entrance.

Pull your car as far forward into the loading zone as traffic allows. Student pick-up is available from the Loading Zone Area only. Follow all directions from school safety personnel. They may see potential problems that you are unable to detect. For safety reasons, please do not back up in the loading zone.

- Pull close to the curb for pick-up so other cars can easily maneuver to the bypass lane.
- Refrain from honking or signaling to students from your vehicle.
- School staff will call students from the waiting area.
- Students must wait in the designated area.
- Please be mindful of staff motions and signals to pull forward in the loading lane and/or to move to the bypass lane.
- If your student has additional equipment to load (large musical equipment, athletic gear, school projects, etc.), please wait until you are at the front of the line and in the first car position for your student to load.

Bus Expectations

Students must obey all directions from the driver and follow all safety rules.

Riding the bus is a privilege, and violations of bus rules could result in the loss of that privilege.

In the morning, students should arrive 10 minutes early to the bus stop to ensure students are there in time to catch the bus.

The bus, as well as the bus stop, are considered school property. In addition to bus rules, school rules apply in both of these areas.

Activity bus routes will occur when there are after school events such as practices, games, and/or club events that require additional transportation for students. Activity buses will be released at 5:30 p.m.

Please be courteous and respectful to the bus drivers.

For specific questions regarding transportation please call our office or the Transportation department.

Conferences and Report Cards

Parent Teacher Conferences (PTC) are designed as a time of sharing information and feedback for mutual understanding and educational planning between the home and the school. Student-led conferences will be scheduled in both the fall and the spring. Your student's teacher will notify you of the date and time for your conference. Report cards are issued in October, January, March, and May. Progress reports will also be sent home twice during each quarter.

Parent Teacher Conferences are:
October 6 & 7, 2022
March 9 & 10, 2023

Grading System

Semester grades are based on the average of each quarterly grade. In order to receive credit for a class, a student must earn a 60% or higher.

Honor Roll is based on having a B average with no Ds or Fs, and is based on quarterly grades, not semester grades. Grades are based on the following percentages:

A 90%-100%
B 80%-89%
C 70%-79%
D 60%-69%
F 50%-59%

Homework and Make-Up Work

Homework will be assigned as needed and is based on the individual teacher's homework policy. Please check with your student's teacher if you have questions about your student's homework assignments. A student who is absent is expected to do any make-up work assigned by their teachers. If a student is absent for several days, parents may call the school and ask for make-up work to be sent for parents to pick up.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool provides access to grades, attendance, and more. It is recommended that parents use PowerSchool to stay informed on their student's progress throughout the year. The school issues usernames and passwords to all parents. If you have not received PowerSchool information, please contact the school's front office. Parents may also email their student's teachers with any concerns. The Parent Portal system can be accessed by going to the district website at www.cgesd.org.

School Technology

Each student will be assigned a laptop for use during school. We ask that students bring their laptop to school everyday (unless otherwise directed for special events) to ensure they are able to participate in the classroom learning. Students will check out a device using their student ID. The device is to be used for school related work **ONLY**. All district devices have specific internet search filters and *BARK* which monitors student use of the device. Students are responsible for damages, including loss, to any district-owned assets and will be assessed charges. The student to whom the device is checked out is responsible for any damage or loss and the related fines unless there is proof otherwise. The misuse of any district technology could result in disciplinary consequences.

BARK (Device Monitoring System)

Digital safety is critically important to the Casa Grande Elementary School District and to Cactus Middle School, which is why we are now using *BARK* to help us protect students both online and in real life.

This virtual monitoring tool, utilized in conjunction with our digital filters, is intended to help us detect activity that might trigger signs of potential online dangers while students are using school-issued accounts and devices. Please note that we will regularly monitor our alert notifications from *BARK* and will contact you with any individualized concerns that may arise.

Parents will be sent an email and we encourage you to sign up for BARK alerts regarding your students' use of district technology.

Fees and Fines

Students are expected to pay all fees and fines accrued over the year. Students who owe money may not be able to participate in extracurricular activities. Students will not receive a promotion certificate until all fees and fines are paid. Some possible reasons students receive fees and fines include replacement IDs, lost library books, athletic equipment that is not returned, and any damages to school grounds or the bus.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

PBIS is the application of evidence-based strategies that assist schools with increasing academic performance, promoting school safety, decreasing problem behaviors, and establishing a positive school culture.

The PBIS process utilizes interventions that will impact behaviors that do not meet the schoolwide expectations. Staff will teach new or replacement skills and implement various levels of support to assist the student in making positive choices moving forward.

PBIS relies on a team-based approach which includes a strong collaboration between families and professionals from a variety of disciplines with the educational system to provide the most appropriate support for the student to be successful throughout the school day.

Cactus PBIS Expectations

At Cactus we have three behavior expectations:

- Be Kind
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful



Cactus Expectation Matrix

	Learning Areas	Fields & Courts	Pods & Courtyard	Cafeteria	Restrooms
Be Kind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help those around you when needed • Use nice and helpful words • Be polite to those around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate positive sportsmanship • Use nice and helpful words • Be polite to those around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help those around you when needed • Use nice and helpful words • Be polite to those around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be patient • Use nice and helpful words • Be polite to those around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nice and helpful words • Be polite to those around you
Be Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on time & ready to participate • Stay on task & give your best effort • Complete assignments • Keep cell phone in bag or pocket • Keep area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate safely • Return equipment to where it belongs • Keep cell phone in bag or pocket • Keep area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have ID and pass available • Walk quietly & directly to your destination • Keep cell phone in bag or pocket • Keep area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face forward in line • Be ready to receive food • Keep cell phone in bag or pocket • Keep area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use bathroom for intended purpose only • Wash your hands • Only 3 people in the restroom at a time • Keep bags & cell phones outside the door • Keep area clean
Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use materials & technology appropriately • Keep conversations academic • Be aware of others and your surroundings • Follow staff directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment appropriately • Play with integrity • Be aware of others and your surroundings • Follow staff directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of others and your surroundings • Follow staff directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait your turn • Stay seated until your table is excused • Be aware of others and your surroundings • Follow staff directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One person per stall • Respect the privacy of others • Be aware of others and your surroundings • Follow staff directions

Student Recognition

When students are observed demonstrating a PBIS expectation they have an opportunity to receive points from staff. Points will be redeemable at designated times for various items or activities. Students will be able to manage their points and redeem them through Kickboard the platform.

H.O.W.L Award — Once a month two students per grade level will be selected to receive the H.O.W.L. of Fame award based on the following criteria: **H**elp others, **O**wn their actions, **W**ork hard, **L**ead the Pack.

Kickboard

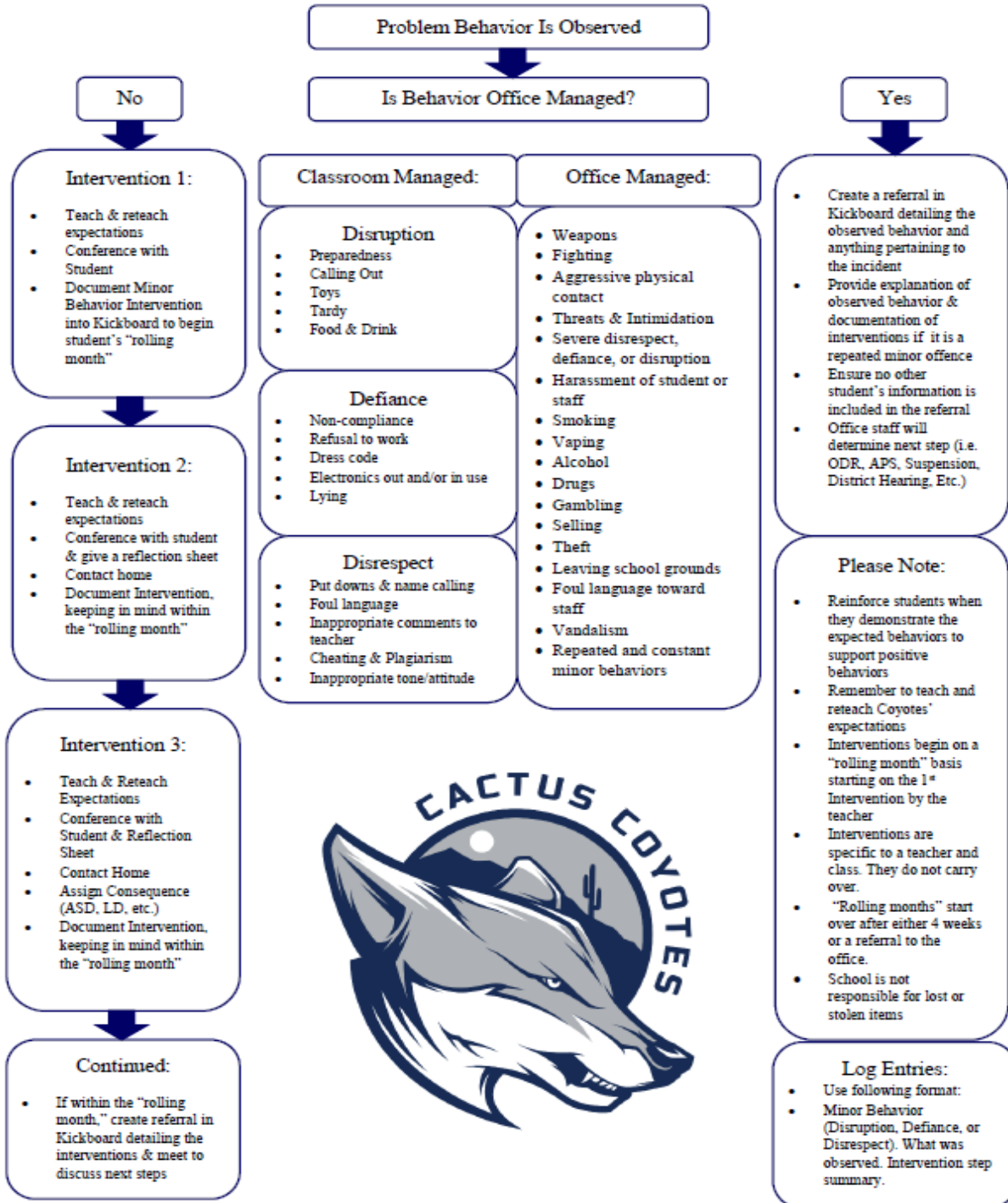
During the 2022-2023 school year Cactus will begin to implement Kickboard which is a digital behavior management platform.

The digital system will allow all stakeholders to communicate and collaborate to create a proactive environment that will support positive student behavior. More information will be provided throughout the year.

School Discipline

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior in all school settings. Students will be held accountable for their actions as indicated by the PBIS expectation matrix and behavior flowchart. Staff members who are aware of any inappropriate situation will determine consequences related to the unacceptable behavior, if necessary. Matters of serious concern will be brought to the attention of the Principal.

Cactus Middle School Discipline Matrix



Lunch Detention

Students must attend Lunch Detention the day they receive the detention pass. If a student fails to attend Lunch Detention, another day of detention will be added. The student may be assigned to a full day of APS (Alternative Placement in School) on a subsequent school day, if lunch detention is not served.

Alternative Placement in School (APS)

Students that are placed in APS do not have access to the campus. Students are expected to follow all APS rules, which are reviewed with the student in APS. Students are expected to complete all work that is sent by their teachers while in APS. If students are disruptive or do not comply with the APS rules, they may receive additional days in APS or a possible suspension from school.

After School Detention (ASD)

After School Detention is also used as a consequence in our discipline system. Students assigned to ASD will be expected to serve ASD on the day after the referral is received. If a student cannot make it, they will be expected to reschedule with the ASD teacher. Students that do not complete their assigned ASD may be subject to additional consequences.

Student Search

To ensure the school is safe for all students, it is sometimes necessary for school officials to search students and their personal belongings. We have a need, by law, to do searches whenever there is a reasonable suspicion that a student may have broken school rules or the law. A student may be searched by having the student empty their pockets, socks, purse, backpack or any other personal item brought onto school campus. At least two adults will be present during this search. An attempt will be made to inform parents after the search is completed informing parents of findings and considerations for disciplinary action if necessary.

District Policy J1H provides that school officials have the right to search student's personal property, including cell phones, when there is reason to believe that the search will produce evidence of a violation of the law or school rules.

Food and Gum on Campus

Students are allowed to chew gum on campus, **with the exception of all P.E. facilities and the stage.** Students may be subject to disciplinary action if they are seen spitting their gum out or putting it anywhere other than the trash when they are done chewing it. Food and any drink (other than water) should only be consumed in the cafeteria or classrooms that allow food. Vendor food delivery is not allowed for students during the day.

Cafeteria

Students are expected to meet the following guidelines:

- Use inside voices while talking.
- Clean up their own areas after eating and prior to being dismissed.
- Walk when entering, leaving, and moving throughout the cafeteria.
- Refrain from taking open food out of the cafeteria.
- Consume water, milk, juice, or other similar drinks. Soft drinks, soda pops or glass containers of any kind will not be allowed in the cafeteria.

As dictated by the Health Code: → *Students may not share lunch.*

→ *Students may not eat off others plates.*

Dress Code

The District encourages students to take pride in their attire as it relates to the school setting. Students should dress in a manner that conveys a professional setting, and take into consideration the safety, health, and welfare of one's self and others. Students will be checked for compliance with the school dress code on a daily basis. Those who fail to comply will be subject to disciplinary consequences. At the principal's discretion, the parent/guardian may be required to bring a change of clothing that meets the requirements of the dress code. Students and their clothing are expected to be neat and clean.

- Torn apparel may be judged as unacceptable if the clothing is too revealing, distracting, or otherwise inappropriate for the school setting.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts must not expose undergarments, private body parts or create a distraction.
- Pants, shorts, or skirts must be worn at or above the top of the hipbone.
- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be fitted so they stay at or above the top of the hipbone without a belt.
- Students' shoulders must be covered by clothing that is at least as wide as students' ID badges (or approximately 2.25"). Spaghetti straps are not acceptable.
- See-through or fishnet clothing and low-cut necklines are not to be worn unless worn in combination with other clothing that meets the school dress code.
- Bare midriffs and halter tops are not acceptable.
- Bare feet are never acceptable. In the interests of student safety, shoes or sandals must be worn at all times. Closed shoes are to be worn for any type of physical activity, such as physical education, et cetera.
- Slippers and any footwear judged as unsafe may not be worn on campus.
- Jewelry or chains shall not be worn if they present a safety hazard to themselves and/or others.
- Profane, offensive or defamatory writing or pictures on clothing or jewelry is not acceptable.
- Gang-related personalization is not permitted on clothing or on one's person. This includes anything worn or carried on campus.
- Obscene language or symbols, or symbols of drugs, sex, or alcohol on clothing are expressly prohibited.
- Tattoos and hickies must not be visible.
- Any article of clothing that is disruptive to the school or learning environment, provides a safety risk, or is gang-affiliated is not allowed on campus.

If a student is seen with these types of clothing items, they will be asked to change and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol are not allowed on campus. This includes any e-cigarettes, vapes, tobacco products, or drug related paraphernalia.

Any student involved in a drug or alcohol related offense will be subject to disciplinary action, with a possible referral to a district hearing.

Gang Activity/Association

Any type of gang activity or association is strictly prohibited at the school. Hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of any type of clothing or jewelry that shows or suggests membership in a gang is not allowed on campus. Any activity that involves initiation, hazing, intimidation, assault, or other activity that could cause physical or mental harm to another student will result in disciplinary action.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are permitted on campus, however we have set up the following guidelines and expectations for phones on campus:

- **Students should not have their cell phones out while they are on campus.**
- Students are not allowed to use cell phones at any point during the day.
- Communication home should be managed in the front office so we can best support students and ensure safety (i.e. pickup plans change).
- Cell phones that are out or suspected to be in use will be confiscated. Students will be able to pick the phone up at the end of the day unless the staff member requires a parent to pick it up.
- Any student caught recording a fight or another incident on campus will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Any student posting a picture or video to social media while on campus will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Students with offensive or inappropriate photos or texts may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal charges, even if the photos or texts originated from an off campus source.

District Policy JIH provides that school officials have the right to search student's personal property, including cell phones, when there is reason to believe that the search will produce evidence of a violation of the law or school rules.

Schools are not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of cell phones.

Items NOT allowed on Campus

All of the items listed below are considered disruptive or potentially dangerous to the educational environment.

- Pocket knives, firecrackers, water balloons, guns, aerosol containers, laser pointers, matches, empty bullet casings, items designed to cause an electrical shock and lighters.
- Any toy from home including stuffed animals and sound activated key chains.
- Energy drinks, or seeds.
- Rollerblades and shoes with wheels are not allowed.
- No balloons or flowers.
- Vendor food items.

Teachers and staff have the right to take away any items listed above or any other items which are deemed disruptive. Parents will be contacted to pick-up the confiscated items.

After School Sports/Events

Students are encouraged to stay after school and support their classmates during after school events. We ask that students follow these guidelines:

- Any student attending a sporting or extra curricular activity must be accompanied by an adult.
- Students are expected to stay at the activity location with their supervising adult and not wander around campus.
- Students are expected to behave in accordance with all school rules and exhibit good sportsmanship towards the visiting team.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There are a wide variety of activities offered to students after school. Some of these include cross country, soccer, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, softball, track, and baseball. Cheer is offered as well when there is staff sponsorship available. Some, but not all, of the clubs offered include National Honor Society, Yearbook, Chess, and Drama.

Eligibility for each of these activities requires that certain academic and behavior standards be met. The requirements for each activity will be explained by the sponsor of the activity.

Should a student become ineligible, they will not be allowed to participate or attend any practices or events. Once the student is eligible, they will be reinstated.

Attendance is vital to practice. Should a student not attend scheduled practices, the student can be removed from the team. Should the student display any inappropriate behaviors during practices or games, the student may be removed from the team.

Nurse's Office

We make every attempt to meet the health needs of our students.

Medications must be turned in to the nurse's office in the original labeled container.

Students may not receive any form of medication (including cough drops, Tylenol, and other over the counter medications) from the school office unless a parental permission form has been signed.

Students MAY NOT carry any medication on their person or in their backpacks (including cough drops, eye drops, Tylenol, and other over the counter medications) except for inhalers when parents have given written permission.

Students should not call parents to inform them they are sick and need to be picked up. The nurse will check students who become ill or receive any injury during school hours.

It is critical that we have current/updated contact information on the emergency forms in case you need to be contacted due to an unexpected emergency with your child.

Please notify the health office staff ASAP if there are any changes to a student's health condition (i.e. chronic illness, injury, acute illness requiring treatment, etc.)

Please contact our Health Office with any specific questions you may have regarding the care of your student.



Cactus Middle School

Make Excellence Happen