



SILVERWOOD SCHOOL - EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS/FAMILIES

While Silverwood values and respects the diversity of families, we also expect that families will share some common approaches to supporting all aspects of their child's education. We also recognize that children are in our care for 1,100 hours each year – roughly 13 percent of the time, and that you as parents have the strongest influence on shaping their values and behavior. We (teachers and School) are unlikely to be successful in our goals unless what we do at School complements what you do in the rest of their life.

These are some of the hopes and expectations Silverwood has of its community of parents and guardians:

Support your child:

Read to or with your young child daily. Read at home yourself in the presence of your child so you are setting a good example. Visit the public library regularly.

Listen. Find a time when you can hear about your child's day. Ask open-ended questions. Discuss successes and setbacks – academic and social. When your child faces an academic or social challenge, express to your child that this is an opportunity to learn a skill that will carry him or her through life's ups and downs. If you are concerned or confused about something a child tells you, contact his or her teacher to get the context and clarification. If you hear something you especially like from your child, compliment your child (and feel free to pass the good news on to the teacher, too!)

Encourage your child to **Write** – thank you notes, stories, shopping lists, letters to a relative or pen pal, or a brief description of an event for a memory album. Write brief notes to your child. These can be reminders or a "to do" list, love notes in a lunchbox, or stories of your own childhood.

Limit and select television shows and computer games and avoid those that are violent or model disrespectful interaction.

Establish homework habits that work for your child, including a "homework and writing box" that contains all the materials he or she will need for a typical homework assignment. Find the time; place and structure that will help him/her succeed. Since all students are different, this may take some experimentation.

Practice math skills assigned by school, and also practice math skills informally while at the store, on the highway, in the kitchen, or in other situations where you use numbers.

At Silverwood School, we challenge our students to become confident, compassionate citizens and skilled life-long learners – literate, motivated, and intellectually adventurous.



Prepare your child for school with good manners and good habits of hygiene (hand washing, etc.). Teach safety and refusal skills as a normal part of growing up. Include some sort of service to the community in your family life. Children adopt the values their families live.

Show your child that you value learning by visiting museums, zoos, historical displays, national parks and monuments, and other sources of learning. Emphasize that adults are always learning, too.

Every year, read at least one book on parenting, child development, learning styles, and other parenting topics. Such books are available on the Parent book shelf in the school office.

Support your School:

Show your child you respect education, teachers, and other parents by how you interact with school personnel and fellow parents and how you talk about school in the presence of your child. Take the initiative to meet the other parents in your grade. Opportunities are available at SPA meetings, on board committees and at school activities, but sometimes a phone call is a great start. Research shows that students are more secure and more successful when their parents and classmates' parents are well connected.

Read each Silverwood Newsletter. A link to the newsletter is sent weekly and it is also available via a link on our website, www.silverwoodschool.org. Read the notes and homework your child brings home. Keep in touch with what's happening at school. If you are not a regular email user, establish an "email buddy" who will call you when the school sends email updates. If your child's classroom has a website, check it often.

Call or email the school as soon as you have a question, concern, or compliment. Contact the person most likely to be able to answer the question or solve the problem. Usually this means first contacting the teacher, then the team leader, and then, perhaps, the Head of School. Likewise, please let the school know of student or family issues or crises. We can best support you and your child when we are "in the loop."

Avoid spreading gossip. Avoid "triangulating" communications. If you are unsure of a fact, check it out directly with the person involved, even if that feels difficult. This is a principle Silverwood teaches students, and one we expect from teachers and parents as well.

Volunteer, as your schedule allows, for school activities and attend school functions. Your presence is powerful for your child and you will learn from teachers and from "veteran" parents who have had a child in your child's grade and stage. Support the Annual Campaign and Auction as you are able.

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