

Dear Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet Families,

Students, staff, parents, and community members are active in making Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet a great place to learn and teach. It is important we work together as a team. This handbook provides useful information about many activities at the school. We hope this information helps you to take advantage of all the opportunities at Phalen Lake Hmong Studies. The information will also help insure that the safety and well being of students and staff are maintained. Please read this handbook and keep it handy for future reference. Best wishes for an excellent school year.

Sincerely,

Ms. Catherine Rich, Principal

Ms. Mai Saevang, Administrative Intern

### Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet is an official Core Knowledge school committed to serving a diverse student population that uses the rigorous **Core Knowledge** reform model. This is a HIGH standards curriculum known nationally as “*Gifted Education for All.*” Core Knowledge offers many ways for students to learn by blending together learning in history, geography, science, and the arts.

In 2006 and 2007, Phalen Lake Hmong Magnet received the Partnership School Awards for an excellent and sustained program of school, family, and community partnership from the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University.

Building on the success of our nationally recognized Hmong Culture and Language Enrichment Program, established more than five years ago, Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet will be the first Hmong Studies Magnet School in the Saint Paul Public School District.

We offer all day kindergarten. Four-year-olds may attend preschool classes here as well. The Family Room offers resources and support to promote family literacy and achievement through day and evening programs. Adult Education ELL classes are offered during the school day. After-school programs offer K-6<sup>th</sup> grade students both academic and recreational activities.

### Absences

Please call the school office at (651) 293-8935 before 8:05 a.m. if a student will be absent for the day. When returning to school the student should give a note to the teacher explaining the absence. When a student is absent the parent may request assignments and materials from the school office. Students will be expected to make up the work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the teacher and parent. **Absences will be determined as excused or unexcused based on the school district attendance policy.**

### After School Achievers

Students are eligible to attend *After School Achievers* after school program Monday through Thursday, after parents complete an application. Please look for an application the second week of September. If you do not receive an application, or for more information, please call us at 651-312-9086 and ask for Jonathan Goss. After School Achievers is a two-hour program that combines academic instruction and enrichment activities. Busing is provided for all eligible students.

### Arrival Time

The school doors open at 7:35 a.m. for children wishing to eat breakfast. *Children who walk to school may enter the building through the playground door or Cypress Street door. Students who ride the bus will enter through the Forest Street door.* The students are released to their classrooms at 7:50 a.m. Students should be

in their classrooms by 8:05 a.m. **Parents must make other arrangements for their child before 7:35 a.m. We have NO supervision before 7:35 a.m.**

### **Attendance**

Daily attendance is very important to the academic progress of each student. If there is a problem interfering with your child's attendance please contact the school social worker or counselor. All students 6-18 years of age are required by law to attend school. STATE LAW requires that we report unexcused absences after 3 days. Students absent more than 3 days will be referred to the school district's attendance program. In extreme cases of 7 or more absences parents are referred to the Ramsey County Attorney's Office Truancy Intervention Program. **Please arrange family trips and medical appointments outside of school time.**

### **Bikes**

If a student chooses to ride their bike to school, they assume all responsibility for the bike. The bike must be locked to the perimeter fence during the school day and the student must walk the bike off the school property at dismissal time. Students are not allowed to bring in-line skates, skateboards, etc. to school. This eliminates any safety concerns for riders or walkers and theft issues.

### **Breakfast**

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet participates in a free breakfast program. Breakfast begins at 7:35 a.m. **Students are not allowed in the building until this time.** Breakfast is served from 7:35-8:00 a.m. Accommodations are made if we have a late bus.

### **Bus Transportation**

Saint Paul Public Schools provides busing for students who live over one mile from the school. Minnesota law states that *transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right.* Please note the following bus safety guidelines:

1. The Saint Paul Public School District will not tolerate disruptions, abusive language, aggressive or dangerous behavior, vandalism, and chemical usage including smoking on school buses.
2. **Children may only ride their assigned bus. They may not ride any other bus home.** Parents: do not send a note to the school or teacher requesting that your child ride home with a friend or relative. **Transportation DOES NOT allow students to ride any other bus than the one assigned.**
3. **Students must ride their assigned bus home unless prior written notice has been given to their teacher stating that parent has arranged for their child to be picked up.**
4. School employees and other citizens are encouraged to report intolerable bus rider behavior to the bus driver or school directly. The bus driver is obliged to report misbehaving students in writing to the principal or their designee.
5. Elementary schools are responsible for enforcing and recording bus rider discipline.

### **Change of Address/Work/Phone**

Please notify the school office promptly of any change in address or phone number at home, work, or emergency contact. **This is very important in the event of an emergency with your child.**

### **Collectibles**

The PTO saves labels from Campbell's products, Box Tops from General Mills cereal boxes, and Kemp's "Give'em five" milk caps. The labels, cereal box tops, and milk caps, are redeemed for educational materials. Please turn in these items to the Family Room. Thank you!

### **Communication**

Several options available for communication between home and school are as follows: phone contact (651) 293-8935, classroom newsletters, Family Room, Parent Link voice mail system, email, personal visits, and our website [www.PhalenLake.spps.org](http://www.PhalenLake.spps.org)

### **Conferences**

Parent-teacher-student regular conferences are scheduled twice a year. This is an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. Our goal for both conferences is that we have 100% attendance. Please contact your child's classroom teacher if you are unable to attend the regularly scheduled time. Academic Improvement Plan (AIP) conferences are held in September and May for students needing to improve their attendance and/or academic performance.

### **Curriculum**

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet uses the rigorous **Core Knowledge** school reform model. All students receive instruction in these core subjects: Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Spelling, and Handwriting), Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. The Enrichment Program specialists provide regular instruction in: Art, Band, Computer, Hmong and Spanish Language and Culture, Music, Physical Education, Science, and Gifted/Talented classes. The Core Knowledge curriculum adheres to state standards and national standards.

### **Data Privacy**

Access to student's records is limited to parents, legal guardians, and professional staff. Release of student records to an outside source is strictly controlled by district policy.

### **Discipline**

At Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet, we believe that students have the right to learn and teachers have the right to teach in a safe learning environment. Respect for self and others are essential to creating a positive and peaceful place to learn. The School Counselor classroom lessons, Character Education program and 5R program teach socially appropriate behaviors and problem solving skills. All students are expected to follow the **Phalen Lake School Rules**.

- 1. Be respectful.**
- 2. Be responsible.**
- 3. Be a learner.**
- 4. Be safe.**

The 5R form will be sent home with the student to be signed by the parent/guardian and must be returned to school. This practice improves home/school communication.

### **Dress Code**

Students should dress for school in clothing that will not distract any student or themselves from learning. Announcements will be made if there are any changes due to special school events. Please note below Phalen Lake Hmong Magnet's dress code policy. Students who do not follow the dress code policy will be asked to dress properly before attending class. Parents will be called and they may bring change of clothes from home. Otherwise, students will be asked to change into appropriate clothing available at school from the Family Room.

- Skirts, shorts, and dresses should be as long as your fingertips with both arms straight down to the sides or longer

- Pants and shorts must be held up at the waist. No sagging clothing or show of underwear.
- Clothing must cover the chest, abdomen, and underwear
- Strapless, off shoulder, see-through, or oversized clothing may not be worn (no spaghetti strap tops or undesirable pictures or profanity words).
- Bandannas, hats, caps and jackets should not be worn during the school day
- Any other clothing that is deemed inappropriate by the principal

The Principal, when necessary, will make modifications to the dress code policy in circumstances due to medical or religious reasons and in extremely hot or cold weather situations. Thank you for your partnership and continual support in making Phalen Lake a safe place for learning.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up Locations**

*Family members driving their children to and from school should drop them off and pick them up on Cypress Street. Please do not drop off or pick up students on Forest Street.* School busses are using this entrance to load/unload students. The parking lot door is not a drop-off/pick-up location for students. This door is reserved for staff members only, due to safety and supervision concerns.

### **Emergency Closing**

In the event of severe weather listen to **WCCO-AM (830)** for the school closing announcements. It is essential that families discuss emergency plans with their children in the event that school is closed and parents are already at work.

### **Emergency Drills**

Drills for fire, severe weather, lockdown, or other emergencies are conducted on a regular basis during the school year. Students are reminded that similar drills at home are good safety measures.

### **Emergency Forms**

An emergency form for each student is required to be on file in the school office. Please be sure to return these forms to school promptly with the correct information when you receive them. ***Please inform the school office if information on the form changes during the school year. It is extremely important for your child's safety and well being that these forms remain current all school year.***

### **Gym Shoes**

Students are required to wear gym shoes for physical education classes. It is recommended that students bring a pair to keep at school.

### **Health Services**

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet has a school nurse on duty. First aid equipment is available in the health office and each classroom. Vision and hearing screening are conducted annually for specific grade levels. Health records are maintained at school. When an emergency or significant illness occurs at school, procedure is to contact a parent or guardian at home or work. If a parent or guardian is unreachable, a relative or neighbor whose name appears on the emergency form is contacted. However, in instances where immediate medical attention is needed, the school will call 911 for emergency personnel and ambulance service. The parents or guardian will be called immediately after the emergency personnel have been contacted.

### **Immunizations/Shot Records**

State law requires that all children K-12 have immunization dates (month and year) on their school health records. This is for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, and rubella.

## **Lost & Found**

Lost clothing and articles are located in our Lost and Found area in the main hallway near the elevator. Small items are kept in the office (jewelry, keys, etc.). Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each semester.

### **Please remember to:**

- Clearly label your child's coats, jackets, sweaters, caps, and boots with full name.
- Try to locate the item immediately upon discovering it is lost.
- **Do not bring** articles of sentimental or monetary value, such as an expensive leather coat or jewelry.

## **Meals**

All students should complete a free/reduced lunch form. Students may buy a complete hot lunch each day at school. Milk is available for 50 cents for students who prefer to bring a lunch from home. Lunch (including milk) is \$1.75 and a reduced lunch costs 40 cents. Lactose Free Milk is available upon request from the parent for student's who cannot tolerate regular milk. Monthly menus are sent home and are published in the Wednesday Pioneer Press in the Neighbor Section. Please put your child's name and room number on the check and send it to school in a sealed envelope. Print your child's name or teacher's name and room number on the outside of envelope. Please send payments weekly or monthly NOT daily.

Saint Paul Schools participates in the federal child nutrition program. All families should complete the free or reduced meals form **each** school year. If you are not certain if you qualify for the federal food program or you have any questions, please call the District Food Service Office at (651) 603-4952 or call the school at (651) 283-8935.

## **Medications**

If it is necessary for your student to take medication in school, please contact the school nurse and obtain a form, which gives authorization to administer medication by school personnel. **Both you and your physician must fill out this form. Medication will not be administered without this authorization. This includes non-prescription drugs like aspirin or Tylenol. All medications must be in their original prescription container.** Medications must be turned into the school office and not carried around school. Please call the school nurse, Michelle Mauder, at (651) 293-8935 ext. 1006 with any questions.

## **Parent Sign-In**

Parents/Guardians can come into the building with/for students during arrival. **After 8:05 a.m., and at all other times during the day, family members and visitors must sign in and wear a visitor badge, except during evening events.**

## **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet has an active PTO that plays a key role in creating outstanding learning opportunities for our students. We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in guiding your child's school and its programs.

## **Pictures**

This year pictures will be taken on October 1, 2008. Information and order forms will be sent home.

## **Recess**

Students are expected to go outside for lunch recess everyday unless we have inclement weather. Adult monitors are outside with the students at all times.

**During winter months we recommend hats, mittens/gloves, scarves, and boots for the cold weather.**

### **Release of Students During the Day**

All students must be picked up and signed out at the office when being dismissed early for appointments such as the doctor, dentist, etc. A note signed by the parent or legal guardian should be sent to the child's teacher on the day of the appointment. Please tell the teacher the time your child will be picked up at the office. The person picking up the child is asked to wait and meet your child in the office. Allow some extra time for calling your child to the office. Request a note from the doctor or dentist. Students will be marked excused when they bring a note from their medical appointment upon their return from school. ***Any restrictions on who may pick up or contact a student at school must be indicated on the student's emergency form or presented in writing to the school.***

### **Report Cards**

A report card is used at the November and March conference. A final report card is sent home at the end of the school year.

### **School Hours**

School day is 8:05 a.m. to 2:35 p.m. Breakfast is served starting at **7:35** a.m. Students need to be in their classrooms by 8:05 a.m. **No Students are allowed in the building before 7:35 a.m.** This request complies with Saint Paul Public School's policy.

### **School Patrol**

School Patrol boys and girls work under the supervision of Gwen Michaelson and the St. Paul Police Department.

The School Patrol will provide assistance at the following corners from 7:30 to 7:50 a.m.: Cypress/Magnolia, Cypress/Cook, Cypress/Jessamine, Cypress/Case, Earl/Magnolia, Magnolia/Mendota and Forest/Magnolia. Patrols return to the corners at dismissal time.

### **Sexual & Racial Harassment**

Saint Paul Schools has a sexual and racial harassment policy and a weapon policy. The policy is available from the school office upon request. Students are routinely informed about these policies in their classroom and assemblies. The expectation at Phalen Lake Hmong Studies and Core Knowledge Magnet is that all students and staff will comply with these policies. Guns, knives, and all toy weapons are banned from the school property.

### **Site Council**

A building Site Council comprised of staff, parents, and community members is working to improve instruction by implementing a shared decision making process in the building. We continue to need interested individuals to join the site council. Call Catherine Rich (Principal) or the Family Room for more information at (651) 293-8935.

### **Special Education**

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet offers a complete range of services for students with identified special needs. Our special education program is designed to be an integrated part of the entire school. The parents and staff design an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for each of these students.

### **Student Records**

State and federal laws governing school records allow parents, legal guardians, and adult students (age 18 and over) to examine and/or obtain copies of their records or those of their children with proper identification. The law requires release of all student information to a non-custodial parent unless prohibited by court order. Exceptional circumstances should be referred to the Student Data Management Department at (651) 632-3764.

### Telephone

**Students' use of the phone should be for emergencies only.** Arrangement for after school activities and visiting friends should be made outside of school time. **If an emergency arises, messages to students should be made before**

**1:00 p.m. to ensure they can be delivered.** Teachers can normally be reached during their preparation period. For specific contact times, check with your child's teacher.

### Textbooks & School Costs

Each student assumes responsibility for the care and proper use of books and other materials and equipment used by them at school. It is the student's responsibility to replace any lost items. Students are provided free school supplies from the "Stuff for Schools" program. Students may also purchase basic school supplies at the "Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet Store". No other money, except for lunch money, should be brought to school unless specifically requested in writing by the school.

### Treats

If you send a treat for the students in your child's classroom, the treat must be store bought and not homemade. Treats should be provided for all students in the classroom and given to the teacher. **Students are not allowed to bring individual cans of pop, gum, or candy.**

### Valuables/Toys at School

Students should focus on learning during the school day. All valuables and toys should remain at home in order to prevent loss, theft and disruption of learning. Items such as Gameboys, Walkman radios, CD players, Pokemon cards and pagers will be confiscated and turned in to the principals' office for safekeeping and returned only to the parents/guardians. **Cell phones must be turned off and kept out of sight during the school day. Cell phones disrupting the learning or used during the school day will be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian.**

### Visitors

Visitors are always welcome at Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet. It is a courtesy and our expectation that you make arrangements with a teacher before visiting a classroom. **All visitors, including parents, must sign-in at the office upon entering the building during the school day. Please be aware that we may ask for identification when entering the building.** Visitors and volunteers must wear identification badges from the office. This is for the safety and security of our children.

### Volunteers

Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet is always looking for volunteers. Our current volunteers are comprised of parents, high school/college students, community and business partnership members. Please consider volunteering your time and talents. Pakong Lee is our new Americorps-Vista Volunteer Recruiter/Coordinator, provided through the Minnesota Literacy Council. Persons interested in volunteering should contact Pakong Lee or the Family Room at (651) 293-8935.

### Walkers

The school rules apply to all students walking to and from school. Students should walk safely and calmly along the city sidewalks. Patrols will be at the designated corners beginning at 7:30 a.m. Students are not allowed into the building before 7:35 a.m.

**At dismissal (2:35 p.m.), siblings should set up a regular meeting place outside one of the exit doors.**

### Weapons

In accordance with the St. Paul Public Schools Board's Zero Tolerance Policy, it is a violation to possess, use or carry any weapon in the building that can cause bodily harm and any instruments that are deemed unlawful like toys which look like weapons. Students found to be in violation of the policy will be referred for disciplinary action in accordance with the policy and procedures which may result in dismissal, suspension or expulsion.

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