

## ***The Founding of SunRidge Charter School***

The impetus for SunRidge Charter School began with a small group of parents who wanted a Waldorf-based education made available to families regardless of their income level. These parents approached the Twin Hills Union School District with a proposal to start a Waldorf methods charter school in early 2002. The Superintendent of the district was fully supportive and the timing was opportune: a school site just down the street from the district offices was to be vacated that summer.

The work of writing the charter began quickly, as was the enlisting of support from the School Board of Trustees, district teachers, and the securing of necessary signatures on petitions of support from potential families. On May 1, 2002 the charter was approved unanimously by the School Board, and on June 27, 2002 SunRidge School was officially approved as the 481st charter in the state of California.

Through a combination of dedication, hard work, and dogged determination, a growing group of volunteers quickly laid the groundwork for the opening of the school. Funds were raised, teachers and administrative staff were hired, enrollment procedures were developed and implemented, the school site was secured and prepared. Community interest and support for the school was quick and strong. Applications exceeded available spaces in most classes and SunRidge opened its doors on September 1, 2002 with almost 180 students in two kindergartens and grades one through seven.

## ***Mission Statement***

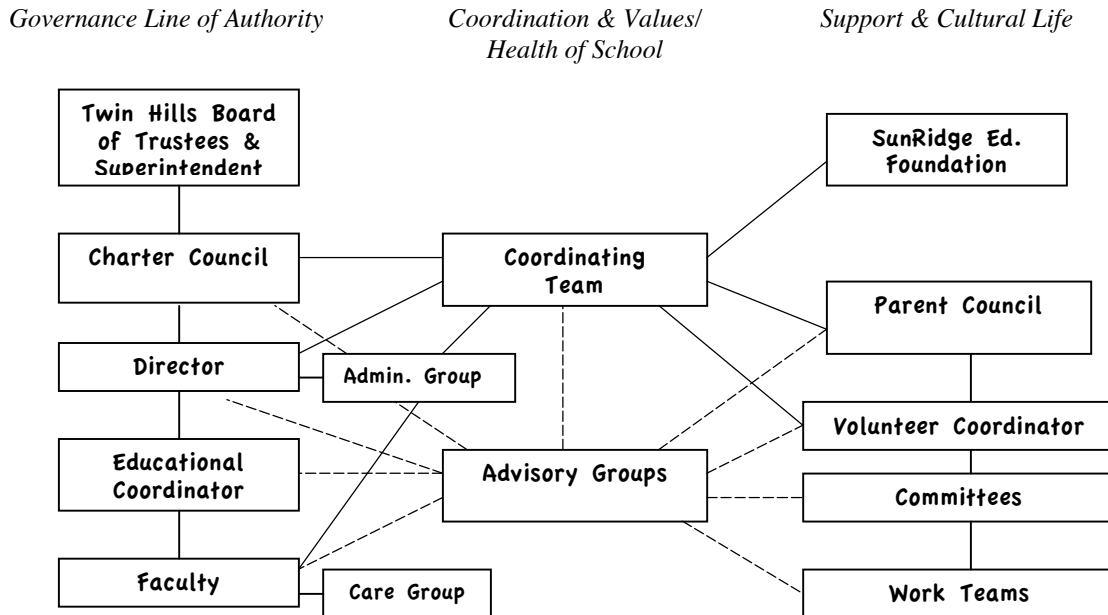
SunRidge Charter School is a public Waldorf methods school where parents, teachers, staff, children, and the land we share come together in a safe and caring educational community to nurture each student's intellectual, artistic, emotional, social, and physical development.

We govern our school based on the principles of participation, collaboration, cooperation, open communication, accountability, respect for individuality and diversity, and a shared responsibility towards the life of the community.

Using Waldorf methods throughout our curriculum, we strive to meet the educational needs of each child at every stage of his or her growth. We support our students in developing the capacities for independent and creative thinking, self-confidence, self-directed learning, social and environmental responsibility, and respect for individual and cultural diversity.

Our vision is that the students of SunRidge Charter School will graduate with a love of learning, proficient in all core subjects, well-prepared to pursue further academic and personal goals, and motivated to make positive contributions to their world.

# SunRidge School Organization & Connection Chart



**Notes:**

- Solid lines from the Coordinating Team box indicate actual representatives on the Coordinating Team.
- Dotted lines from the Advisory Groups box represent lines of possible/intended influence, not actual people. The Advisory Groups are comprised of individual parents and staff who have an interest in ensuring that a particular key value is fully integrated into our school’s educational program and operations. They meet as desired to discuss interests and ideas, do research, develop recommendations/suggestions, etc. in their area of interest.
- Descriptions of the positions/groups shown above are included below.

## Description of Organizational Chart Roles/Positions

**Twin Hills Board of Trustees:** Legal governing body for the school; sets policies, approves calendars, hiring, handles payroll, accounting, insurance, etc.

**Charter Council:** SunRidge governing body serving as delegate body of the Twin Hills Board for purposes of overseeing the operations of SunRidge School. Develops and recommends

school policies, programs, budget, calendars, etc. Evaluates School Director. Includes 3 faculty, 3 parents, and 1 non-parent community member. Director is non-voting member.

**Director:** Responsible for the daily operations and management of the school, hiring, supervision and evaluation of all staff, budget development and implementation, educational program, site needs, enrollment, coordination/leadership, etc.

**Educational Coordinator:** Provides educational support to teachers and, serves as designee of the Director in matters of teacher supervision, evaluation, educational program planning and coordination, scheduling, procuring teaching resources, parent communication, and other administrative tasks as needed.

**Admin. Group:** Group of senior faculty members (2-3) who meet weekly with Director to prepare faculty meeting agendas, identify school and faculty needs, and implement plans for addressing identified needs.

**Faculty:** Responsible for the delivery of the educational program; works collaboratively with the Director in developing, evaluating, and implementing school procedures, plans, and programs. Three representatives serve on the Charter Council.

**Care Group:** Internal support group of teachers and staff who meet regularly to help discern and support the needs of individual children, teachers, or classes.

**Parent Council:** Parent representatives from each class working to support a thriving school community through events, activities, fundraising, parent education, and community forums. Oversees committees and work groups set up to support school activities, events, and goals.

**SunRidge Community Service Coordination:** Organizes and coordinates SunRidge community service program, matching school service needs with parents to fill those needs.

**SunRidge Educational Foundation:** Not-for-profit corporation that exists to support SunRidge School through serving as fiscal agent for fundraising, and fund development through grant writing and donor campaigns.

**Coordinating Team:** Group comprised of the Director, a Faculty member, the Parent Council Chairperson, a Charter Council member, a Foundation member, and the Volunteer Coordinator, that meets regularly to ensure that school-wide activities are well planned, coordinated, and successfully implemented.

**Committees:** Parent and staff groups working under the oversight of the Parent Council to address identified needs. Includes Fundraising, Site Development, Parent Education, Festivals and Events.

**Advisory Groups:** Parent and staff groups with interest in ensuring that key SunRidge values are well integrated into all aspects of the school's operations, programs, events, and activities. Key values include: Diversity; Social/Emotional Learning; Collaboration/Communication; and Environmental Consciousness/Practices. Advisory group members communicate suggestions, ideas, and resources to any of the above listed entities.

**Work Teams:** Designated parent groups that assist with work needed to put on school events and projects.

## ***Our Educational Philosophy***

SunRidge Charter School is a parent-initiated school of the Twin Hills Union School District that was created to bring the best of Waldorf methods and philosophy to the public sector. Embracing Waldorf curriculum and methods, SunRidge addresses the whole child, framing rigorous academics in an artistic, creative and multi-sensory curriculum. Our method follows a developmental model that respects the nature of children and how they best learn. A play-based, half-day Kindergarten resists the sad cultural trend for “more-sooner-faster,” allowing young children to enjoy the wonder of childhood through imaginative play.

In the grades, the SunRidge curriculum covers an exceptional range. Core subjects are taught in three- to four-week-long Main Lesson blocks, immersing the students in language arts, math, science, geography and history. Concepts are interwoven throughout the curriculum and are taught through oral presentations, writing, reading, recitation, drama, painting, drawing and movement. This multi-dimensional approach engages students in a powerful and concentrated experience and promotes active listening, memory, imagination and vocabulary. Enrichment subjects, most taught by specialty teachers, include Spanish, singing, flute and recorder, violin, painting, drawing, modeling, knitting, sewing, woodworking, drama and movement.

### ***Learning to Think***

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of a Waldorf-methods education is that it teaches students how to think. Imaginative play, emphasized in the Kindergarten, develops into imaginative thinking as a child matures into the grades. The capacity for imaginative thinking enables students to perceive events with clarity, to comprehend complex situations fully, and then to envision creative solutions for life’s challenges. In SunRidge’s capacity-building curriculum, academic mastery is achieved through immersion in experiential learning. By building a playhouse, third graders first imagine their construction, then learn measuring, reinforce math skills, and master practical building abilities in order to bring their playhouse into form. A fifth grader studying ancient Greece will compete in an Olympic pentathlon and might play the role of Pythagoras in his annual class play. Reading is taught on a foundation of rich oral literacy that begins in Kindergarten and continues to develop as children progress through the grades. In addition to academic mastery and artistic development, learning how to learn is a primary goal for SunRidge students.

### ***Learning to Care***

The arts are integrated throughout the SunRidge curriculum in order to access and develop the emotional intelligence of our students. Artistic activities such as painting, drawing, drama, singing and instrumental music are used in combination with core academic standards to enrich the learning experience. Through the arts, we teach to the child’s heart as well as her head, facilitating the development of compassion, responsibility and stewardship.

Overcoming challenges through common artistic effort builds individual self-esteem, builds the feeling of class community and inspires in students the confidence to meet life’s challenges with creativity and imagination. An orchestral performance or a class play requires enormous teamwork among teachers and students. By working together consciously throughout the curriculum, students develop a capacity for emotional

involvement that is both sensitive and resilient. They become caring individuals committed to one another and to the greater good.

### ***Learning to Create***

Children drawing, painting, knitting, playing flutes or violin, carving wooden utensils, reciting poetry and rehearsing plays are common sights at SunRidge. While one might think their purpose is to train students to be accomplished artists, the real intention is quite different: all these activities are exercises for the will. To express the typical movements of an animal in wood or cloth or clay, to knit a pair of socks, to master a violin piece—these activities are experienced as a challenge to both the child’s courage and his patience.

There is no better way of training the will than to practice again and again something one finds difficult. Children need tasks that give them pleasure and satisfaction in overcoming difficulty, and the arts are a central area for this opportunity. The SunRidge curriculum nurtures students’ capacity for resolute determination so that they have the will, the ability and the confidence to turn their hopes and dreams into reality.

### ***Waldorf Methods Education***

Waldorf methods emerged from a pedagogical model of the child that stresses the developmental stages of childhood. At the heart of the philosophy is the conviction that education is an art. Whether the subject is arithmetic, history or physics, the presentation must be alive, must speak to the child's world, through direct experience, and is often filled with art, music, movement and imagination. The goal is to teach children in a safe, protective and naturally beautiful environment using methods that fill them with delight, wonder and enthusiasm. Our teachers engage the whole child through a multi-year relationship, addressing children not solely as beings of intellect (head), but physical (hands) and emotional beings (heart) as well.

SunRidge has developed a powerful educational vision that incorporates Waldorf education methods and embraces the developmental model of the unfolding child. This education, built on a strong academic foundation, also brings forth creative imagination, critical thinking, self-confidence, and a sense of delight, wonder and respect for nature and humanity.

*Thank you to Woodland Star Charter School for the writing of most of this section on Waldorf education and curriculum.*

## **Our Curriculum**

*"One of the strengths of the Waldorf curriculum is its balance and depth: the emphasis on the arts...the rich use of the spoken word through poetry and storytelling...Above all, the way the lessons integrate traditional subject matter is, to my knowledge unparalleled."*

Ernest Boyer, President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

### **Kindergarten**

Our Kindergartens offer a joyful, nurturing setting that inspires the imagination through creative play, storytelling, puppetry, music, movement, and art. Emphasis is placed on the healthy development of the physical body through practical activities that include handwork, crafts, baking, cooking, gardening, sweeping, digging, nature walks, and plenty of time outdoors.

Responsibility for self and others is encouraged through attention to sharing, caring, and taking care of our Kindergarten classroom and play yard. The foundations of written language and literacy are laid with an emphasis on the oral traditions of storytelling, puppetry, and song. The foundations of mathematics are nurtured through rhythmic movement, music and the practical activities of cooking, sewing, gardening, and carpentry. Attention to, and care of, the natural world and its beauty lay a healthy foundation for more precise scientific explorations in the later years.

We believe that kindergarten is not a time to expose children to the pressures of society, or to make strong intellectual demands. Through healthy imitation, imagination, and play children learn about their world and build a solid foundation for the work to come.

### **The Grades**

In Waldorf-method elementary schools, the Main Lesson is the cornerstone of the day, a two-hour period in the morning when children are most awake and eager for academic work. The class teacher focuses on one subject over several weeks so students have an opportunity to develop a strong relationship with every subject studied.

In each main lesson block, the teacher incorporates storytelling, movement, music, poetry, drama, drawing, painting, modeling, reading and writing, presenting vivid descriptions and experiential opportunities each day that engage the student in a harmonious and joyful way. Students record and illustrate the lesson content in their Main Lesson books, which are treasured for years to come.

The ideal is for the Class Teacher to remain with the same class for multiple years, enabling close, secure relationships with each child and a deep appreciation of individual needs. This allows a close partnership to develop between parents and teacher as well, which fosters a much deeper understanding of the ever-changing stages of child development.

After the morning Main Lesson, the students engage in practice periods that deepen the academic skills introduced in the main lesson and attend special subject classes including Spanish, handwork, games, violin, Eurythmy, and woodworking. Most special subject classes at SunRidge begin in the First Grade, although Spanish and Eurythmy are introduced in Kindergarten.

### **Grades 1-4**

The Waldorf-methods curriculum is designed to give children meaningful experiences at every age. An approach is taken that strives to maintain the protective veil of childhood for students in the first four years of grade school. Through fairy tales, fables, legends, creation stories and Norse mythology, the teacher slowly builds a bridge that crosses from the innocent, imaginative world of childhood to the more conscious, empirical world of adolescent life.

### **Grades 5-8**

In Grades Five through Eight, the developmental capacity for thinking radically shifts and the curriculum grows progressively more complex from year to year. The beginning of this transition is marked by the "nine year change," a time when the child's individuality becomes more pronounced and when a child first begins to view everything in his/her surroundings with a "critical eye." At this time, many children begin to question their place in the world, which was hitherto taken for granted.

### **Curriculum Overview**

SunRidge faculty recently adopted the *Curriculum Standards and Assessment Rubrics* published by the Gradalis Institute for Waldorf Methods Charter Schools. This comprehensive tool provides a detailed, grade-by-grade delineation of learning objectives that is comparable to the California State Standards but tailored to the Waldorf curriculum. What follows here is a brief outline of our curriculum:

#### *First Grade:*

Storytelling is a large part of the First Grade curriculum encompassing Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and Nature Stories from around the world. Explorations of nature, pictorial and phonetic introduction of the alphabet, word recognition, qualities of whole numbers, Roman numerals, introduction to the four processes in arithmetic, mental math games, lower multiplication tables, form drawing.

#### *Second Grade:*

Legends, Animal Fables and Native American Indian Legends and the multi-cultural studies of noble and heroic people. Small letters, reading, basic elements of grammar and sentence structure, form drawing. Broadening arithmetic processes, continue observations of natural phenomenon (i.e. weather, seasons, etc.).

#### *Third Grade:*

Ancient legends and creation stories from many cultures. Study of practical life: farming, housing, clothing. The children grow food, cook meals and build a simple housing structure like a garden shed or playhouse. Reading, spelling, cursive writing, original compositions, grammar, punctuation, parts of speech. Higher multiplication tables, weight, measuring, money, primary numbers, word problems.

#### *Fourth Grade:*

Stories from Norse mythology and Celtic sagas and legends. California and local history, geography and cartography. Study of animal kingdom. Fractions, long division, square roots, averages, factoring.

#### *Fifth Grade:*

Ancient Civilizations of India through classical Greece. Participation with other Waldorf-methods Fifth Grades in a spring Pentathlon. Composition and poetry, spelling, reading,

grammar. U.S. Geography related to vegetation, agriculture and economics. Decimals, ratio and proportion, freehand geometry, decimals, metric system, mixed numbers. Study of plant kingdom.

*Sixth Grade:*

Roman and Medieval history, composition and poetry, reading, formal letter writing, grammar, spelling, North and South American geography. Mineralogy, physics (acoustics, electricity, magnetism, optics and heat), astronomy. Percentages, interest, profit and loss, ratios, proportions, geometric drawing with instruments.

*Seventh Grade:*

Renaissance, Reformation and Age of Discovery, literature and poetry (Chaucer and the Crusades, Arthurian legends), biographies. Composition, complex grammar, spelling. World geography and ocean currents. Physics (mechanics and electricity), physiology, research, inorganic chemistry. Business math in depth, graphing and powers of numbers, pre-algebra.

*Eighth Grade:*

Shakespeare and Elizabethan Age to modern poetry, writing short stories, dramatic scripts and journalism, spelling, grammar. Continue world geography and climatology. Age of Revolution to Current Events. Physics (hydraulics), physiology, organic chemistry, meteorology. Applied mathematics (review of solids and measurements), set concepts, algebra, solid geometry.

*Special Education:*

As a public school, SunRidge accepts all students. Special education needs are currently met by our Resource Teacher and a teaching assistant, with additional contracted services from a Speech Therapist and an Educational Psychologist.

## ***Electronic Media Concerns and Guidelines***

In our society, electronic media in all its forms is an ever-growing presence and influence in our lives. As adults we face the difficult choices of deciding how to use various media wisely, and when and how various media should be introduced into the lives of our children.

It is a well-documented fact that the experience of watching television affects the development of children. Strong evidence shows that habitual TV use negatively affects IQ, attention span, reading abilities, imagination, play, language patterns, critical thinking, self-image, perception of others, and moral values. Recent studies indicate that even a single viewing of violent behavior through electronic media can increase violent behavior in children. Habitual use of electronic media affects the child physically as well, altering brain waves, reducing critical eye movements, immobilizing the body, and undermining nutrition, eating habits, and exercise. The content of most TV, video and computer games, and movies shows a glaring disregard for the sensitivity and impressionability of the developing child, and gives commercial interests direct access to a child's forming mind and character.

At SunRidge, there is a conscious intention and effort to provide an educational environment that nurtures the imagination and healthy development of every child. Because electronic media exposure tends to work at cross-purposes to this intention and effort, SunRidge teachers need the support of parents in restricting media use in the home. Similarly, parents who choose our school because they want to protect their children as much as possible from the negative affects of electronic media also need the support of the parents of their children's classmates.

For these reasons, the Kindergarten and class teachers request that parents protect their children from exposure to electronic media. As a guideline, we strongly recommend that children from kindergarten through 3rd grade not be exposed to electronic media at all. If electronic media is introduced to children in grades 1-3, it should be limited to wholesome content, on weekends only, and kept to minimum. We ask that any exposure to electronic media with children in grades 4 and 5 also be limited to weekends only. Attention to content is particularly important if use is allowed, keeping in mind that electronically received images, language, and meaning lodge in the child's inner being and affect their behavior and sense of well-being at home and at school.

Early adolescence (grades 6-8) marks a time of increased exploration and desire to learn about the world. It also is a time when children do not yet have the maturity to make important life-affecting decisions, and need parental guidance and clear boundaries set by the responsible adults in their lives. We ask that parents of these older students work in partnership with our teachers to limit exposure to electronic media in ways that protect them from its negative influences while also encouraging their increasing capacities for discernment, critical thinking, and self-discipline (i.e., media literacy). We strongly recommend that any TV and movie use be limited to weekends only, and that parents supervise and restrict the use of TV, movies, computer and videogames, the internet, recorded music, and radio use due to the extremely varied content that is present through these media.

We recognize that restricting electronic media use in the home requires a commitment to a family lifestyle that runs counter to our mainstream culture. We also recognize that protecting children from media exposure is especially challenging in homes where older siblings are present, and when a child lives in more than one household. A whole-hearted effort to thoughtfully protect children from media exposure can only be successful when we educate ourselves about the affects of electronic media on children, and then exercise continual determination to go "against the grain" in order to do what we believe is most healthy for them. We ask that every parent join us in this challenging, but so very important, commitment.

## **Parent Partnership**

One of the central tenets of SunRidge School is parent participation. Parental involvement is what makes our school a true community, and we will be most successful in our work if our students' parents are informed about, engaged, and involved in helping to meet the needs of the school.

There are many faces to the partnership between parents and the school. Some of the more significant ones are included in the Parent Participation section of this handbook on page 20. Beyond the obvious volunteer help and pledge donations there is the equally important need for every parent to take the time to be part of ensuring the success of their child's education. This means more than helping them with their homework. It includes ensuring that your child gets enough sleep each night, has a good breakfast before school, brings a healthy snack and lunch, and is dressed appropriately for the weather. It includes ensuring that your child has good attendance and arrives each day before class begins. It includes scheduling your family trips during our breaks so that your child receives everything that his or her teacher works so hard to provide.

Working in partnership also means becoming informed about the policies and procedures of the school, so that you can help things run smoothly. It means following our campus driving and parking guidelines, and being courteous and patient with others, as we are occasionally challenged by the limitations of our site. It means supporting your child's adherence to our student rules and expectations for grooming and dress. It means making the effort to learn about and understand our Waldorf curriculum and methods, how it develops through the grades to meet your child's needs, and how exposure to electronic media works at cross-purposes to what our teachers are trying to give your children here at SunRidge.

It takes a whole community to raise a child and a whole community to educate one as well. SunRidge offers the opportunity and the support to every parent to be part of an inspiring educational initiative that can have a significant impact on the quality of children's lives. We whole-heartedly encourage your full participation.

## **The Weekly Bulletin**

One of the challenges of a school is having effective ways of getting important messages to parents. Our primary means of communicating school news, schedules, dates, announcements and other information is through our weekly *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is prepared every *Wednesday* and sent to all parents on our email list. It is also available on our website (as are other forms and information), [www.sunridgeschool.org](http://www.sunridgeschool.org). If email doesn't work for you, you may request that a hard copy be given to your child to bring home each week. Please take the time every week to read the *Bulletin* and stay informed.

## **Kindergarten Handbook**

Because our kindergartens operate in a space separate from our grades, and have needs often different from the rest of the school, there is a separate Handbook for parents with kindergarten children. Please consult your Kindergarten Handbook for any questions that may be specific to Kindergarten needs, activities, and operations.

## 2008-09 SunRidge Calendar

<b>August 26</b>	Tuesday	First day of school (early release day)
<b>September 1</b>	Monday	Labor Day, <b>school closed</b>
<b>October 3</b>	Friday	Teacher In-Service Day, <b>school closed</b>
<b>November 10 &amp; 11</b>	Monday-Tuesday	Veterans Day + Monday, <b>school closed</b>
<b>November 24 &amp; 25</b>	Monday-Tuesday	<i>Parent Conferences, school closed</i>
<b>November 26-28</b>	Wednesday-Friday	Thanksgiving Break, <b>school closed</b>
<b>December 19</b>	Friday	Early release day before Winter Break
<b>December 22—Jan. 2</b>	Mon.-Fri., Mon.-Fri.	Winter Break, <b>school closed</b>
<b>January 16</b>	Friday	Early release for staff in-service
<b>January 19</b>	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. Day, <b>school closed</b>
<b>February 13</b>	Friday	<i>Early release day before President's Week Break</i>
<b>February 16-20</b>	Monday—Friday	President's Week, <b>school closed</b>
<b>March 26-27</b>	Thursday—Friday	Parent Conferences, <b>school closed</b>
<b>April 10</b>	Friday	Early release day before Spring Break
<b>April 13-17</b>	Monday—Friday	Spring Break, <b>school closed</b>
<b>May 25</b>	Monday	Memorial Day Observed, <b>school closed</b>
<b>June 10</b>	Wednesday	Early Release Day
<b>June 11</b>	Thursday	Last day of school (early release day)

• Early release days are every Thursday as well as the additional days noted above.

### **2008-09 Daily Schedule & Pick-up Times**

Grade	Class Starts	Class Ends	Pick-up Window
Kindergarten, Regular Days <i>Early Release Days</i>	8:45am 8:45am	1:00pm 11:45am	1:00—1:10 11:45—11:55
Grades 1—3 Regular Days  <i>Early Release Days</i>	8:30am  8:30am	2:30pm for 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2:10 for 1 <sup>st</sup> 1:00pm	2:35—2:50 2:10—2:20 1:05—1:15
Grades 4—8, Regular Days <i>Early Release Days</i>	8:20am 8:20am	2:50pm 12:40pm	2:55—3:10 12:45—1:00

- Student supervision is provided before school on our backfield between 8:00 - 8:30am. Please do not drop-off your child before 8:00am.
- Traffic and congestion in our pick-up area necessitates that children be picked up during their grade's designated pick-up window. Children not picked up during their designated window may be escorted to AfterCare and parents charged accordingly.
- Staff go off duty at the end of the pick-up window times. Children not picked up by 3:15pm (or 1:15 on early release days) may be escorted to AfterCare and parents charged accordingly.

#### **Parking and Traffic**

Limited parking and heavy traffic force us to have staggered class schedules and a number of parking and driving rules. Our parking and traffic challenges also force us to muster more thoughtfulness for others than we might normally possess during tense driving times.

We have no lines on our gravel lot, so we rely on everyone's good judgment in using space efficiently (i.e., park as close to the next car as you reasonably can). Because parking is extremely limited, please do not park unless it is truly necessary. If you must park, please be considerate and limit your parking time. Our kindergarten parents must park to walk their children in and are looking for spaces between 8:20-8:45am every morning. In general, we expect that students above first grade should be able to be dropped off at the top and walk down to their classroom. Our crosswalk in back is staffed every day and children enjoy the walk down the winding path on our hillside.

You can help minimize traffic congestion on Watertrough Road by following these requests: If you are coming up from the back, always allow cars coming in from Watertrough Road to have the right of way before you. Also, if you are coming down Watertrough to make a right turn into the school and notice a backup of cars trying to turn left into our driveway, you might want to stop in the road before the entrance and wave a left-turning car or two in before you.

A few more:

- Never park anywhere that may block the safe movement of other vehicles.
- Do not leave your car unattended—even for a brief time—in our drop-off lane unless you are a kindergarten parent and cannot find a parking space anywhere else. In those hopefully rare instances when this is necessary, please put on your emergency flashers so others will know to go around you.
- Always exit the campus by going down our driveway and out through the lower exit.

- Always use extreme caution when driving in our parking lots. The conditions are often crowded with children and adults walking (and sometimes running) from their cars and across the crosswalk. We have less than ideal conditions for our vehicular load, so a good deal of patience and kindness is necessary for it to work well and safely.

### ***Arrivals and Pick-ups***

Adult supervision is provided before school on our backfield between 8:00 - 8:30am. It is helpful for the children to arrive a little earlier than the start of class so they can socialize a bit before class begins. Students should not be dropped off at the school before 8:00am as there is not supervision available.

For picking up after school we have designated “pick-up windows” so that traffic congestion is minimized (see previous page for schedule). Please do your best to pick up your child during the specified window as the ending time of the window is when the supervising staff go off duty. Children not picked up by 3:15pm on regular days and 1:15pm on early release days may need to be taken to AfterCare and parents will be billed accordingly.

### ***Office Hours and Phone Usage***

Our school office is open from 8:00am to 3:30pm each regular day. The office closes on early release days at 2:00pm. Phone messages can always be left on our message machine. Student use of the office phone is for emergencies only. Please arrange play dates, and communicate pick-up arrangements to your children before school so they are not asking to use the phone for these reasons.

### ***Attendance & Punctuality***

Punctuality and good attendance are vital to your child, and to the school, for many reasons. Because there is a rhythm to the school day, beginning with a welcome and an opening activity, it is extremely important that all children arrive on time to reinforce their sense of belonging and connection to their class, and so that they do not disturb the focus of the teacher and the other children on activities that have already begun. Good attendance is also important because much of the daily lesson is presented orally and as a group interaction. A student who is absent or late frequently may find it difficult to make up work or to fully understand the material.

In addition, the operating budget for our educational program is dependent on state funds that we receive for days of student attendance. Each day of student absence costs the school approximately \$45.00 of lost income—an amount that may seem small, but if only 10 children are absent each day, the lost income for the year is over \$78,000.00!

Please limit absences to times of illness or injury, and schedule appointments after school hours if at all possible. For appointments that can only be scheduled during school hours, it is helpful if a student comes to school for as much of the morning as possible so that they can be recorded as being in attendance and also so that they do not miss main lesson. Please call the office as early as possible in the morning if your child will be absent that day.

Students who arrive late need to check in at the school office before joining their class. Students who must leave school prior to the official dismissal time also need to check

out at the school office before leaving the school grounds.

Good attendance is extremely important, but for the health of your child, and his/her teacher and classmates, please do not send your child to school if they are sick.

### ***Excused and Unexcused Absences***

State regulations that apply to charter schools specify that students must attend all scheduled school days except for “excused” absences. Excused absences are defined as absences due to illness, medical or dental appointments, attendance at a funeral of an immediate family member, or participation in religious instruction release time as allowed under Board policy 6113.1. Other reasons for considering an absence as “excused” may be approved if those reasons are requested by the parent(s) in writing and are judged legitimate by the school director.

Students not in attendance for three or more scheduled school days for other reasons, such as for family or personal preference, are defined by State regulations as “truant.” As a public school, state education code specifies that we inform parents of truant students of their legal obligation to ensure their child’s attendance in school.

Labeling students as truant who are on family trips or whose parents allow them to stay home on a day when they “don’t feel like going to school” is not a course of action we would prefer to take. Please limit your child’s absences to those that meet the definition of “excused,” and request approval for others that may be in question.

### ***Independent Study***

Under some circumstances, and with approval of the teacher and the director, a student may be able to miss between 5—40 consecutive days of school for non-illness related reasons if he or she completes a plan of “independent study” assigned by the class teacher. The amount of work specified in the independent study agreement should be comparable to the amount of work the student would be expected to complete if they were in attendance at the school, and work samples in each curricular area must show that the plan was followed. Work samples, and the completed agreement form are supposed to be submitted to the office within two days after the student returns to school. Independent study agreements enable the school to collect state funds for the attendance of the student only if he or she completes the required schoolwork specified in the agreement.

Not all extended absences justify or qualify for an independent study arrangement and all independent study agreements must be approved by the teacher and the director of the school. For this reason, any plans to request independent study should be discussed with the teacher and the director well in advance of the time of anticipated absence. In addition, once agreed to, independent study work must be completed as agreed or the school is unable to “sign off” on the agreement as completed. In such a case, the school would forfeit all attendance funds for the time period, and, since independent study did not take place as agreed, the student would be considered to have been out of school for an unexcused absence, and considered truant for that period of time.

### ***Lunch and Snacks***

Please make sure your child has an adequate breakfast at home that includes protein and something warm to eat or drink. Students need to bring a mid-morning snack (unless otherwise specified by your class teacher) and a lunch. These should be nutritious and

well balanced, avoiding gum, candy, soft drinks and sugary foods. Please pack lunches in baskets or soft lunch bags (cloth or insulated), free of advertisements and media images.

### **Medications at School**

Children cannot bring and self-administer medications at school, and school personnel cannot administer medications (including over-the-counter items) without a physician's written authorization. If your child needs to take a medication of any type during the day, contact our Office Manager for information and the form needed for this purpose.

### **Clothing**

The weather in our area varies considerably from early morning to late afternoon and children should come to school dressed for that variety. Except on the warmest days, every child should have several layers of clothing including a warm sweater or coat, so that they can keep themselves warm when outdoors and remove layers as the temperature rises. All students should also have rain gear for rainy days. We allow outside play even when there is light rain if a child has proper protection (weatherproof coat, boots, and hood or hat). Labeling your child's clothing is highly recommended.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost clothing has a way of accumulating on school grounds as the children play and shed layers. We gather it up and put it on the lost and found rack in the breezeway between grades 4 and 6. Please check the lost and found if you are missing something. Periodically we donate the build up of lost and found items to charity, after announcing this plan and the date in the *Bulletin*. Labeling your child's clothing and lunch bag with their name is strongly recommended so that we can return it more easily.

### **Field Trips**

SunRidge School has considerably more field trips than most other public schools. We believe this adds much to the richness of our educational program, but to keep this aspect of our school viable, we must ensure that all trips are safe and that all necessary regulations and procedures are strictly followed.

It is especially important that we have received the necessary administrative information for students and parent drivers prior to the day of the field trip. Insurance clearance should be submitted to the office *at least three days before the trip* so that any problems can be remedied in time. No student or driver will be able to go on a field trip without the required clearances. Questions about forms and requirements should be directed to our Office Manager.

Parents are needed and welcome on most field trips, to serve as drivers and helpers. Teachers may put a limit on the number of parent participants if they deem that to be best for the type of trip or other reason. Parents on field trips are considered supervising assistants. They are expected to follow the teacher's directions and act in a manner that supports safe, respectful, and responsible behavior by all participants. Designated parent supervisors are not permitted to bring other children with them who are not students in the class.

The cost of all field trips is typically covered by the parents in each class (i.e., there is a per student cost). Every student is entitled to participate regardless of financial means, and fundraising is used to cover all or part of the expenses for those who cannot afford

the amount needed. When fundraising is conducted the following policies apply:

- Any fund raising activities undertaken in the name of the school must be approved by the SunRidge administration prior to initiation.
- All money raised in the name of the school for school field trips must be deposited in the SunRidge Student Body account.

Parents incurring expenses for class field trips can be reimbursed from the SunRidge Student Body Account as follows:

- All expenses by parents must be pre-approved by the teacher.
- Reimbursement is made by submitting a reimbursement form (available in the office) with the teacher's signature and original receipts.
- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted no later than two weeks after the completion of the field trip.
- Receipts should include only the field trip related expenses—do not include other items on the same receipt with field trip expenses, and do not make written adjustments on the original receipt.
- Reimbursement requests for expenses put on credit cards by phone (i.e., no receipt issued) must be submitted with a copy of the credit card statement.

## ***Student Release Procedures Following an Emergency***

In the event of an emergency or disaster situation while school is in session, it is essential that we work together to ensure the safety of every child. SunRidge has emergency plans and supplies in place, and, in the event of an earthquake, flood, or other disaster, we are prepared to take care of your child(ren) until they are released to you or another adult you have authorized to pick them up. We need parents to be knowledgeable of, and follow, our student release procedures so that there is a safe and responsible transfer of care.

We realize that parents will want to get their children home as soon as possible after a disaster. Unfortunately, road conditions may make getting to the school difficult. We may also need to keep cars out of our driveways and parking areas so that emergency vehicles can access our buildings. And, we will need to exercise great care in tracking the whereabouts of each child. With these circumstances and needs in mind, please follow these guidelines:

- 1) Communication with the school during an emergency may be difficult or impossible. We have a generator that will enable us to use our phone system if electrical power is out, but there is no way of knowing whether or not the phone lines will be operational. There is a system for schools to report status in an emergency that is then announced by radio station KSRO 1350 AM. In addition, you can try calling the Twin Hills District emergency hotline at 523-9550 for updates. If the phones are working, we will also activate the phone trees for each class.
- 2) Because our campus may be closed to cars in a disaster, you may need to park on the street and walk in to the campus. If this is the case, be sure to park without blocking street traffic—emergency vehicles may need to get through.
- 3) Following a disaster event, we will need to follow strict procedures for releasing the students in our care. A “*Student Release Station*” will be set up directly in front of the office, under the awning where the stairs go down to the back. Parents will need to come to the *Student Release Station* first to sign out and have their child (and any others they are authorized to take) brought to them. It is essential that this sign out procedure be followed. We will need to maintain an accurate record of each child’s whereabouts and who picked up each child. To do otherwise would result in confusion, upset, and time-consuming searches at the worst possible time.
- 4) Be reminded that school staff are authorized to release students only to those whose names are on the emergency release cards that we have on file for each child. If you want to include additional people on your authorization form, please add them now.

### **Aftercare Information and Rates, 2008-09**

SunRidge understands how important after-school childcare is to many parents and strives to offer a stable, high quality after-school program for our students. Please read the following information so that you help us operate a healthy and stable program. **Please note that, due to rising costs and the need to make our rates more consistent for all sessions, we have increased some of our rates slightly.**

**Registration:** Parents wanting to use Aftercare for their children must complete our registration paperwork before services can be provided. The forms are available in the school office.

**Sessions:** Our Aftercare services are charged for by “session” at the flat rates listed below. Parents will be charged these flat rates when Aftercare is provided for all or any part of a session. The sessions are designed to accommodate the varied dismissal times of different grades on regular and early release days, and enable us to provide stable staffing.

**Scheduled, Pre-Paid Rates:** Lower rates are charged for Aftercare services that are scheduled and paid for at least one day prior to the first day of use. The Pre-Paid Scheduling form is available in the office or the Aftercare Room and must be accompanied with payment in order to receive the lower pre-paid rate. Pre-pay early to ensure there will be a space.

**Drop-in Rates:** Higher rates are charged for Aftercare services that are not pre-scheduled and pre-paid. Drop-ins are accommodated only if there is space still available for that day/time.

#### **2008-09 Aftercare Rates by Session**

	<b>Scheduled, Pre-Paid Rates</b>	<b>Drop-in Rates</b>
Session A: 11:45am - 1:00pm	\$5.00	\$6.50
Session B: 1:00 - 3:00pm	\$9.00	\$11.50
Session C: 2:10 - 3:00pm	\$4.00	\$5.50
Session D: 3:00 - 5:30pm	\$10.00	\$13.00
Session E: 1:00 - 5:30pm	\$16.00	\$21.00
Session F: 2:10 - 5:30pm	\$12.00	\$16.00

**Billing and Non-Payment of Fees:** To keep administrative costs as low as possible, we do not do billing. Amounts due will be totaled on the last school day of every month, and that information will be available to parents as of the first school day of each month. It is the responsibility of parents to either call or come in to be told the amount due for the previous month. Payments are due no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. If payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, additional Aftercare services will not be provided until the previous amount due has been paid.

**Cancellations:** There is no credit provided for missed sessions that have been scheduled and pre-paid. Scheduled drop-in Aftercare will be charged for unless there is at least 24 hours notice of the cancellation.

**Limited Spaces:** There are a limited number of Aftercare spaces available each day. Pre-scheduling and pre-paying reserves a space for your child. Those wishing to use Aftercare on a drop-in basis cannot be assured a space and must call the office first to see if there is room on the desired day. Children will not be admitted to Aftercare unless a parent has first called and reserved a space for them.

**Late Pick-up Fee:** Children must be picked up no later than when our Aftercare staff's workday ends at 5:30pm each day. **There will be a \$1.00 per minute charge for Aftercare services that must be provided beyond the 5:30pm closing time.**

**Returned Check Fee:** There will be a \$10.00 charge for checks returned as unpaid from the bank. In addition, district policy requires that the payment be made in cash for any returned check amount.

**Sibling discount:** Siblings receive a 10% discount off the rate for the additional child(ren) as per the rate schedule, when siblings are attending at the same time.

**Scholarships:** Reduced rates based on income level are available to a limited number of families. Scholarships are intended only for those with demonstrated financial need, and whose work schedules make after school childcare a necessity. Scholarships are granted on an annual basis and must be re-applied for each year. Applications are available in the school office.

## **Parent Participation**

### **Communication with Teacher**

SunRidge teachers each have a way in which they communicate to parents about class news, activities, and needs. Please read these communications so that you can support the efforts of your child's teacher in a timely way. Teachers also specify how and when they would like to receive communication from parents. Please be clear on what your child's teacher requests in this regard (e.g., times for phone calls, available times to meet, when and when not to use email, etc.). Following these requests allows communications with the parents to be managed in a way that respects the needs of the teacher as well as the parents.

### **Class Meetings**

Our teachers are expected to schedule a minimum of five class meetings for parents across the year. Participation in these meetings by at least one parent of each child is essential as they provide information about your child's school program, homework, field trips and other upcoming events. Teachers also use these meetings as a time to provide needed information to parents about Waldorf education and how parents can support the school's efforts at home. Class meetings can also be a time for parents to build their class community, ask questions, and discuss class needs or concerns.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in both the fall (November) and the spring (March). This a time for the class teacher to provide you with individualized attention about your child's progress, to hear your suggestions and concerns, and to refine plans for working together for your child's benefit. All parents are expected to participate in these twice-yearly conferences.

### **Parent Education Events**

SunRidge offers a variety of parent education evenings throughout the year. Some focus on the younger grades, some on the older grades, and some are whole-school events. We strive to make them relevant and stimulating to promote good attendance. Parents are expected to participate in at least two of these educational events each year.

### **Community Service Needs**

It is through volunteering one's time and energy to address needs that new and lasting relationships are built, ownership is engendered, and a healthy school community is built. The volunteer needs in a Waldorf methods charter school are significant, and the more of us that participate, the less there will be for each of us to do. We ask that every parent contribute approximately 40 hours of SunRidge community service during the school year (4 hours per month). For most families, this is not hard to do and the opportunities are many and varied.

Volunteers are needed to serve as class parents, field trip drivers and chaperones, classroom cleaners, flower bringers, and food preparers. We need those who can build and make repairs, beautify our landscaping, coordinate and help with fundraising and festivals, and serve as representatives on our Parent Council, Charter Council, or one of our standing committees . We need others who can help edit and lay-out written materials, plan and put together our yearbook, plan and execute site improvements, and write grants. Please refer to our Community Service Handbook on our website, or pick one up in the office. There is something for everyone and with everyone helping, there is so much done, and so much to feel good about.

## **Pledge Program**

The SunRidge Pledge Program is a voluntary parent effort to fund that part of our school curriculum that would not be possible to fund with current state funding. The pledge program is needed to fund the full cost of our students' classes in Spanish, Handwork, Woodwork, Music, Eurythmy, Choir, and our teaching assistants in grades K-3. Without pledge program funds, SunRidge would not be able to offer these essential parts of what makes our school unique.

The way our pledge program works is simple. Parents are asked to commit to making a monthly donation, or pledge, that goes into a pledge fund that pays for certain expenses. This commitment is voluntary and tax-deductible, and everyone is asked to contribute to the degree they are able. Most SunRidge families participate in meeting this goal. A significant number contribute the amount that we have specified is needed to meet our current budget needs: \$200.00 per child, per month. Some families contribute more to this community effort, which is much appreciated as it helps balance the contributions of others who cannot afford to pledge the needed amount.

In the late spring of each year, parents are mailed a pledge commitment form for the following school year. We ask that each family complete and return the form by June 1 so that we can wisely plan the next year's budget for the classes that pledges support. During the school year we provide regular reminders about paying monthly pledges. We also gladly accept full or partial year pledge amounts if that is easier than a monthly payment system for you.

During the first three years of our school's operation, our voluntary pledge program has been very successful at enabling us to offer a full spectrum of specialty classes to all grades. In 2007-08 we had our best year yet, with parents contributing over \$207,000. It is a tribute to the vision, sense of community responsibility, and sacrifice of SunRidge parents that our pledge program has been so successful. During these times of rising costs and inadequate state funding, our school could not survive without it.

## **SunRidge Conflict Resolution Procedure**

### **1) Conflict Resolution Procedure**

Disagreement and conflict are natural and inevitable in any school, but conflict isn't necessarily negative. When conflict is addressed in a direct and caring manner, it can help build healthier relationships and a stronger community. The purpose of our *Conflict Resolution Procedure* is to foster this outcome by providing a framework that helps community members resolve conflicts in a non-adversarial way. Our *Conflict Resolution Procedure* is a model available to all members of the SunRidge community: parents, teachers, the administration, and other SunRidge employees.

### **2) Complaint Procedure**

Alternately, our *Complaint Procedure* applies only to situations where a parent has a complaint about, or dispute with, a SunRidge employee. Unlike the *Conflict Resolution Procedure*, in which the involved parties determine the outcome themselves through collaborative problem solving, in the formal complaint process a third party renders a decision about any action that may be taken to address the complaint. The timelines and steps of the SunRidge *Complaint Procedure* are determined by the Twin Hills School District and the Twin Hills Teachers' Association. A copy of the *Complaint Procedure* follows this description of the *Conflict Resolution Procedure*.

### **Conflict Resolution Procedure**

The communication lines described below are the vehicles that SunRidge promotes for resolving conflicts within our community as they arise. These steps form a structure and process that encourage the parties involved to work together to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. *It is emphasized that the first step in the resolution of conflicts in our community is direct communication between the involved parties.*

#### **Level 1: Direct Communication**

Whatever the nature of the conflict, it is essential that the person feeling the conflict speak directly to the other party as soon as possible after the conflict arises. SunRidge community members can help build a healthy school community by following, and encouraging others to follow, this simple, but powerful, principle. Generally, it is most productive if a discussion occurs within a few days of an incident of concern, and at a time and place that is conducive to effective communication (e.g., in person, in private, without distractions, etc.). If a conflict is not addressed early on, negative feelings usually increase, and it becomes even more difficult to speak to the other party. Of course, while early communication is important, it is never too late to speak to someone about a conflict that is interfering with an honest, mutually supportive relationship.

#### **Level 2: Conciliation**

*A. For conflicts concerning an employee other than the Director*

If a conflict is not resolved through direct communication, the Director should be notified by any of the parties involved as soon as possible. The Director will schedule a meeting to help the parties resolve the conflict through "conciliation." Conciliation is defined as a process in which a third party attempts to help parties to collaborate, but it is less structured and formal than mediation. More than one conciliation meeting may occur by mutual agreement of the involved parties.

Note: By mutual agreement, the involved parties may choose to request someone other than the Director to assist with conciliation.

*B. For conflicts concerning the Director*

If a conflict with the Director is not resolved through direct communication, a description of the conflict should be submitted in writing to a representative of the Charter Council. The Charter Council will appoint a Council member to conduct the conciliation meeting(s).

**Level 3: Mediation**

*A. For conflicts concerning an employee other than the Director*

If the conflict is not resolvable through conciliation (Level 2), any of the parties may request the assistance of an independent mediator. Mediation is defined as facilitated negotiation; a process by which a trained mediator assists disputing parties to collaboratively discuss their concerns and problem-solve their issues. Mediators assist in documenting any mutually acceptable points of agreement the parties may reach. The mediator does not have authoritative decision-making power, and participation by the parties is voluntary, private, and face-to-face.

Requests for mediated assistance should be made to the Director, who will decide on a case-by-case basis if school assistance with independent mediator intervention can or should be provided. When determined to be warranted and possible, the Director arranges for the parties to contact an approved mediator.

The independent mediator will provide the Director with a report on the outcome of a mediation meeting, and the Director will determine the number of sessions the school can support.

*B. For conflicts concerning the Director*

If a conflict with the Director is not resolvable through conciliation (Level 2), any of the parties may request the assistance of an independent mediator. Requests for mediated assistance should be made to the Charter Council member who participated in the conciliation meeting. The Charter Council will review the situation and decide what mediator arrangements will be made.

**SunRidge Complaint Procedures**

Any teacher who encounters a student-teacher conflict or parental complaint which he/she cannot resolve shall communicate that conflict or complaint to the school director as soon as possible.

Any parent or guardian of a pupil enrolled in the District may make a written complaint regarding any district employee. All such complaints shall be on complaint forms (as per school board policy #1312, available in the school office), signed by the complainant and submitted to the Director within thirty (30) days of the event giving rise to the complaint. The employee will be given a copy of the complaint. Complaint forms include a place for the complainant to indicate whether a response from the Director is requested. If no such request is made the Director shall not be required to respond to the complainant.

Upon request, by either the involved teacher or the Director, the teacher shall have the right to meet with the complainant in order to question the complainant regarding the accuracy and validity of the complaint. The Director shall schedule a meeting at a mutually agreeable time with the complainant. A district representative may be present at said meeting at the Director's discretion or by teacher request. At any successive meeting where a District representative is present, a Twin Hills Teachers' representative may be present if so requested by the teacher.

If a response is requested by the complainant, the appropriate administrator or the District shall reply in writing within twenty (20) working days from the receipt of the complaint and a copy provided to the teacher.

The complainant or teacher may contest the response of the Director by written appeal to the superintendent within twenty (20) workdays of such response. The Superintendent, upon receipt of such appeal, shall respond within twenty (20) workdays. After response from the Superintendent, any complainant or teacher still dissatisfied with the District resolution of the complaint may make a final written appeal to the Governing Board within fifteen (15) working days of the Superintendent's decision. The final decision regarding disposition of the complaint shall be by the Governing Board. Any complaint filed by a parent or guardian will not be used in the evaluation of an employee or placed in that employee's personnel file if the procedural steps described above have not been followed or a complaint is found to be false. The District shall not dismiss or refuse to re-employ a permanent Association member solely on the basis of uncorroborated, unsubstantiated, uninvestigated hearsay in a citizen or parent complaint. Note: Complaints regarding the Director shall follow the above procedures and timelines but be submitted in writing to the Superintendent.

## **Expectations for Student Dress**

The expectations for student dress at SunRidge are based on a commitment to providing an educational environment that:

- Is safe, age-appropriate, and conducive to focusing on our educational purpose
- Is free from commercial influences, including advertising and the media-driven sexualization of children and youth
- Promotes dignity and respect for self and others

Our guidelines may not cover all situations and teachers may need to address concerns not specifically mentioned in these guidelines. The general rule is that a student's clothing and grooming should be appropriate to a school setting, and be conducive to the educational purposes and activities of the school. Please feel free to contact your teacher if you have any questions about specific articles of clothing.

### **Dress Guidelines**

*Images & Writing on Clothing, Backpacks, lunch bags, etc.*

**Grades K-5:** Should be free of media images, cartoons, and large name brands, and be free of images/references to tobacco, drugs, violence, sex, or any content that is degrading or disrespectful to self or others.

**Grades 6-8:** Should be free of commercial advertisements, images/references to tobacco, drugs, violence, sex, or any content that is degrading or disrespectful to self or others.

### **Clothing**

General rule: students should be dressed modestly and appropriately for a school environment

- Shoes and clothing must allow for safe, active movement during the school day. Shoes must be secured to the feet (no "flip-flops" or other loose-heeled/opened-toed type sandals).
- Clothing should cover the midriff and undergarments.
- Shirts/tops must be worn at all times.
- Shorts and skirts/dresses should be at least fingertip length with hands at sides.
- Shirts/tops should stay securely on the shoulders, with straps at least 1 inch wide, and with necklines and sleeve holes that keep the chest covered.

### **Make-up and Nail Polish**

**Grades K-5:** Children are expected to come to school free of make-up or nail polish. Perfume and other scents are discouraged in all classes due to possible allergies some may have to these products.

### **Hair Dying**

**Grades K-5:** Children are expected to come to school with their natural hair color.

### **Jewelry**

In general, jewelry must not present a safety concern given the active nature of some school activities. Jewelry design must also conform to the guidelines for clothing, backpacks, etc., and not present a distraction to the educational focus of the school environment. Additional restrictions, based on developmental concerns, may be requested by teachers in discussion with class parents.

*Consequences for not following these expectations:* Students will be treated respectfully and given a choice of ways to correct the problem if possible. Parents may be called to assist with this choice if necessary.

## **Guidelines and Rules for Student Behavior, Grades 1-8**

*The purpose behind these guidelines and rules is to ensure that children in our care are safe, responsible, and respectful. These guidelines and rules will be reviewed periodically and changed as necessary to ensure that this purpose is being fulfilled.*

### **Site Boundaries**

Unless accompanied by a teacher, students are to stay within the campus boundaries at all times during the school day.

- **Front Boundary:** Except for pick-up and drop-off times, or when going to the office for approved business, the front boundary for students is the hillside area just below the office. Except for the purposes of going to or from one's vehicle with an adult, the parking lot areas in both the front and back are off-limits at all times.

- **Rear and Side Boundaries:** The fence around the backfield is the boundary of the campus. Students may only go beyond the gate that leads to the gardens and the willows area when accompanied by a teacher. Students are not to go into adjoining yards for any reason. Balls should be retrieved by a teacher or other yard supervisor.

### **Upon Arriving**

Upon arrival students should go to the front of their classrooms or, if it is not yet time for the bell, should go to their assigned play area if adult supervision is present. The bell signals the time to move immediately to their classroom door area.

### **Upon Dismissal**

Unless other arrangements have been made (e.g. Aftercare or parent pick-up at classroom door), students should go to the front pick-up area at the designated time. Behavior at the pick-up areas should be safe and orderly to avoid risk of injury on the steps, decks and area directly next to the driveway. Sitting, standing, or climbing on the deck railings is unsafe, and therefore not allowed.

### **Play Areas**

Active play areas are in the backfield, the side yard, the breezeway between Room 4 and Room 6, and the basketball court (before school, students may only play/congregate on the back field and the covered breezeway).

### **Walking/Quiet Zones Only Areas**

The areas around the classrooms (the decks and walkways), the hillside area just below the office, and the amphitheater stage and benches are for walking and quiet activities only. Students may be on the deck by the casitas only when accompanied by an adult.

### **Restroom Area**

The restroom area is to be used only by those needing to use the restrooms or the drinking fountain. The restrooms and the deck in front of the bathrooms are not areas for congregating or play. Students are expected to return to their play area in a timely manner.

### **Community Room and AfterCare Room**

Students may be in the Community Room and AfterCare room only when accompanied by a supervising adult.

### **Classrooms**

Students are allowed inside classrooms only when a teacher is present.

### **Supervision**

Students must be supervised or under the direction of an adult at all times. Except when walking to the restroom, students are not to be in the deck and walkway areas in front of the lower grades classrooms during recess and lunch period as these areas are unsupervised at those times. Students should go into the play areas at the beginning of recess only if an adult supervisor is present.

### **Play Equipment and Structures**

#### **Swings**

The swings must be used safely at all times. The swings are to be used only for single, forward and backward swinging—no games, other equipment, or other activity in or around the swings area. Making the swing higher (by twisting the chain or looping it over the top bar) is not allowed. No high jumping off of swings. Those not on the swings should stay clear of the wood shavings area around the swings.

#### **Climbing Structure & Bars**

The climbing structure and horizontal bars must be used safely at all times. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and above should have only one person using a horizontal bar at a time. No climbing, sitting or hanging on the bars in a way that is unsafe. Students in grades 1-4 may not sit or stand on the top bars of the climbing structure. Students in grades 5-8 may sit but not stand on the top bars of the climbing structure.

#### **Play Houses**

No climbing to, sitting or standing on, top of playhouses, sitting on window ledges of playhouses, or climbing up into the top of the inside of playhouses.

#### **Sandboxes**

Shoes must be left on during recess including during sandbox play. No throwing of sand or moving sand out of sandbox.

#### **Trees**

Climbing trees on campus is not allowed (balls and other items stuck in trees may be retrieved by a supervising adult or his/her designee).

#### **Fences**

Sitting on the fence along the upper (south) side of the field is allowed. No sitting on other fences, and no standing on any fence.

#### **Ropes**

Ropes are to be used only for jumping rope, or as part of a directly supervised game (e.g., during games class). No ropes in playhouses, climbing structures, bars, swings, or from limbs of trees. Jump ropes need to be taken back to class after recess.

Braided “harnesses” that are designed specifically for “horse” play by the younger grades may be used for that purpose only, and not secured around front of neck.

### **Sticks and Boards**

Sticks, boards, and other structural materials *that are safe and approved for use* may be used for building things only; no “swordplay”, running with sticks, etc. unless part of a supervised games class activity.

### **Railings**

No sitting or climbing on railings anywhere on campus, including those along the deck behind rooms 6 and 7.

### **Tables**

No standing or stepping on tops of outdoor tables or high workbenches. Sitting on these outdoor tables is okay.

### **Scarves**

Scarves should not be worn during active play at recess, unless they are tucked into coat or jacket.

### **Ball Use**

- Ball use only on the grassy field, the blacktop and the grassy area of the side yard.
- No kicking of balls on blacktop or side yard
- No ball play in the breezeway or the redwood grove area of the side yard.
- Balls (and Frisbees) that go over the north fence into the neighbor’s yard may only be retrieved by an adult, or under the direction and supervision of an adult.
- Balls should be returned to classroom or ball rack at end of recess.

#### *Ball Use in Grades 1 & 2*

Allowed: Cooperative ball play that uses hands for batting, rolling, passing, throwing and catching.

Not allowed due to developmental, social, and safety concerns: soccer, other games that involve kicking a ball, and basketball.

#### *Ball Use in Grades 3 & 4*

Allowed: Same as for Grades 1 & 2, with the addition of simple ball kicking games, bowling and dribbling, throwing ball at designated target, 1/2 court basketball.

Not allowed due to small, shared field and safety concerns: competitive soccer.

#### *Ball Use in Grades 5 - 8*

Football: touch or flag football only; no tackling, grabbing, or rough play. Due to small, shared field, no kicking of football.

Basketball: no pushing, grabbing, or rough play.

Baseball: due to small, shared field and safety concerns, baseball is only allowed when played with hollow plastic or foam balls and bats.

Soccer: due to small, shared field and safety concerns, competitive soccer games are only allowed when the area is clear and the game is organized and actively supervised by an adult who is available for that purpose only (not on yard duty).

Ball games in general: Must be safe for participants and those nearby, and not present risk of damage to windows, buildings or other structures.

## **Use of Field**

Due to small, shared field and safety concerns, the yard supervisor may need to divide the grass field in half (with a rope laid on the ground) to allow for safe, simultaneous play of two games.

## **Equipment Shed**

Students may only take items from the equipment shed if they are authorized to do so by a supervising adult.

## **Rainy Days**

At SunRidge we would like students to get outside and move around even on days when it is raining, but we don't want students in cold, wet clothes all day. This is our compromise:

**Before school:** If it is raining upon arrival at the school, playing out in the rain before class time begins is not allowed. Students should congregate under an eave, in the breezeway, or in the classroom if the teacher is present.

**During recess with light rain, grades 1-4 :** need to be wearing rain gear (raincoats with hood and rain boots) to play outside. Those without protective rain gear (as specified above) at times of light rain may go outside under an eave, or remain indoors if teacher supervision has been arranged.

**During recess with light rain, grades 5-8:** need to be wearing a rain repellent coat with hood or hat (not cotton or other easily soaked material). Upper grades students may also use an umbrella to stay dry if they are not playing, running, or using the swings. Those without protective rain gear (as specified above) at times of light rain may go outside under an eave, or remain indoors if teacher supervision has been arranged.

**During recess if it is raining hard, all students:** need to either remain indoors with their teacher or may stay under an eave or the covered breezeway. The adult on yard duty has the authority to make the "hard rain" call, and direct students off the fields.

## **Behavior and Speech**

### **• Rough play/behavior**

Students are expected to treat others safely and with respect. No rough play, tackling, hitting, kicking, wrestling, yelling in ears, or throwing objects at others (unless part of a safe game (e.g., dodge ball), or a supervised game or PE activity, e.g., wrestling, medieval games, etc.).

### **• Rude or Foul Speech**

Speech should be appropriate to an educational setting and be respectful of all others on campus. Swearing or disrespectful speech, or offensive materials, drawings, writing, or gestures are not allowed on campus. Spitting is not allowed.

### **• Following Directions**

Students are expected to follow the directions of adult supervisors at all times and without arguing.

### **• Harassment and Bullying**

Our school is committed to providing an educational setting free from bullying, harassment, and name calling for any reason. Harassment of or by students, parents, or staff will not be tolerated.

- **Displays of Physical Affection**

Displays of physical affection must be appropriate to an educational setting (i.e., not of a sexual or intimate nature). Physical affection is also only appropriate when both individuals are consenting.

- **Electronic Devices**

Students are not allowed to bring CD's, pagers, electronic games, cell phones, tapes, personal stereos, laptops, or electronic organizers on campus. If a cell phone is needed and authorized by the parent(s), it must be left in the school office upon arrival and picked up when leaving the campus.

- **Food Rules**

Healthy, nutritious food is encouraged at all times. No gum, candy, or high-sugar soft drinks and sodas. Eating is only allowed during recess or lunch periods and only in designated sitting areas or other area approved by the teacher.

- **Respecting Property & the Environment**

No materials may be taken from the classrooms, storage areas, or grounds without direct permission of the teacher or owner. All materials are to be treated with care and returned to their proper area when not in use. Garbage and recycling are to be placed in the appropriate receptacles at all times. Plants, wild animals, the ground/soil, and our facilities are to be treated with respect and care.

- **Dangerous or Illegal Items**

No weapons, fireworks, lighters, or other dangerous objects are allowed on campus. Use or possession of drugs or alcohol is illegal and will be dealt with as such.

## **SunRidge School Discipline Policy**

The central tenets of our school discipline policy shall be safety, respect, and responsibility. School rules and consequences should be developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced. They should maintain a balance between respecting individual freedom and having clearly defined standards that serve our educational environment. Discipline should be proactive and provide opportunities for learning healthy social interaction skills. Consequences should be logical, non-shaming, and foster opportunities for restitution, learning, and forgiveness.

The ultimate goal of our discipline policy and procedures is the development of self-discipline in our students, fostering the emerging ability of our students to recognize and demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior, to monitor their own actions, and to behave in ways that promote a safe and healthy school community.

### **Lower Grades (K-4) Discipline Procedure**

Our approach in the lower grades (K-4) is to encourage, teach, and focus on positive behavior, knowing that putting our attention on children's highest potential will draw out their best behavior. While working from this positive, appreciative model, we realize that there are times when a child's behavior may become disruptive or when rules are not followed. At these times, gentle redirection will be used first. If redirection doesn't work, natural consequences or a brief, teacher-designated time-out may be used, to help the student reflect on what is needed to participate in class or recess. If these measures are unsuccessful and disruptive behavior is becoming chronic, the teacher will meet with the parents, and may bring the situation to the Care Group or the Student Success Team (SST) for help as needed. The SST will develop a plan to address the student's needs that may include referrals for needed services. All SST plans include a follow-up date to review the success of the plan and to revise it as needed.

#### **Outline of steps:**

- 1) Emphasis/focus on desired positive behaviors
- 2) Redirection
- 3) Natural Consequences where appropriate
- 4) Brief time-out as a time to reflect on what is needed
- 5) Parent conference
- 6) Referral to Care Group if appropriate
- 7) Referral to SST

### **Kindergarten**

Our kindergartens have a specific set of procedures for children who are having a difficult time responding to normal supportive procedures. These are:

#### **1) Calm & Return "A"**

Calm and Return provides an opportunity for a child "on the edge" to spend a little time in the office in order to re-gather themselves away from their class. A child can request this time, or a teacher can recommend it based on the child's cues. The office will keep a record of calm and return visits.

#### **2) Calm & Return "B"**

If a child is having a mild to moderate tantrum/outburst s/he will be escorted to the office for a period of "calm and return."

### **3) Sent Home for the Remainder of the Day**

The following behaviors in kindergarten may result in a child being sent home for the remainder of the day:

- Having more than one incident in one day of behavior that results in being sent to the office;
- Especially graphic, threatening language to a teacher or other student;
- Actual or threatened behavior that caused, or could have caused, physical injury;
- Severe tantrum (screaming, kicking) that does not respond to teacher intervention;
- Leaving fenced Kindergarten yard or the building without adult permission;
- Hiding when class gathers or moves to another area;
- Refusing, in a confrontational or persistent way, to follow the teacher's requests or instructions.

### ***Upper Grades (5-8) Discipline Procedures***

SunRidge School strives to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment that fosters success for every student. Toward that end, teachers and other supervisory staff will communicate clear and reasonable expectations for classroom and campus behavior that all students are expected to follow. When a student does not follow the expectations or rules, discipline procedures will be employed that support self-correction and increased self-discipline.

Disciplinary interactions will be conducted in a non-punitive manner, with the goal of identifying and addressing unmet student needs that might be contributing to behavior problems, and encouraging the student to learn behaviors that are necessary for successful class participation. With these principles in mind, the following outline describes the hierarchy of discipline procedures we use with our students in grades 5 and above. A more detailed description of each step is available by request.

### **Outline of steps**

Normal teacher practice: Reminders/Prompts/Re-direction

- 1) If student does not respond as needed: Time-out in seat in back of room
- 2) If student does not respond as needed: Time-out in seat in buddy classroom
- 3) If student does not respond as needed: Sent to office, parents called, writing assignment
- 4) If sent to office 2 times in one day or 3 times in one week: Meeting with director, parents called, writing assignment, other consequence (e.g., parent conference)
- 5) If continuing office referrals: SST ("Student Success Team") Conference, detailed plan and behavior contract for addressing the problem, follow-up meeting
- 6) If disruption continues: Suspension and, if warranted, expulsion

Note: behavior that is dangerous, injurious, illegal, or otherwise of a serious nature will result in immediate referral to the office and, depending on the type of behavior, possible suspension or expulsion. Refer to our Student Rules for a list of behaviors that may result in suspension or expulsion according to State of California Ed. Code.

### ***Suspension and Expulsion***

Following State Education Code/district guidelines, a suspension of up to 5 days may be issued to a student for certain infractions. Inside the classroom, a teacher may request suspension for a student for repetitive or serious classroom disruptions. Inside or outside the classroom, a suspension may be requested by a staff member for any of the established State Education Code suspendable offenses listed below. Suspension from

school is executed by the Director; the process is mandated by Ed. Codes. Expulsion is recommended by the Director and must be approved by the Twin Hills Board.

### **Behaviors that can result in Suspension or Expulsion (as per California Educational Codes)**

- 1) Alcohol, tobacco, and drug possession or use will result in automatic suspension.
- 2) Fighting, unless clearly in self-defense, is grounds for suspension.
- 3) Disruption of school activities, refusal to follow reasonable directions, and bullying or intimidation are listed in Educational Codes as offenses warranting suspension.
- 4) Vandalism, theft, and destruction of property are also listed as reasons for suspension.
- 5) Possession of weapons, fireworks, or other dangerous objects (bringing a weapon onto campus could result in the expulsion of a student).
- 6) Harassment of other students is grounds for suspension (This includes social harassment, sexual harassment, or any other behaviors that impede our students from feeling safe and secure at school. See the definition of harassment below).
- 7) Defiance of school authority may also result in suspension.

### **Inappropriate Language or Indecency**

Participation in a school community requires acting within commonly recognized standards of decency in verbal, written, physical, and pictorial form. Degrading language or behavior of any kind (sexual, racial, religious, etc.) is not acceptable (A possible yardstick would be, "If it is offensive to anyone in the area, it is not acceptable."). This is a school-wide standard, both inside and outside the classroom. First-time offenders may be given a verbal or written warning; repeated offenses will result in higher-level consequences (see definition of harassment below).

### **Harassment**

Our school is committed to providing an educational setting free from harassment based on race, gender, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability or characteristic, sexual orientation, or age. We will not tolerate harassment of or by students or staff.

Harassment includes verbal, physical, or visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment or that interferes with one's education. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, pictures or cartoons regarding another's sex, race, color, national origin, age, physical or mental disability or characteristic, medical condition, or sexual orientation. Any incident of harassment should be reported promptly to a teacher or the director of the school. Staff members who are so informed may take action, but they should also file a written report of such incidents to the director for recording. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, the situation may be turned over to the director for immediate disciplinary action. Every incident will be investigated with an emphasis on thoroughness and confidentiality.

If harassment is established, the offender will be disciplined. Disciplinary action can range from verbal or written warning up to, and including, immediate suspension and possible expulsion, depending on the circumstances. Retaliation against a student or staff member reporting harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome behavior from students or staff members that is sexual in nature and causes problems for a student at school. The

unwelcome behavior may be verbal, visual, or physical. Sexual harassment is against the law and should not be ignored. Some examples are:

- Comments, notes, or invitations of a sexual nature
- Derogatory comments or jokes that are sexual
- Touching or gestures that are sexual
- Blocking or cornering in a sexual way
- Pulling clothing or grabbing that is sexual

Other behaviors include:

- Showing sexual interest in someone when the interest is not wanted
- Any expression of sexual interest between adults and students
- Using sexual epithets as verbal intimidation or name calling

**School Board Policy reads as follows:**

A pupil enrolled in any grades 4 through 12 may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the superintendent or the principal/director of the school in which the pupil is enrolled determines that the pupil has intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against a pupil or group of pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of that pupil or group of pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.

## **2008-09 Enrollment Policy and Procedures**

### **Enrollment Policy**

Application for admission to the SunRidge Charter School shall be open to any resident in the state of California. Pupils will be considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, family structure, or disability.

Children must meet the following age requirements:

**Kindergarten:** Age five on or before December 2nd after entering Kindergarten the previous September.

**First Grade through Eighth:** Age six by June 1st prior to entering First Grade in September. This age policy continues in this manner through all the grades, reflecting the developmental approach followed by Waldorf-methods schools. Exceptions to this policy may be made by consent of the class teacher and the director, and will be on a trial basis.

### **Application Process**

The application process for SunRidge Charter School will follow California Education code for Charter Schools and the provisions included in the school's charter as approved by Twin Hills Union School District and the State Board of Education. In that SunRidge School employs a Waldorf-methods curriculum, and emphasizes parent involvement, it is essential that the needs, expectations, and values of applicants' parents are a good match with the school's educational program. Specifically, parents are expected to be in agreement with the following:

- 1) Provide a home environment that works in partnership with the curriculum, methods, and values of the school. This includes:
  - Reading *Electronic Media Concerns and Guidelines* (pages 8-9 of this handbook), becoming informed about this important issue, and striving to be in alignment with these guidelines.
  - Learning about Waldorf education and supporting the school's educational philosophy in our home.
  - Insuring regular and punctual student attendance.
  - Monitoring and supporting adherence to the school's dress and behavior codes.
- 2) Participate in volunteer activities that support the school.
- 3) Attend regularly scheduled parent-teacher meetings and conferences, and parent education events that are offered throughout the year.
- 4) Read and follow the policies and procedures of the school as described in the Parent Handbook and other documents published by the school.

The steps of the application process are designed to help families and teachers determine if SunRidge is the right educational option for each child. Those steps are:

- 1) Attend one or more public information meetings.
- 2) Complete and submit the written application within the designated open enrollment period.
- 3) Attend a family conference/interview with a teacher.
- 4) Sign an agreement of parent expectations.

Applications for new students are accepted during the designated open enrollment period each spring for the following school year. Following the open enrollment period, a determination is made as to whether the number of eligible applicants exceeds the

number of available spaces for each class. An eligible applicant is defined as one whose parent or parents have attended a public information meeting and submitted a completed application form within the designated open enrollment period for that year.

### **Lottery Procedure**

As required by law, a public lottery procedure will be initiated when the number of eligible applicants exceeds the capacity of a class. Tickets with eligible applicants' names will be drawn randomly, and a number assigned to each applicant. Enrollment in the class will then be allocated according to available space, lottery number, and the enrollment priorities shown below. Kindergarten applicants will be divided by age into K-1 (one-year in kindergarten) and K-2 (two years in kindergarten), with selection based on available kindergarten spaces in each age grouping (younger children traditionally attend Kindergarten for two years in Waldorf methods schools).

Enrollment priority is as follows:

- 1) Children of SunRidge School employees working at least .5FTE
- 2) Siblings of currently enrolled SunRidge students
- 3) Children who are residents of Twin Hills School District, children of employees of the Twin Hills School District, or children with previous Waldorf-based schooling experience
- 4) Children who are not Twin Hills School District residents and do not have previous Waldorf-related experience

Applicants are placed on a waiting list within each priority category in the order of their lottery ticket number. Available spaces will be offered by order on the waiting list within each priority category, first to applicants in the #1 priority group, then the #2 priority group, then the #3 priority group, and then the 4th priority group. Applications received after the open enrollment period will be placed on the waiting list below open enrollment applicants in order of receipt, and may be offered available spaces after completing the necessary steps of the application process. Applicants not offered spaces remain on the waiting list only for the school year for which they applied and are contacted if space becomes available during that school year.

As spaces are available, applicants will be notified and offered a family conference. The family conference is intended to allow the family and the potential teacher to get to know each other, to clarify student and parent expectations, and to help insure that SunRidge is a good educational match for each child. The family conference and the *Agreement of Parent Expectations* need to be completed prior to enrollment in the school. Parents will need to complete these parts of the application process and confirm their acceptance of enrollment in writing, by a specified date, or forfeit their space.

### **Students with Special Needs**

SunRidge Charter School is a public school within the Twin Hills Union School District and will work together with the special education local plan area (SELPA) to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with disabilities. SunRidge School participates in state and federal funding in the same manner as other schools within the Twin Hills Union School District. The Twin Hills Union School District will be responsible for ensuring that all children with disabilities enrolled in the SunRidge School receive special education and designated instructional services implemented within the curriculum of SunRidge School in a manner consistent with all applicable provisions of state and federal law.