

# TAOS CHARTER SCHOOL

## Parent Information Sheet

### Taos Charter School's Mission Statement:

**To deliver a college readiness curriculum to kindergarten through eighth grade students from the Taos community, resulting in high levels of academic achievement for all students.**

Taos Charter School was created by a group of parents in 2001 to provide Taos with a K – 8 school with a strong academic focus. Our goal is to prepare all of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for the honors program at Taos High School. Typically, our students are one year ahead of most students in their grade level at other schools. **Being a successful student at Taos Charter requires a strong commitment on the part of the student as well as the parent.** Students here really need their parents help and involvement.

### **When does school begin and end?**

Grades Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> begin school at 8:15 am and ends at 2:50 pm.

Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> begin school at 7:45 am and ends at 3:00 pm.

A middle school teacher will be on duty outside at 7:30 and an elementary teacher will be on duty at 7:45. If the weather is poor, students can wait in the cafeteria. Please do not visit with teachers who are on duty, their job during this time is to keep all of our students safe.

### **How does the lunch program work?**

In your registration packet is an application for free/reduced lunch all students are required to return a completed application. Students will need money for lunch for the first week of school.

Costs: Full price breakfast: \$1.50. Lunch: \$3.25 elementary; \$3.75 middle school.

Reduced breakfast: \$.30. Lunch: \$.40

You may give your student money every day, or prepay the cafeteria cashier by bringing her a check for a week, weeks or a month.

### **How do I drop off and pick up my child?**

By car: Students may only be dropped off by the south side of the gym. Keep to the right in the parking lot and drive counter clockwise to pull up to the gym with the passenger side next to the side walk. Please drive very slowly. Please park in the parking lot if you would like to park and come into the cafeteria to get your child. **Never park in the bus circle or stop in the bus circle to pick up or drop off students.**

In person: Come into the office and sign out your student. A staff member will go to the classroom to notify your child.

### **What do I do if we are late to school?**

If your student is tardy, take them to the office to sign in. Teachers will not admit a student without a tardy slip. There are no excused tardies and 3 tardies are the equivalent of one absence.

### **What do I do if my child will be absent?**

The handbook goes into detail regarding absences. You must call the office or the absence will be unexcused. **Good, consistent attendance is critical to a student's academic success at TCS.**

### **What if the weather is terrible?**

Listen to the local radio stations, check *The Taos News* website [taosnews.com](http://taosnews.com) for information about a snow day. Taos Charter School follows the district schedule, so if Taos School District schools are closed so is Taos Charter.

### **What does the school expect of me?**

#### **1. Contribute**

At Taos Charter School you, our parent partners, are an essential part of our community. Charter schools like Taos Charter truly are community schools, governed and operated by the staff, with the guidance and support of the parent body and the community at large. Taos Charter School is "our" school and needs the support and commitment of each of us to operate and thrive successfully. Due to the past four years of continued reduction of state funding for public schools, we must supplement our resources to provide your child with the innovative high-quality education you expect from Taos Charter. One way we do this is by conducting several fundraising activities through the year. **In addition to the fundraisers, we ask each family to donate \$100.00 per student for educational enrichment costs for the year or 20 hours of volunteer time per student.** We have to maintain our grounds and library ourselves and we have had to cut classroom assistants. We always welcome a one time or a weekly commitment to our classrooms and school.

#### **2. Support your child**

**The curriculum at TCS is rigorous. Students must be at school on time every day to keep up. They need a good breakfast before school. Supervise a consistent daily homework time. Make it a priority to read with your child or next to your child every night. We know from experience what a big difference this makes in student success.**

### **How do I find information?**

Website: [taoscharterschool.org](http://taoscharterschool.org)

Weekly e-mail newsletter: *The Chalkboard*

Taos Charter School Handbook

Attend the Governing Council meetings and/or the Friends of TCS meetings

Join the PTO

### **How do I find out how my child is doing in school?**

Many teachers maintain blogs with daily homework information. Progress reports are sent home approximately every three weeks. Report cards go home every 9 weeks. Teachers' e-mail addresses and classroom phone numbers will be provided to you.

## **How does the school enable my child to be successful?**

### Academically

1. Teachers focus on building a safe, predictable, interactive learning environment all year. They are interested in knowing each child individually to better meet their learning needs.
2. Parent conference days are on the calendar.
3. Students take a short cycle assessment three times a year. These are used to measure progress and modify instruction.

### Socially/Behaviorally

1. Taos Charter School believes that learning occurs at all times. In terms of behavioral and social learning, students learn from watching others and from their own mistakes.
2. At TCS, building behavioral success includes teaching students positive social behaviors, talking through bad decisions, accepting responsibility and the consequences for a poor decision and moving on. The focus is **always** on learning and improvement.
3. At the beginning of the year, each classroom meets with the Director to review schools rules, including anti-bullying rules and the consequences for breaking the rules. A strong focus is placed on personal responsibility and telling the truth.
4. Every classroom has a social emotional learning curriculum to help students learn to express themselves responsibility, problem solve, work as a team and make friends.
5. Parents are contacted for major issues like hurting another student or chronic disruptive behavior. Students are provided with several opportunities to make a better decision before getting parents involved.

## **What do I do if my child is having problems with another student?**

First, keep in mind that there are **always** two sides to every story. Second, call or e-mail the teacher to discuss the issue. If it is a serious issue such as bullying, sexual harassment or suspected illegal activity, call the Director at 751-7222 x 202. If the problem persists in the classroom, call the Director..

## **How can I help my child transition to this school?**

1. Visit the school before the year starts, take a tour of the classroom, find the bathrooms and the cafeteria.
2. Introduce yourself and your child to the teacher and the office folks before school starts.
3. Get involved with the school: volunteer and join one of our parent groups.

August 16, 2017