

# FSK Parent Guide

## — ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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*Updated 8-21-2008. This is the "beta" launch; check back soon for updates!*

### — Who This Guide is For and Why

This guide is published by the FS Key PTA, for parents and guardians of students at Francis Scott Key Elementary School. It is intended to be a concise handbook for parents and glossary of programs and services at FSK.

### — How to Use This Guide

This online guide is a dynamically expandable outline. Click on the plus sign **+** to expand sections; click on the **—** sign to collapse. For printing or offline viewing, please download the PDF version ([click here](#)).

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## — GENERAL INFO

### — Daily Schedule

#### Lower Grades (K-2)

7:30 am Yard supervision begins  
7:45 am Morning bell and line up  
7:50 - 9:10 First instructional block  
9:10 - 9:30 First recess  
9:30 - 10:40 Second instructional block  
10:40 - 11:25 Lunch recess  
11:25 - 12:45 Third instructional block  
12:45 - 1:00 Third recess  
1:00 - 1:50 Fourth instructional block  
1:50 pm Dismissal

#### Upper Grades (3-5)

7:30 am Yard supervision begins  
7:45 am Morning bell and line up  
7:50 - 9:40 First instructional block  
9:40 - 9:55 First recess  
9:55 - 11:40 Second instructional block  
11:40 - 12:25 Lunch recess  
12:25 - 1:50 Third instructional block  
1:50 pm Dismissal

### — Drop Off and Morning Line-up

Yard supervision begins at 7:30 am. The morning bell for line-up rings at 7:45 am; classes go into the building at 7:50.

Remember to be safe and courteous when dropping off your children. Please do not jaywalk, double-park, or block bus zones or neighborhood driveways.

Supervised drive-thru drop-off zone is on 43rd Avenue near the front entrance. You may also use Kirkham Street.

Bike racks are located at the south entrance of the school building.

### — Dismissal and Pick-up

Dismissal is at 1:50 pm. Kindergarteners are picked up from their classrooms. Older students (grades 1-5) can be picked up from the front of the school or from the schoolyard. Students in the after school programs check in with their instructors in the yard; in the case of kindergarteners, instructors will pick up the students from their classrooms.

### — Breakfast, Lunch, Snacks

Ensure your child's school day gets off to a good start with a healthy breakfast. School breakfast is served at 7:30 in the cafeteria and costs \$1.50.

Students may eat a snack from home during recesses; parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks. Candy is strongly discouraged. Many teachers will also offer snacks. After school programs provide snacks.

Lunch recess for grades K-2 is at 10:40 am; for grades 3-5 lunch is at 11:40 am. Students eat in the cafeteria. School lunch costs \$2; meals can also be purchased in advance (you'll receive a form in your Wednesday envelope).

### — Enrolling in After-School Activities

Forms for fee-based extracurricular programs such as Mandarin, Piano, and Chess will be sent home in the Wednesday envelope in Sept or Oct. (For information about the enrichment activities offered in the CDC, CYC, and SNBC after school programs, contact the program coordinators directly.)

New for 2008-09, we are launching our After School Elective Program, offering enrichment courses taught by classroom teachers for grades K-5. More information on the course listings and how to sign up will be made available in late September; fall session will begin in mid-October.

— **Preparing Your Kindergartener for School**

Be sure to attend kindergarten orientation. New family summer playdates are another opportunity to familiarize your child with the school site and make some friends before the start of school. *Tip: Help them develop some independence by practicing putting on (and taking off) their jackets, opening and closing backpacks, lunchboxes, food, and drink containers.*

— PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS

— **Brainchild**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center Excel After School Program**

The Beacon Center's after school program at FSK is an academic and enrichment program serving grades 3-5. Students attend academic classes focused on literacy and math, and a homework/tutorial program. Enrichment activities include: traditional Chinese dance; martial arts; origami; games; sports; cooking; arts and crafts. For more information, contact Program Coordinator [Ray Lie](#), or see [www.snbc.org](http://www.snbc.org).

— **Noriega Child Development Center After School Program**

The Noriega CDC After School Program serves grades K-3. The program focuses on language arts, math, and science. Staff are trained in developmentally appropriate practices and implement the Project Approach in addressing the needs and interests of students. For more information, contact the school office at 759-2811

— **Community Youth Center After School Program**

The CYC After School Program provides academic assistance and recreational activities to our students in grades K-2. For more information, contact Project Coordinator [Betty Ly](#), or see [www.cycsf.org](http://www.cycsf.org).

— **After School Elective Program**

The mission of the After School Elective Program is to offer small group **enrichment courses taught by classroom teachers** to all students. Every student is invited to participate in the program, and every effort will be made to accommodate all interested students.

The program was envisioned by teachers who noticed the need for and value of enrichment opportunities for all FSK students, especially those not participating in our SNBC, CDC, and CYC after-school programs. A small committee of faculty and parents met several times in 2008 to design a scalable program with minimal structures to balance flexibility for teachers and access for as many students as possible. For 2008-09, the PTA has fully funded the program for up to 210 students.

— **Opera a la Carte**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **Little Kids Rock Guitar Lessons**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **Taiko Drumming**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **The First Tee Golf Program**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **Jump Rope for Heart**

*(this section to be updated)*

— **Friday Bookstore**

The Friday Bookstore aims to foster reading by making interesting and current books available to all students at school for \$1 (or free, in the case of incentive coupons). The sale of non-book items subsidizes the price of books so that all books can be

offered belowcost. Bookstore coupons and bookstore parties are offered as academic incentives. See the spotlight on the [Friday Bookstore](#).

— **Tess Manalo-Ventresca Community Service Award**

Each year the school and PTA recognize four students from the graduating class who have demonstrated commitment to community service. Recipients' names are added to the commemorative plaque and each is awarded a \$50 college savings bond. The award honors the memory of Tess Manalo-Ventresca (1945-2005), beloved activist and long-time volunteer at Francis Scott Key Elementary.

— PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES

— **Parent/Family Workshops**

The school offers a range of workshops for parents and families, on topics ranging from cooking, health and nutrition, Internet security for kids, Brainchild, math, science, homework strategies, and others.

*(this section to be updated with 2008-09 information)*

— **Food Pantry**

*(this section to be updated with 2008-09 information)*

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— GETTING INVOLVED

— **Room Parents**

If you'd like to help out at our school but you're not sure where to start—*before we go any further, on behalf of students, teachers, and parents, thank you!*—a good way to start is to talk to your child's classroom teacher. Room parents may perform a variety of tasks and roles for teachers, from photocopying to helping set up craft projects to organizing field trip chaperones. Your child's teacher may have his/her own Room Parent guide, or you can use some generic room parent resources from the PTA, including [an overview of the Room Parent Role](#), guide for [what to discuss in the planning meeting](#), and sample [volunteer sign-up sheets](#).

— **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

Parents are encouraged to take on leadership roles and join the PTA. The PTA leads and organizes parent volunteers, and provides an avenue for community members to voice their concerns. Our 130+ member PTA includes several formal and ad hoc committees. Our PTA works collaboratively with the school; all PTA projects are vetted by the PTA board and school principal in consultation with teachers, staff, and parents, and several PTA board members are also active members of the SSC. This close strategic partnership with the school enables the PTA to efficiently and creatively meet school needs. Past and ongoing programs include: The Friday Bookstore, The Garden Project, The Computer Lab Fund, The After School Elective Program, Field Trip Fund, and much more. The PTA can help you get involved in any of these programs, as well as non-PTA school projects. Although you are encouraged to join, you do not have to be a member to volunteer in the PTA.

— **School Site Council (SSC)**

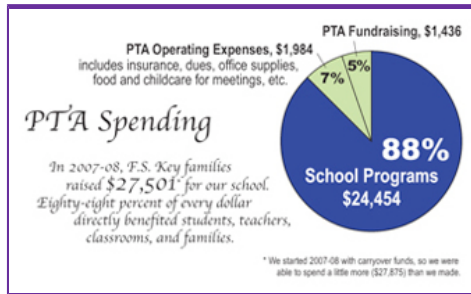
School Site Council is a powerful way to be involved in shaping the school. Members of the council are parents, staff, and school principal. The council reviews the principal's academic plan and budget. Elections are held every two years. The council meets on the third Wednesday of the month of most months. Please contact the principal if you are interested in being part of this body.

— FUNDRAISING

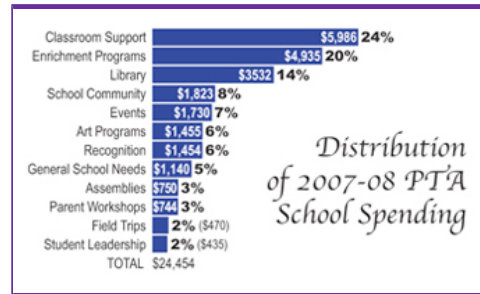
— **PTA Spending**

Eighty-eight percent of every dollar raised by the PTA directly benefits students, teachers, classrooms, and families (Figure 1). These funds bridge the budget gap for school needs and bring great programs to our school, from parent workshops to classroom materials, from enrichment classes to new computers (Figure 2). Membership and donations help us reach our fundraising and community building goals.

**Figure 1.** Investing in our children and our school is one of the best charitable donations you can make.



**Figure 2.** PTA school spending supports many important school needs.



— **PTA Membership Drive**

For 2008-09, PTA is redoubling its efforts to expand membership. Membership is an important way for families to engage and give back to the school community. The enhanced membership drive will conclude with a fall celebration on October 31, featuring Halloween festivities and membership raffle.

— **Safeway eScrip**

Safeway eScrip is a free program for school fundraising. Participating schools earn money based on a percentage of the groceries members buy at Safeway. In 2008-09, FSK received over \$2,700 through eScrip. The PTA conducts an eScrip registration/renewal campaign each September/October because accounts must be renewed each year. Friends and relatives can sign up, too. (For more information about eScrip, visit [escrip.com](http://escrip.com) or call 1-800-400-7878.)

**10% Back-to-Schools** is another school rebate program offered by Safeway. For a limited period during the summer and early fall, purchases of certain items earn 10% for our school. If you've signed up for Safeway eScrip, the rebates are automatically be donated to our school.

Don't forget to present your Safeway Club Card (or enter your phone number in the keypad) at checkout so your purchases count for our school!

— **Read-a-Thon**

For 2008-09, we will have a winter Read-a-thon to promote reading and raise funds for the library.

— **Annual Raffle**

Each year FSK has held a raffle in February. The event celebrates the Lunar New Year and, in addition to the raffle, features a school-wide parade and performances by our Lion Dance and Ribbon Dance troupes. In recent years, the raffle has raised as much as \$13,776. See the Spotlight on the [2008 Parade and Raffle](#).

— **Skate Night**

Skate Night is a fun social and fundraising event for the whole school. It is coordinated by the 5th grade classes to raise money for their annual Balclutha trip. Although it is not a PTA fundraiser, the PTA supports the event with volunteers and promotion. See the Spotlight on [Skate Night](#).

— **AWARDS & PERFORMANCE**

— **California Department of Education**

FS Key has earned a **State API Rank 9**; Similar Schools Rank 8. Our school has met all State API growth targets and Adequate Yearly Progress for seven consecutive years.

— **Title I Achieving School Award**

Calif. Dept. of Education Title I Achieving School in 2003, 2004, 2006, and 2007

— **California Business for Education Excellence Foundation**

2006 Honor Roll School