



**SUMMIT**  

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**Charter School**

**Appendix R. Student and Families Handbook**



# **SUMMIT**

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## Charter School

### **STUDENT & FAMILIES HANDBOOK**

### **PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES**

### **2021-22 School Year**

Summit Charter School will provide a movement-rich, project-based environment, grounded in shared governance, where students demonstrate an active voice and ownership in their education.

This approach prepares students for the competitive, evolving workforce of today and tomorrow.

***“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” –Gandhi***

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# **WELCOME TO THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR!**

*[Reserved for current year welcome letter from the Principal/CEO]*



## **SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Summit Charter School Main Office**

*[Insert new location address]*

(570) 664-1229

### **Office Hours**

Monday - Friday from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm, while school is in session

Attendance Email (absences, arrival or pick up changes):

*[Insert attendance email address]*

Operations Email:

*[Insert operations email address]*

### **Public Website**

*[Insert School website address]*

### **Public Facebook Page**

*[Insert Facebook Page Link]*

### **Private Facebook Page for SCS Families**

*[Insert Facebook Page for SCS Families link]*

## **SUMMIT CHARTER SCHOOL**

Experts say that sixty-five percent of today’s school-age children will work in a job that doesn’t yet exist. If we are to address that concern, we must not “teach to the test,” we must not possess a strong deference to the clock, we must not teach by placing academic subjects in “silos.” In 2016, a group of concerned local parents, community members, and educators launched Summit School of the Poconos in response to an overwhelming need for local school choice and systemic change in educational paradigms to better meet the needs of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This became the foundation for Summit Charter School, as it is known today.

Through a project-based curriculum combined with teacher-led instruction in a setting that encourages movement and insists on shared governance, students will practice critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and collaboration. Learning is not only measured by the knowledge an individual possesses, but by a capability to apply it, and we believe the learning process should be valued as much as the results. This method of education will prepare students for the competitive, evolving workforce of tomorrow.

In the twenty-first century, we have seen both growth in democracy and challenges to democracy around the world, and today, perhaps more than ever, our country needs young leaders. Summit Charter School will embrace a democratic-rich, civics-centered environment in which students will play an active role in their school community by voting on rules and practicing peaceful resolution of conflict through a justice committee.

By integrating democracy with project-based learning experiences and a solid and comprehensive foundation from which to explore and move, students will learn how to compete in a global world and participate as active, engaged members of their society.

***We are Summit School HEROES.  
Watch Us Climb!***

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## SCHOOL HOURS

Students should **arrive during a 10-minute window prior to** the scheduled start time of school.

	<b>Regular Schedule</b>	<b>2-Hour Delay</b>	<b>3-Hour Delay</b>	<b>Half-Day</b>
Kindergarten through Grade 12	8am-3pm	10am-3pm	11am-3pm	8am-12pm

## CALENDAR PROVISIONS

- Additional days will be added to the school year calendar to make up for inclement weather days.
- Field Trips will be communicated to parents as soon as we have detailed information.

# WHO WE ARE

## **Mission Statement**

Summit Charter School (SCS) will provide a movement-rich, project-based environment, grounded in shared governance, where students demonstrate an active voice and ownership in their education.

## **Vision Statement**

SCS will be an innovative education hub for Northeast Pennsylvania, sharing its practice with positive change makers in local and national education. Here, educators are empowered to create responsive curricula and meaningful learning experiences in a student-centered environment. Through a unique approach built upon shared governance, students are encouraged to responsibly contribute to their school community and assume ownership in their education and learning experiences. By applying these combined practices, we will graduate motivated, civically-engaged citizens who uniquely contribute to our world and future.

# WHAT WE DO

## Values in our practice

*Beliefs that guide our actions and interactions:*

- Learning should be fun, interactive and meaningful.
- Learning is a social process that happens best in a dynamic and effective community.
- Not all learning is classroom-based.
- We must recognize and meet the needs of individual learners.
- Pursuing in-depth experiences leads to meaningful and lasting learning.
- A holistic approach to gaining knowledge that integrates subjective and objective experiences and learning in all curricula is more effective than teaching information in isolation.
- Students need opportunities to explore, verbalize, think, create and discover answers to their questions.
- Students need opportunities to succeed and fail as those endeavors entail risk-taking and learning from mistakes.
- Everyone is a novice and an expert—there is always more to be learned and discovered.
- Teachers are professionals who should be encouraged to write their own curriculum, be learners themselves, experience success and failure, and take risks. They should also seek out best practices and utilize peer-reviewed research to integrate with their own creative ideas.

## Signature programs and practices

*The structures and practices through which we seek to achieve our vision:*

- Democratic, civics-centered, and restorative practices are the foundation of our School culture
- Project-Based Learning
- STEAM focused curriculum
- Critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and innovative problem-solving
- Teacher- and student-designed projects
- Learning goals/content standards
- Growth mindset and soft skills
- Small class sizes

- Mastery-based grading
- Revision & peer critique
- Meaningful reflection
- Rubrics and other assessment tools
- Presentations of learning
- Project exhibitions
- Digital and paper portfolios
- Student leadership and voice
- Community-building, our school as a community and community connections with the outside world
- Meaningful teacher evaluation
- Distributive leadership and shared governance (choice and voice for all)

### **SCS also utilizes:**

- Compassionate communication
- Mixed-age grouping
- Personal skills for problem solving (see next page for further information)
- Progress & growth plans (report cards)

### **WE ARE Summit Charter School H.E.R.O.E.S.:**

Students of our founding school developed their own standards of which to hold themselves accountable. They are Summit School HEROES, and students agree to hold themselves to the following standards:

**H**onest

**E**mpathetic

**R**esponsible

**O**pen-Minded

**E**ncouraging

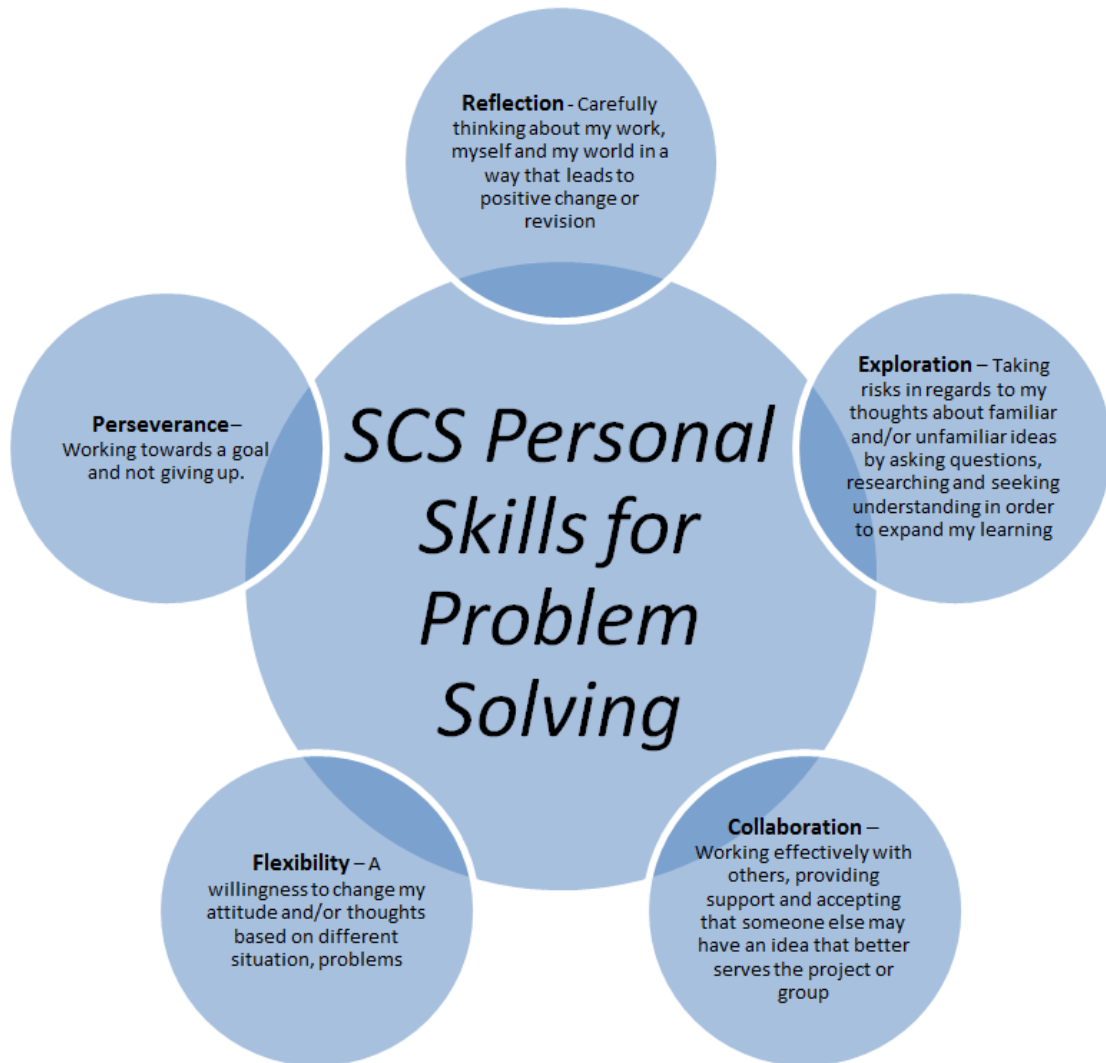
**S**cholars

# OUTCOMES & RESULTS

*What we seek for our students and how we measure our success*

<b>Personal Skills for Problem Solving</b>	<b>21st Century Skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reflection</li><li>● Exploration</li><li>● Collaboration</li><li>● Flexibility</li><li>● Perseverance</li><li>● Empathy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Initiative</li><li>● Innovation</li><li>● Communication</li><li>● Critical Thinking</li><li>● Problem-Solving</li><li>● Use of Technology</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Leadership</li><li>● Creativity</li><li>● Adaptability &amp; Agility</li><li>● Assessing &amp; Analyzing Information</li></ul>

Personal Skills for Problem Solving are characteristics of what successful people do when they are confronted with new situations or problems. The descriptors listed with each habit will help support the development of these habits.





## WHY WE ARE UNIQUE

Our goal is to let passions drive a student's educational process as we encourage them to broaden their interests and intensify their skills, all while fueling a deep vested interest in every student's ownership of their educational journey.

*Helping every student reach their personal Summit.*

### **Project-Based Learning (PBL):**

**Project-Based Learning** is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. In Gold Standard PBL, Essential Project Design Elements include:

- **Key Knowledge, Understanding, and Success Skills** - The project is focused on student learning goals, including standards-based content and skills such as critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, and self-management.
- **Challenging Problem or Question** - The project is framed by a meaningful problem to solve or a question to answer, at the appropriate level of challenge.
- **Sustained Inquiry** - Students engage in a rigorous, extended process of asking questions, finding resources, and applying information.
- **Authenticity** - The project features real-world context, tasks and tools, quality standards, or impact – or speaks to students' personal concerns, interests, and issues in their lives.
- **Student Voice & Choice** - Students make some decisions about the project, including how they work and what they create.
- **Reflection** - Students and teachers reflect on learning, the effectiveness of their inquiry and project activities, the quality of student work, obstacles and how to overcome them.
- **Critique & Revision** - Students give, receive, and use feedback to improve their process and products.
- **Public Product** - Students make their project work public by explaining, displaying and/or presenting it to people beyond the classroom.

*Buck Institute for Education (BIE)*

# **DEMOCRACY IN MOTION**

## **SCS - A Democratic, Civics-Centered Culture**

Our democratic, civics-centered culture is at the heart of everything we do at SCS. We regard ourselves as a school community, responsible for our actions, responsible to each other, the community outside of our school, and a duty to be good stewards of the earth.

Around the world, democracy is being challenged, yet it is at the core of America's promise of opportunity in exchange for hard work. Our students are expected to work hard. They are expected to be kind and respectful of their teachers, themselves, and one another.

Understanding the importance of self-regulation and compromise is vital for success in adulthood. Through our civics program, School Meeting is held once a week, wherein students and staff come together to discuss, debate, and vote on matters brought forward by any member of the school.

Students help make the rules that govern our school. This allows them to actively participate in the management of their educational community and provides ownership of rules along with an understanding as to why they exist.

Restorative practices such as "Justice Committee" (JC) and restorative circles serve to represent fairness within our school community, peaceful conflict resolution, and a genuine respect for all students and staff.

Perhaps more than ever, our country needs young leaders. By incorporating a democracy-rich environment with our teaching methods and philosophies, students are provided a voice and ownership in their education and school community. In turn, they learn how to participate as active, engaged members of their society and possess the ability to carry this into the real world, beyond their school experiences.

## **The Value of Restorative Practices**

SCS is committed to using restorative practices to build community, reduce behavior incidents, and instill the values of inclusion, restoration, and growth in our students. Restorative practices are founded upon the principle that discipline

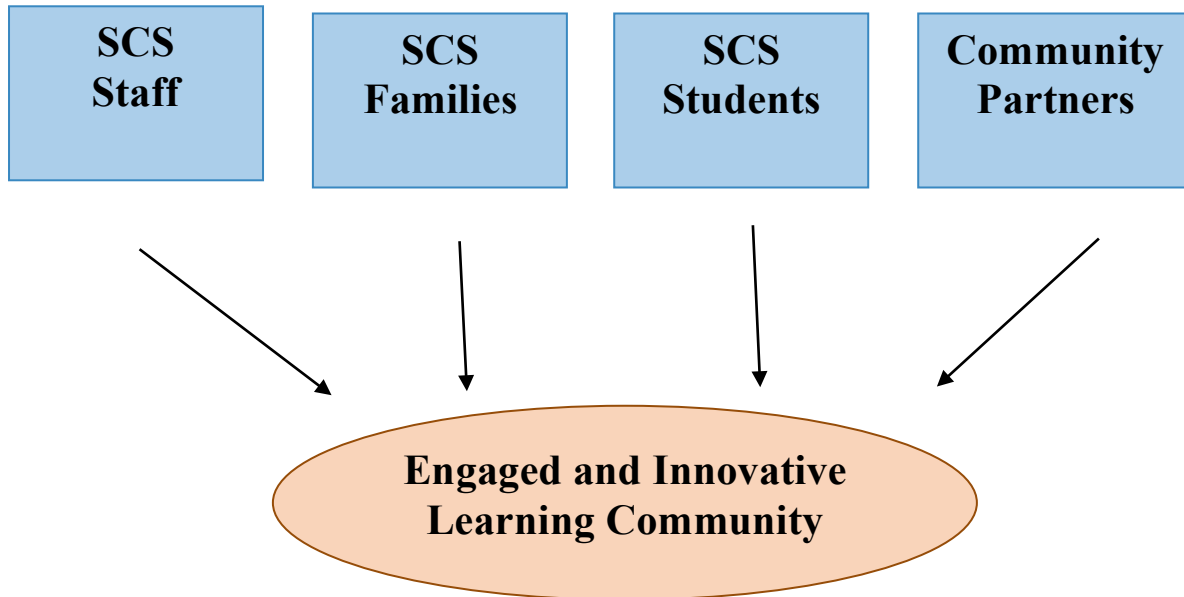
is meant to help students learn versus be a punitive measure. Community building activities such as classroom restorative circles, School Meeting, and Justice Committee all facilitate the core belief that students are responsible, accountable, and able to solve their own problems with assistance and guidance from adults.

By instilling restorative practices in the classroom, conflicts are prevented and also worked out in a supportive and non-judgmental space. If behaviors escalate or cannot be resolved within the classroom setting, they are elevated to intervention by the Principal/CEO, who then employs restorative practices to name the harm, restore the community, and employ a learning component to the process. Through this method, the student has ownership over the process and a say in the consequences, which has been proven to be effective in reducing future behavior incidents. An additional element of restorative practices employed at SCS is the Justice Committee. This process allows students to seek assistance with behavior issues and their fellow students help adjudicate the cases and have input into the consequences. This process allows for student voice, ownership, and the belief that all voices matter at SCS.

Restorative practices mimic the process used in the real world to solve conflicts between individuals and to seek practical, meaningful solutions. Restorative practices also counter the process of punishment, exclusion from school via suspensions, and prevent the school to prison pipeline. By teaching students that they can make mistakes, learn from those mistakes and grow, we are allowing students to become better community citizens.

# **SUMMIT CHARTER SCHOOL COMMUNITY AGREEMENT**

SCS's success is based on the commitment and collaboration of all key partners.



As key partners in the SCS community, staff, families, students and community partners will:

1. Understand and support the mission and vision of SCS
2. Uphold school community limits and support the guidelines set forth in the handbook
3. Treat all community members with kindness, care, respect, and consideration
4. Agree to utilize compassionate communication, conflict resolution strategies, and restorative practices when conflicts occur
5. Do their best to create a safe and healthy environment at home and at school
6. Take responsibility for learning, as well as the pursuit and development of passions
7. Contribute to the well-being of others so that everyone can become a caring and confident learner

# EXPECTATIONS

## What we expect from our students

### Student Code of Conduct

SCS is a collaborative learning community in which *how* you learn is as important as *what* you learn. This agreement details your roles and responsibilities as a SCS student. As a collaborative partner in my learning community, my role is to:

1. Take responsibility for my learning by:
  - a. Focusing on mastering the SCS learning goals/content standards in academic subjects, knowing that these skills are important for anything I decide to do in life
  - b. I will read a minimum of 30 minutes each day (alone or with a family member)
  - c. Supporting at-school projects by actively participating in and contributing to projects (i.e. conducting research about/for projects, bringing my own ideas, collaborating with my family and teacher(s))
  - d. Communicating with my family and teacher(s) about my unique interests and learning goals/content standards beyond class projects
  
2. Actively participate in my learning, both on campus and off campus by:
  - a. Attending class, workshops, student-led conferences, enrichment classes, and all other learning opportunities I commit to
  - b. Listening to the thoughts, ideas, and questions of others, knowing that I can learn from every person and every situation
  - c. Thinking and speaking up for myself, knowing that my thoughts, ideas, and questions matter and that others can learn from me also
  - d. Asking questions and getting help when something is not clear, I feel like I don't understand, or when I see a problem that I think needs to be addressed
  - e. Understanding and letting people know how I learn best and seeking to understand and respect how others in my community learn best
  - f. Exploring, investigating and experimenting with new ideas (both mine and those of others in my community), knowing that as a life-long learner, I always have more to discover

- g. Striving to improve and grow my skills and talents and supporting those in my community to do the same
3. Respect and support all members of SCS's community by:
- a. Supporting SCS's Personal Habits (reflection, exploration, collaboration, flexibility, perseverance, empathy)
  - b. Demonstrating the values of SCS HEROES (Honest, Empathetic, Responsible, Open-Minded, Encouraging, Scholars)
  - c. Developing a flexible mindset by celebrating "struggles" and recognizing effort
  - d. Seeking to understand others and their actions, instead of judging them; demonstrate empathy

Furthermore, I understand and agree to the following terms pertaining to the SCS community:

1. I understand and support that SCS utilizes technology, among many tools, in its teaching processes.
2. I understand that I should immediately notify an SCS staff member if I feel physically or emotionally unsafe, so staff can support you in a timely manner.
3. I understand that I should put away my trash and equipment to ensure the school is kept safe and clean.
4. I understand that I am representing SCS with my words, gestures, behaviors, or clothing when I attend SCS events and field trips.
5. I understand that I am responsible for lost, damaged, incomplete, or unusable books, electronic devices, and other school property used by me.

SCS has adopted a Code of Conduct that is described in detail below. It includes four levels of violations, and a range of potential consequences for these different levels. Please note that while the list of violations is reasonably comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. In other words, SCS reserves the right to address under this code student misbehavior that is of a level of seriousness equivalent to those in the code, even where not specifically listed. **It is important to clarify that while persistent Level 1 offenses can lead to Level 2 consequences, they cannot be aggregated to lead to Level 3 or Level 4 consequences. It would not be possible for a Level 1 action to lead to a suspension or expulsion.**

A disciplinary violation can be addressed under the school's Code of Conduct while the student:

- is at school and/or on school grounds
- is participating in school-sponsored activities
- is walking to or from school or a school-sponsored activity
- is walking to or from or waiting for school transportation
- is riding on school transportation (for example, the school bus)
- is riding on public transportation while on the way to or from school or to or from a school-sponsored activity

The School may also impose consequences under this Code of Conduct for student behavior that, while occurring outside of school, has a substantial impact on other students or on staff or members of the school community.

## **School-Wide Rules**

- Respect the needs and feelings of others.
- SCS is a drug and alcohol-free campus. No student, staff member, or visitor is permitted to use any drug, tobacco, alcohol, or any device that mimics or suggests the use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol, including but not limited to smoking, chewing tobacco, or vapes, vape pens, and other electronic smoking devices even if that device contains a tobacco/drug free or alcoholic substance. Any sort of inhalant, other than those prescribed by a doctor and checked in with school staff, are strictly prohibited.
- Use appropriate language and demonstrate concern for the property of peers, classrooms/campus and the entire community.
- Be safe and considerate of the safety of yourself and others.
- Remain in the classroom or on school grounds unless permission is given by the teacher or administrator to leave.
- SCS keeps a current comprehensive Rulebook that is continually developed by the student body during School Meetings.

## **Care of School Property**

Each SCS student shall utilize school property (including but not limited to textbooks, computers, furniture) with respect and care. Each student is responsible for the proper care of school property and the school supplies and equipment entrusted to his/her use.

Students who purposefully cause damage to school property shall be subject to disciplinary measures detailed in the Code of Conduct. Students and others who damage or deface school property may be prosecuted and punished under law and be held financially responsible for any school property damaged or lost. Parents and guardians of students shall be held accountable for student actions. The dollar value will be determined by the SCS and will be paid by the person, by the student, or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) on demand of the school district.

Instances of purposeful damage/vandalism may be reported to the appropriate juvenile authorities if any student whose damage of school property has been serious or chronic in nature. In no case shall referral to juvenile authorities be made without prior notification to the student's parent.

The Principal/CEO shall develop additional procedures, as deemed necessary to implement this policy which may include rules for safekeeping and accounting of textbooks / technology, supplies and equipment and an established list of fines for lost or damaged textbooks, supplies and equipment. The Principal/CEO shall submit a report on incidents of vandalism to the Board on each occurrence.

## **Level 1 Behavior Violations**

- a. Unexcused lateness to school
- b. Bringing prohibited equipment to school without authorization (for example, toys or electronic devices)
- c. Violating the School's student cell phone policy
- d. Disrupting the education process (for example, making excessive noise, singing when inappropriate, interruptions, calling-out, humming, in the classroom and in the hallway, etc.)
- e. Engaging in verbally rude or disrespectful behavior (to both teachers and peers: talking back when given a direction, name-calling, mimicking, harassing, teasing, taunting, etc.)
- f. Wearing clothing or other items that are unsafe or disruptive to the educational process.
- g. Posting or distributing material on school premises in violation of School rules
- h. Using school computers, faxes, telephones, or other equipment without permission



- i. Using or touching other people's property without permission (both teachers' and peers' property, belongings, equipment, supplies, etc.)

## **Level 2 Behavior Violations**

- a. Harassment, bullying, put-downs, inappropriate behavior, inappropriate photos on cell phones, electronic devices, email, and social media
- b. Congregating in bathrooms with other students without permission
- c. Gambling
- d. Being insubordinate; defying or disobeying school personnel or school safety agents
- e. Using profane, obscene, vulgar, lewd, or abusive, language or gestures
- f. Lying, or giving false information to school personnel
- g. Misusing school property and/or property belonging to others (including breaking, destroying, ripping, etc.)
- h. Engaging in or causing disruptive behavior on the school bus. (See bus policy)
- i. Leaving class or school premises without permission of supervising school personnel
- j. Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact of a minor nature, such as poking, pinching, tapping, and throwing of non-harmful objects
- k. Smoking
- l. Violating the School's Internet use policy, e.g., use of the school's system for no-educational purposes, security/privacy violations
- m. Engaging in scholastic dishonesty which includes: cheating, plagiarizing, colluding, copying, and related behaviors. For these purposes, plagiarizing refers to using someone else's work as one's own for credit without required citation and attribution. Colluding refers to partnering with another person in preparing written work for credit without permission from the teacher. Student grades and credit will also be affected by incidents of scholastic dishonesty
- n. Engaging in a pattern of persistent Level 1 behavior

## **Level 3 Behavior Violations**

- a. Being seriously insubordinate: defying or disobeying school personnel or school safety agents in ways that potentially create danger or that seriously disrupt school instruction or operations
- b. Using slurs based upon race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability
- c. Fighting or engaging in physically aggressive behavior
- d. Bringing unauthorized visitors to school or allowing unauthorized visitors to enter school in violation of written school rules
- e. Engaging in theft or knowingly possessing property belonging to another without permission
- f. Engaging in inappropriate or unwanted physical contact
- g. Tampering with, changing or altering a record or document of a school by any method, including, but not limited to, computer access or any electronic means
- h. Posting or distributing libelous or defamatory material or literature or material containing a threat of violence, injury or harm
- i. Engaging in vandalism or other intentional damage to school property, staff property, or others; including student bathrooms.
- j. Engaging in gang related behavior (e.g., wearing gang apparel, writing graffiti, making gang-related gestures or signs)
- k. Engaging in a pattern of persistent Level 2 behavior

#### **Level 4 Behavior Violations**

- a. Engaging in intimidation, coercion or extortion or threatening violence, injury, harm or retaliation to another or others
- b. Falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm or making a bomb threat
- c. Engaging in behavior that creates a substantial risk of serious injury or that results in serious injury
- d. Engaging in serious intimidating and bullying behavior such as threatening, stalking or seeking to coerce or compel a student or staff member to do something; engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practice, gender, sexual orientation or disability
- e. Engaging in sexual harassment (to peers or school staff)
- f. Possessing, using, or selling illegal drugs, alcohol or controlled substances

- g. Engaging in threatening, dangerous or violent behavior that is gang-related
- h. Participating in an incident of serious group violence
- i. Threatening to use any instrument that appears capable of causing physical injury
- j. Engaging in behavior on the school bus that creates a substantial risk of injury or results in injury
- k. Engaging in physical sexual aggression/compelling or forcing another to engage in sexual activity
- l. Committing arson
- m. Inciting/causing a riot
- n. Possessing a weapon or an item intended to be used as a weapon (for example, a broken bottle)
- o. Using any weapon to attempt to inflict injury upon school personnel, students or others.
- p. Possessing or using a firearm
- q. Inflicting or attempting to inflict serious injury against another person
- r. Engaging in a pattern of persistent Level 3 behavior

### **Level 1 Violations Range of Consequences**

- a. Restorative discussion with school staff
- b. Student/teacher conference
- c. Parent/guardian conference via telephone or in-person
- d. Exclusion from in-school activity (for example, from extracurricular activities, recess, or communal lunchtime) or loss of specific privileges
- e. Removal from the classroom by teacher

### **Level 2 Violations Range of Consequences**

- a. Any of the consequences listed in Level 1, above
- b. Restitution
- c. Short-term out-of-school suspension (1-5 days in length)

### **Level 3 Violations Range of Consequences**

- a. Any of the consequences listed in Levels 1 and 2, above
- b. Long-term out-of-school suspension (more than 5 days in length)

### **Level 4 Violations Range of Consequences**

- a. Any of the consequences listed in Levels 1 through 3, above
- b. Expulsion

**Please note that behavior violations in Levels 3 and 4 typically involve serious incidents of misbehavior on the part of students and are therefore much more likely to result in more severe consequences such as suspension. Level 4 violations are particularly serious and will typically result in long-term suspension or expulsion.**

**In addition, please note that school officials will report student behavior to law enforcement authorities wherever they are required to do so by law or to maintain the safety and security of the School and its students and staff.**

## **Weapons Violations**

In accordance with Act 26, the Pennsylvania Safe Schools Act, SCS will report to the Office of Safe Schools all incidents involving acts of violence, possession of a weapon, or the possession, use or sale of a controlled substance, alcohol or tobacco by any person on school property; at school-sponsored events; and on school transportation to and from school.

SCS will maintain updated summary reports of all incidents of violence; incidents involving possession of a weapon; and convictions or adjudications of delinquency for acts committed on school property. A statistical summary of these records will be maintained at the school and made accessible to the public for examination during regular business hours. SCS intends to fulfill this reporting requirement by filing the Annual Report on School Violence and Weapon Possession (PDE 360) with the Pennsylvania Department of Education by July 31 each year. An individual incident report will also be filed for each incident involving acts of violence, possession of a weapon, or the possession, use or sale of a controlled substance, alcohol or tobacco by any person on school property; at school-sponsored events; and on school transportation to and from school.

Act 26 also requires the school to expel, for a period of not less than one year, any student who is determined to have brought onto, or is in possession of, any weapon on any school property; at a school-sponsored activity, or onto to any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school sponsored activity, at the Principal/CEO's discretion. A weapon is defined by Act 26 as "any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and [anything else] capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. For a student with a disability, this excludes pocket knives with blades of less than 2-1/2 inches. School officials will notify police whenever they discover any weapon covered under the Act.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

- It is the goal of SCS to provide experiences for children that teach them compassion, commitment, empathy, and concern for others.
- It is understood that children learn what they experience, and therefore we ask that all adults model appropriate behavior for children.
- Staff will help children behave in ways that are conducive to learning and building community.
- Classroom experiences create developmentally appropriate opportunities for autonomy and positive decision-making.
- The essence of discipline is the ability to understand behavior and find effective ways to express our needs and react to the needs of others.

### **Justice Committee (JC)**

At SCS, we are dedicated to helping children learn to meet their own needs while empathizing with and respecting the needs of others.

- Justice Committee Members (JC students) mentor with a staff member to develop leadership skills.
- JC Members help to resolve student conflict by listening and acting as facilitators, helping all parties to acquire a mutual understanding of viewpoints, feelings, and what needs to occur in order for all to positively move forward.
- On rare occasions, when teachers must set limits without a student's input, they communicate clearly, firmly, and with kindness, dignity, and respect.
- Teachers form empathic and positive relationships with their students, holding them to high standards of behavior.

### **Redirecting Behavior**

It is our strong belief that while punishment may work in the short term to stop unwanted behavior immediately, long-range results may include resentment, revenge, rebellion, and/or retreat. Therefore, we use strategies that are not humiliating to children. Our approach is based upon mutuality and incorporates clear and firm expectations with respect for children so that a foundation for teaching life skills, good decision-making, and self-regulation is emphasized. Restorative practices are at the center of how we address behavioral issues.

## **Levels of Suspension & Due Process Procedures**

The Board recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the SCS, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student. SCS regards suspensions and expulsion as a last resort that cannot be imposed without due process. The Principal/CEO/CEO of the SCS will make recommendations for dismissal or expulsion to the Board of Trustees in accordance with the law.

### **In-School Suspension**

In-school Suspension is an exclusion from a classroom for disciplinary purposes that allow a student to remain under the direct supervision of school personnel. Students must be informed of the reason for the suspension and be given an opportunity to be heard. Direct supervision means school personnel are physically in the same location as students under their supervision. Special Education students must have access to their specially designed instruction by a certified provider of service for all removals from the classroom when remaining in the school. In-school suspensions of more than ten consecutive days must be offered an informal hearing with the school before the 11th day of in-school suspension.

### **Short-Term Out-of-School Suspension**

A short-term suspension is an exclusion from school and/or any school activity or function for disciplinary reasons **for a period of three or fewer days**.

*Note: Kindergarten students may not be suspended unless their actions result in serious bodily injury. Before a suspension can be issued for a student in 1st or 2nd grade, referrals for various interventions must be made and documented.*

The Principal/CEO may impose a short-term suspension and shall follow all due process procedures. Before imposing a short-term suspension, or other, less serious discipline, the Principal/CEO shall provide notice to inform the student of the charges against him or her, and if the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student. A chance to present the student's version of events shall also be provided. Prior notice of the intended suspension is not required where it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school population is threatened.

Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal/CEO shall immediately notify the parents or guardian in writing that the student may be suspended from school. Written notice of the decision to impose suspension shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours at the last known address(es) of the parents or guardian. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s)

for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents or guardian of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal/CEO/CEO. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents or guardian.

The parents or guardian of the student and the student shall have the opportunity to present the student's version of the incident and to ask questions of the witnesses. Such notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place prior to the suspension of the student unless the student's presence in the school poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, in which case the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon as possible after the suspension as is reasonably practicable.

The Principal/CEO/CEO's decision to impose a short-term suspension may be challenged by the parent(s) or guardian in accordance with the School's complaint policy.

### **Long-Term Suspension & Expulsion**

A long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period of three and no more than ten days. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten-school day period. Expulsion refers to any removal more than ten (10) days up to the permanent removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons.

The Principal/CEO/CEO may impose a long-term suspension. Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Principal/CEO/CEO shall verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions. The Principal/CEO/CEO also shall immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents that resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that an informal hearing will be held on the matter that may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s). The hearing will be held within 5 days of the suspension and also be held in the dominant language. At the informal hearing, the student shall have the right to speak, question witnesses, and present evidence. The Principal/CEO/CEO and all members of staff that were involved in witnessing the alleged discipline violation are required to



participate in the informal hearing. A decision by the Principal/CEO/CEO will stand as the final decision regarding the student's long-term suspension status.

The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the informal hearing:

- i. Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and;
- ii. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
- iii. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
- iv. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
- v. The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

Should the Principal/CEO/CEO recommend that an expulsion is required, he or she will follow the same procedures for the long-term suspension with the exception that a formal hearing shall be held. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

1. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
2. At least three (3) days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. The hearing notice shall include a copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student, and hearing procedures. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.
3. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
4. The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
5. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
6. The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.

7. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
8. A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
9. The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:
  - a. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
  - b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400–1482).
  - c. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
10. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

### **Provision of Services During Removal**

SCS will ensure that alternative educational services are provided to a student who has been suspended or removed to help that child progress in the school's general curriculum. For a student who has been suspended, alternative instruction will be provided to the extent required by applicable law. For a student who has been expelled, alternative instruction will be provided in like manner as a suspended student until the student enrolls in another school for a reasonable period thereafter or until the end of the school year.

Alternative instruction will be provided to students suspended or expelled in a way that best suits the needs of the student. Instruction for such students shall be sufficient to enable the student to make adequate academic progress and shall provide them the opportunity to complete the assignments, learn the curriculum and participate in assessments. Instruction will take place in one of the following locations: the child's home, a contracted facility (e.g., in the school district of location), or a suspension room or other room at the School. During any removal for drug or weapon offenses, additional services shall include strategies designed to prevent such behavior from recurring. Instruction will be provided by one or more of the following individuals: the student's teacher(s), aides or trained volunteers, individuals within a contracted facility, and/or a tutor hired for this purpose.

## **Attendance/School Work During Suspension and Prior to Expulsion**

Students serving an out-of-school suspension must make up missed exams and work and shall be permitted to complete assignments pursuant to established guidelines.

Students who are facing an expulsion hearing must be placed in their normal classes if the formal hearing is not held within the ten-school day suspension. If it is not possible to hold the formal hearing within the first ten (10) school days, the school may exclude such a student from class for up to five (5) additional – fifteen (15) total – school days if, after an informal hearing, it is determined that the student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others. Any further exclusion prior to a formal hearing may be only by mutual agreement. Such students shall be given alternative education, which may include home study.

## **Attendance/School Work After Expulsion**

Students who are under seventeen (17) years of age are still subject to compulsory school attendance even though expelled and shall be provided an education. The parent/guardian has the initial responsibility of providing the required education and shall, within thirty (30) days of the student's expulsion by the Board of Trustees, submit written evidence to the school that the required education is being provided or that they are unable to do so. If the parent/guardian is unable to provide for the required education, the school shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the parent/guardian notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Board may provide an educational program to the student immediately upon expulsion and may waive the 30-day period, at its discretion.

## **Student Disciplinary Records**

The School will maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons. The School will comply with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's data collection requirements for disciplinary data and submit that information to PDE by required deadlines. Charter schools are subject to the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) that requires a school to protect a student's privacy. The School will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records except as authorized pursuant to FERPA, or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student under 21 years of age, or a student 21 years of age or older, is entitled to access to the student's school

records by submitting a written request to the Principal/CEO. Further information concerning the disclosure of student information and limitations on such disclosure may be found in FERPA and the school's FERPA policy.

## **Disciplinary Policies for Students with Disabilities**

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, SCS shall implement the following disciplinary policy procedures with respect to students with disabilities.

### **Protected Students**

Every regular education student who is subject to a disciplinary suspension or expulsion will be subject to a review by the Student Support team to determine whether the student is "thought to be eligible." This screening tool ensures that disciplinary action is not imposed on a student whom the school should have known needed an evaluation for a suspected disability before the prohibited conduct occurred. There are three (3) situations that are legal evidence that the school had knowledge that the student might have a disability:

1. The parent or guardian has requested an evaluation.
2. The parent or guardian has expressed concerns in writing to the student's teacher or school administration that the student needs special education.
3. The student's teacher or other school staff told a school leadership member of specific concerns about the child's academic or behavior difficulties.

During the review, CSC will take all relevant information into consideration including school interventions, mental health evaluations from outside agencies in the school file, and other factors. The team must carefully consider the listed criteria and determine whether there is substantial evidence to conclude that the student should be evaluated for a suspected disability as an alternative to punishment. If the parent or guardian requests an evaluation for a suspected disability after the child is subject to an alternative or remedial disciplinary placement, CSC must conduct an expedited evaluation at parental request. However, the student remains in the alternative/remedial placement during the evaluation. If the student is found to have a disability, an IEP must be developed. The IEP team must then determine if the disability had a direct and substantial relationship to the offense. If so, the team needs to reconsider the student's placement in light of the new information.

If a student already has an IEP or a 504 plan, they are automatically entitled to all due process protections.

## **Due Process Procedure**

If a student with a disability violates the school's Code of Conduct and is being considered for a suspension or removal, SCS must consider if this is considered to be a "change in placement" and SCS must ensure all due process protections are provided. A change in placement is a legal term that applies in the following situations:

- Any suspension (even one day), expulsion, or transfer to another school of a student with intellectual disability.
- A suspension, expulsion, or disciplinary transfer to a remedial disciplinary school for either more than 10 consecutive school days or more than 15 cumulative school days in a school year is a change in placement. If a student has transportation on his IEP, then bus suspensions are also counted.
- Suspensions that may total less than 15 cumulative school days in a school year may be a change in placement if they appear as part of a pattern of suspensions. A pattern of suspensions (If a student has transportation on his IEP, then bus suspensions are also counted) may be found if the student is suspended for behavior that is "substantially similar" to behavior for which the child has previously been suspended. Factors may include same type of behavior, same victim, same class, same day of the week or same time of day.
- If the offense is not committed by a student with intellectual disability or if suspensions do not exceed 10 consecutive or 15 cumulative days nor constitute a pattern of suspensions, then it is not a change in placement and the student may be subject to the same consequence the school applies to all students who violate the Code of Student Conduct.

If the offense is a change in placement, the school team (including the parent) must hold a Manifestation Determination meeting. The parent must be invited to the Manifestation Determination in writing and provided with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards notice. The purpose of the Manifestation Determination meeting is to determine two issues:

1. Was the student's misconduct caused by or directly and substantially related to the student's disability. OR
2. Was the student's misconduct a direct result of the school's failure to follow the child's IEP?

If the team answers yes to either question, then the student's behavior is a manifestation of their disability. The student may not be suspended, expelled or transferred to a remedial disciplinary school as a punishment for misbehavior. The team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and create a behavior plan addressing ways that the school can help a student with the conduct at issue. If the student already has a behavior plan, the plan must be reviewed and

modified to address how the school can better assist the student with the conduct at issue.

If all team members agree that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of their disability, then the student may be subject to the same consequences as all students. This decision must be communicated to the parent or guardian in writing via a Notice of Recommended Placement (NOREP). If a parent disagrees with the team's decision that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the parent may request a due process hearing to challenge this finding. If the Hearing Officer agrees with the parent, the student will remain in the school where the offense was committed unless the parent and the school agree otherwise. However, during the period of expulsion or transfer to an alternative placement or remedial disciplinary setting, the student must continue to receive special education services prescribed by his IEP and a Behavior Plan must be created or revised to address the offending conduct.

CSC shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

### **Special circumstances involving school safety: weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury**

If a student:

- possesses illegal drugs;
- is selling prescription drugs;
- carries a weapon; or
- causes serious bodily injury to another, (to comply with the law, serious bodily injury must be egregious (requiring medical treatment, significant and potentially permanent injury)

either at school or during school related activity, the school may immediately remove the student for up to 45 school days to an alternative or remedial disciplinary setting.

Because drugs, weapons and serious bodily injury are so dangerous to a safe school climate, a school may remove a student under these circumstances for 45 school days regardless of whether a child has intellectual disability or even if the team believes that the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. During the 45-school day period, the school must convene a manifestation determination meeting. If the school determines that the conduct is a manifestation, the school may have the child reevaluated, create or revise an existing behavior plan, or hold an IEP meeting to consider a more intensive special education placement upon the expiration of the 45-day alternative

placement or sooner. If all team members determine that the conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the 45-school day emergency placement may proceed to a disciplinary proceeding afforded to all students.

### **Notice to Parents or Guardians**

Any time a student with an IEP or 504 Plan is removed to an alternative or remedial disciplinary setting, the parent or guardian must be given a Notice of Recommended Placement (NOREP) stating this decision and a copy of procedural safeguards.

### **Provision of Services during Removal of a Student with a Disability**

Arrangements will be made between the school and each individual family for the delivery of services, pick-up/delivery of work, and the making up of any missed assignments and classroom instructional support. All IDEA mandates will be followed for student with disabilities.

### **Transfer Students**

When the School receives a student via transfer from a public or private school during the period of an expulsion for any reason, the school will honor the discipline imparted by the previous school or school district in accordance with the law.

### **What we expect from our staff**

#### **Staff Code of Conduct**

SCS Staff creates and empowers an atmosphere of collaborative learning and development, where all students are fully supported in becoming collaborative, informed, resourceful, and reflective individuals who are college-ready, career-prepared, and community-minded. This is accomplished through strong and supportive partnerships with students and families.

#### **In support of students, staff will:**

1. Engage students in meaningful learning by:
  - a. Creating and implementing project-based curriculum
  - b. Connecting student work to the world outside the classroom
  - c. Managing classroom behavior through the use of clear routines and consistent expectation
  - d. Engaging students in presenting and talking about their work

- e. Attending students' Exhibitions and Presentations of Learning
  - f. Modeling meta-cognitive strategies to help students develop skills and strategies
  - g. Using engaging, creative, and appropriate assignments and resources (work has a clear purpose with limited use of textbooks and publisher-created worksheets)
2. Differentiate and support the diversity of students in the classroom (ethnicity, gender, culture, aptitude, capability, etc.) by:
    - a. Personalizing instruction and differentiation to support and/or challenge students
    - b. Establishing the expectation that all students participate in class activities
  3. Uphold the values of our democratic, civics-centered culture and develop appropriate relationships with students by:
    - a. Knowing, seeing, and valuing each student as an individual
    - b. Creating a classroom/school atmosphere based on mutual respect
    - c. Implementing compassionate communication and conflict resolution strategies
    - d. Encouraging students to use their voice and take ownership in their school community and personal education
    - e. Leading by example by actively participating in School Meeting and restorative practices
    - f. Managing everyday challenges and issues in the classroom with students directly unless additional support is needed
    - g. Seeking appropriate support for students when needed (from administrators, peers, etc.)

**In support of families, staff will:**

1. Proactively maintain effective and collaborative communication with families by:
  - a. Identifying learning goals/content standards to be worked towards at home and at school
  - b. Responding promptly and professionally (within 48 hours while school is in session unless urgent) to parent questions/concerns
  - c. Scheduling and facilitating parent-teacher-student conferences as needed
  - d. Providing meaningful information about student progress and areas for growth



### **In support of SCS's Mission and Vision, Staff also:**

1. Accomplishes their goal of facilitating an atmosphere of collaborative learning and development through:

## **STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES**

### **SCS Staff collaborates effectively by:**

1. Acting as a learning facilitator and resource for students and families
2. Planning and preparing for meetings
3. Managing course requirements for all students
4. Maintaining on-going home contact (in person, via phone calls and via email as needed)
5. Developing interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum
6. Actively participating in staff meetings and professional development
7. Listening and being open-minded in conversations
8. Being solution-oriented when problems arise
9. Following and enforcing school rules while maintaining a positive attitude
10. Tolerating ambiguity and striving for clarity
11. Being a presence in the school community

### **In commitment to SCS's personal skills for problem solving and SCS's staff ways of being, staff will:**

1. Be conscientious, innovative, and reflective.
2. Reflect on what works and what does not and adjust as appropriate
3. Arrive on time to meetings/classes and be present at school from 7:45am-3:30pm/4pm on all school days other than scheduled days off.
4. Prepare for lessons/projects/classes/meetings and seek support from the team when needed.
5. Take part in campus design and maintenance to keep our school safe and clean.
6. Utilize technology as needed to be effective as a teacher and to fulfill the duties necessary to act as a 21st century educator.

7. Love teaching and learning.
8. Actively take part in professional development on site and be an active learner beyond the classroom.

## HOW WE TRACK GROWTH

At SCS, we believe that learning is a life-long process that represents far more than the acquisition of knowledge. We are committed to supporting each student in his or her continual growth of learning goals and content standards. We know that this comprehensive focus will support and empower our students as they develop and share their own individual gifts. Tracking each student's growth in a holistic way is accomplished through a combination of the following:

- Progress & Growth Plans (report cards) that capture SCS teacher reflections on development in both academic skills and SCS Personal Habits (soft skills)
- Presentations of Learning (POLs) and Project Exhibition Presentations provide tangible evidence of each student's growth over time in a way that honors each student for the unique individual that they are
- Digital and Paper Portfolios
- Ongoing communication between students, teachers, and families
- Quizzes and tests
- Annual Standardized Testing for grades 3 and higher (although we do not “teach to the test”)

## **LET'S NOT FORGET THE PARENTS!**

At SCS, we also need to hear from our parents, so we understand how best to improve our systems and processes, concerns, and what we are doing well. We collect parent feedback in a number of ways including:

- **Parent Surveys.** These are typically sent via our Remind text message communication system or via email. Surveys are usually short and take only a minute or two to complete. This can be done right from your phone. Please help us by taking the time to provide feedback. Surveys are usually anonymous.
- **Parent Visit Days.** Parents are invited to join us at the school annually to observe their child/ren in the classroom.
- **The School has an open-door policy** and teachers and administrators are available to listen to parent concerns and suggestions.
- **Parents are encouraged to join our Parent Advisory Committee, Fundraising Committee, or other functioning committees of the School.**
- **Town Hall Meetings.** Town Hall meetings occur as needed during the school year. This is a time for school staff to update parents on current initiatives, for parents to provide feedback, and for us to brainstorm through challenges as a community. We appreciate you making the time to join us!

### **Parental Complaint/Resolution Policy**

Except in a perfect world, disagreements, problems, and/or conflicts arise from time to time. SCS believes parents are an integral partner in the education of all students. Therefore, parental concerns are taken very seriously. The school requires parents to follow the protocol listed below for reporting and resolving concerns or issues:

It is the intent of the Board of Trustees and the school staff that concerns should be resolved as quickly and amicably as possible with the best interests of the students held firmly in mind. The procedures will be known by staff and parents so that communication about concerns can be carried out in an open and convenient way.

If the complaint concerns something that has occurred in the classroom, then the following steps should be followed:

The parent should contact the child's teacher and discuss the issue on the telephone or in person. Every effort should be made to resolve the parental complaint/concern at the teacher level. Since parents are considered to be essential partners in the educational process, each teacher must make a conscientious effort to interact with parents on an as-needed basis. It must be noted that the 30 minutes after students are dismissed each day provide some opportunities for parental contacts.

If the concern remains unresolved, then the parent should meet with the Principal/CEO. If the parent has not obtained a satisfactory resolution to the concern after meeting with the appropriate administrator, then the parent should contact the lead administrator.

If the concern has not been resolved to a level of satisfaction to the parent, the parent may write to the President of the Board of Trustees about the concern and ask for a committee of Trustee members to hear the concern and make a recommendation.

If the complaint concerns an issue not directly related to the parent's child but reflects a concern about a classroom practice, school rule, procedure, or practice, the following steps should be followed:

The parent should request to discuss the concern with the classroom teacher, school nurse, or the Principal/CEO or lead administrator depending on the type of issue. A classroom issue is best addressed to the teacher, while a school-wide concern should be addressed to the Principal/CEO or lead administrator.

If the informal discussion does not resolve the concern, then the parent should file a written complaint with the lead administrator who will investigate the matter and report the findings to the parent.

If the findings of the lead administrator do not result in a satisfactory conclusion of the matter, the parent should address the matter in writing to the President of the Board of Trustees who will assign the matter to a committee of the Board to investigate and prepare recommendations for the full Board's consideration.

# ON CAMPUS PROCEDURES

## School Hours

- All students should arrive promptly at 8am.
- **Grades K-12** will begin formal instruction at 8:10am and end at 3:00pm.
- **K-12 arriving after 8:10 are considered late and must be walked into the school by a parent and signed in at the office.**
- All students not riding the bus should be picked up by an approved adult at 3pm.
- Buses will depart at 3pm and will dismiss first (before parent pick-up).

## Accessing school property

- *[Reserved for pick-up/drop-off information at new location]*

## Drop-off and pick-up

Student safety is a top priority at SCS. It is important that parents and students comply with the following drop-off and pick-up procedures at all times to ensure the safety of all students.

### Arrival

- An SCS employee will always be stationed at the entrance to receive students in the morning and release students in the afternoon.
- Parents should park and walk their student(s) to meet the employee at the entrance of the school.
- No children should ever walk through the parking lot alone. Children under the age of seven must have their hand held by an adult while walking in the parking lot.

### Departure

- During dismissal, buses will be granted priority.
- Once buses have left the property, all other students will be dismissed.
- Parents/adults picking up their children should park in the designated lot and walk to the school entrance to retrieve their children.

- Any parents/guardians that will be picking up their child(ren) from school at dismissal time on a regular basis must notify the office to ensure it is noted and accounted for.

### **Alternative Arrival and Pick-up Arrangements**

- Parents must call or send a note or email to the school if their child(ren) are being picked up by someone else or not riding their scheduled bus.
- Please use [*insert attendance email address*] for any pick-up instructions or changes.
- Please advise anyone picking up your child that they will be asked to show federal or state issued identification before we will release your child to them.
- Should we suspect that any person picking up a student, parent or otherwise, is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the authorities will be immediately notified, and the child will be held at the school until they arrive.
- Daily updates or changes in pick up plans must be received **no later than 2pm.**

## **BUSING AND TRANSPORTATION**

- Students residing in East Stroudsburg, Pocono Mountain, Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley school districts may receive transportation services directly from their respective school district.
- Parents who wish to send their child(ren) on the bus should notify both the SCS office and their respective transportation department as soon as possible.
- SCS will follow its own inclement weather closures and delays. Please ensure you are signed up for text or email alerts from the school.

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM**

SCS will use a text message system to communicate with parents throughout the school year in regard to inclement weather delays or closings and in regard to other important notifications.

Please see sign up instructions for this system to be distributed during the first weeks of school.



## **ABSENCES & TRUANCY**

Regular attendance is an important component to learning continuity. However, parents should think carefully about sending children to school who do not feel well or may be contagious. Please refer to the Illness Policy on the next page.

In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, students will be expected to attend school on scheduled school days. The Summit School Board of Trustees directs the Principal/CEO or his/her designee to enforce student attendance and respond to issues surrounding student attendance, including truancy, in accordance with the law.

A student absence is considered excused under the following circumstances:

- A death in the student's family.
- Student illness or injury with a doctor's note to the school within 24 hours.
- Student medical appointments. Parents should do their best to schedule medical appointments outside of school time. If an appointment must be scheduled during the school day, the student should not be absent for the entire day. It is expected that the student will come to school before and/or after the appointment.
- Religious observance.
- Educational opportunities with prior approval from the Principal/CEO.
- Attendance at Court proceedings with prior notification to the school.
- If the student is dismissed from school during school hours for health-related reasons by the School Nurse or School Administrator.
- For the purpose of obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.
- If a student whose parent or legal guardian has been called to military duty for, is on leave from, or is immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, with regard to school attendance, tests, and extra-curricular or co-curricular activities, at the discretion of the Principal/CEO or his or her designee, no penalties shall be imposed for absences of up to five (5) days. Teachers shall assist students in making up work caused by such absences.
- If the student is participating in an event in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a notice

in advance of the absence indicating the date, location, and time of the event.

- If the student is absent due to participation in a project sponsored by an organization that is eligible to apply for a grant under the Pennsylvania Agricultural Fair Act.

Absences for any other reason will generally be considered to be unexcused absences. Students are considered absent if they do not report to their assigned location for alternative instruction in the event of an out-of-school suspension.

All absences shall be considered unexcused absences until the appropriate School personnel receives written notice documenting a valid reason for the absence. However, the fact that a parent/guardian has written an excuse does not mean that the absence is deemed excused. Written notices of absences are subject to review by School Administration.

**When absences occur, it is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to provide a written note or email correspondence to the appropriate School contact [*insert attendance email address*], regarding the reason for the absence.**

A School staff member will call the student's house or parent's mobile phone if no call or email is received.

In the case of frequent absences or absences not accompanied by a written notification, a member of the Operations staff will contact the student's parent or guardian to determine the cause of the absence(s), whether the absence was excused, and appropriate action will be taken, if needed.

Please note that work may be sent home with the child to be completed before returning to school. Further, teachers may revise student roles in ongoing projects to adapt to any prolonged absences.

Vacations during instructional time are not an excused absence pursuant to School Policy or State law. If a student will be absent for a vacation, parents must notify SCS administrative staff via email, phone, or note at least two weeks prior to travel.

SCS is responsible for reporting cases when a student has been absent for three days, or their equivalent, without a lawful excuse. SCS complies with all public truancy laws.

Please note that work may be sent home with the child to be completed before returning to school. Further, teachers may revise student roles in ongoing projects to adapt to any prolonged absences.

### **Three (3) Unexcused Absences**

If your child has three (3) or more unexcused absences in the current school year, he/she is considered *truant*. The school will send a letter home notifying you of the three (3) or more unexcused absences within 10 days. The school will make a report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The letter notifying you of the three (3) or more unexcused absences:

- Shall include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant as that term is understood by law;
- Shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the parent;
- **May** include the offer of a school attendance improvement conference.

When the aforementioned notice is transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, such notice shall also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent if the parent's mailing address is on file with the School and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by Court Order.

In accordance with the law, the School will not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or transfer for truant behavior.

### **Six (6) Unexcused Absences**

If your child has six (6) or more unexcused absences in the current school year, he/she is considered to be *habitually truant*. When this occurs, the School shall refer the child to either of the following:

- The SAP (Student Assistance Program) team whereby a school employee will contact you to schedule a phone or in-person conference. In collaboration with you, the school team will complete a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) in order to attempt interventions to prevent further absences; or

- A community-based attendance improvement program; or
- A county child and youth agency for services.

In addition, the School may file a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the child.

### **Eight (8) Unexcused Absences**

If your child has eight (8) or more unexcused absences in the current school year, he/she is very close to the ten unexcused absences that would warrant even more intensive intervention. At this threshold, you will receive a letter providing notice that you are close to reaching 10 unexcused absences.

### **Ten (10) Unexcused Absences**

If your child has ten (10) or more unexcused absences in the current school year, the school’s SAP team will review the existing SAIP and will decide about the appropriate next step, which could include:

- Mandatory in-person student/family conference to review SAIP. Plan could include accessing academic and social/health supports from the school and community organizations, an outline of the family and student responsibilities, and levels of performance monitoring that include rewards and consequences.
- Conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment for truancy (with parent/guardian written permission)
- Referral to the District Attorney’s office for services, which may include addressing family issues that may be responsible for the child’s truant behavior, or possible adjudication as a “dependent” child under the Juvenile Act.
- Sending a citation to the appropriate magisterial judge

### **Ten (10) Consecutive Absences**

If a student is absent for 10 consecutive days, SCS must drop the student from active membership unless a legal excuse is provided or if the school is pursuing compulsory attendance prosecution. In the event the student returns to SCS, he or she is not guaranteed placement in the same classroom previously attended before the withdrawal from attendance. According to the above timeline, the family would have received at least two written notifications by mail that their child is close to reaching this total

# ILLNESS

## Illness Policy

For the protection of all children and staff, please keep your child home if he or she has:

- A fever. A child should stay home until he/she has a normal temperature for 24 hours.
- An unusual rash that may be a symptom of a contagious illness.
- A contagious illness such as measles, mumps, roseola, or chicken pox.
- An eye infection with discharge or that is unusually red. After being examined by a physician and placed on medication (as needed), your child may return.
- An ear or throat infection. Once examined, medicated (as needed), and comfortable, your child may return.
- A cold. Your child should stay home until the symptoms of a cold such as coughing, sneezing, watery eyes and thick, green mucous secretions have subsided.
- Diarrhea and/or symptoms of the flu. A child who has been vomiting, has had diarrhea and/or complains of a headache often gets even worse at school.
- A persistent, hacking cough and/or rapid or labored breathing.
- Head lice and/or nits (lice eggs) on the shafts of the hair. Your child may return to school once all head lice and nits are removed.

Please assess the comfort of your child before leaving for school. If your child has been listless, complains of a headache or is pale, this may be a good day to stay home. (You may lightly homeschool or take the day to rest up!)

## Communicating Illness

- Please email [*insert attendance email address*] if you keep your child home and leave the following information: child's name, teacher's name and specific illness, i.e. cold, flu, etc.
- You may also call the school at (570) 664-1229 (with the same information) but an email is preferable, as it is pushed out to our entire staff and helps us to be more organized.
- It is very helpful for the staff to be aware of illnesses present among children. Please keep emergency information (including updated phone numbers and addresses) current. You will be contacted if your child becomes ill at school.

## **HEALTH & MEDICATIONS**

A full-time school nurse will be provided. She/he is mainly in-charge of routine screenings (hearing, sight, height, weight) and to ensure SCS maintains adequate health records of its students.

### **Accidents**

Children will receive immediate attention after a minor accident or illness and SCS staff will inform parents of any such accidents at the end of the school day. In the event of a serious illness or accidents, SCS will arrange for immediate medical attention, including transportation to the nearest medical center. Parents will be contacted immediately in such an event.

### **Medicine**

The Board of Trustees strongly encourages that prescription and non-prescription medicines needed by students be administered at home under the supervision of their parents or guardians and physician or licensed medical provider whenever possible. However, the Board recognizes that some students require medication during the school day and/or during school-sponsored activities.

The School will permit the administration of prescription and non-prescription medications during school and/or school sponsored activities and events when this policy is followed. The School's policy on medicine shall be interpreted consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Whenever a student has a Section 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program ("IEP"), that Plan or Program shall supersede this policy to the extent it contains different and/or more detailed provisions than those set forth in this policy.

Except as provided in this policy or as specifically provided for in a student's Section 504 plan or IEP, no student shall be allowed to keep medications on his/her person or in a locker or bookbag. Students who possess and/or take medications in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline.

Unless otherwise specified in a Section 504 plan or IEP, any medication, prescription or nonprescription, that a student must take during school must be brought by a parent/guardian or designee, in its original packaging, to the nurse's office immediately upon entering the building so that it may be transferred to a secure location under the supervision of the school nurse and maintained with the proper forms and instructions. Medications presented to an individual other than the school nurse, presented in a container other than the original container, or provided without sufficient necessary physician's instructions where required, shall not be accepted.

No medications, prescription or nonprescription, shall be administered to a student during the school day without the written and dated consent of the student's parent/guardian and specific written recommendation by the student's physician. Such written consents and specifications must be on file in the nurse's office. Copies of the Medication Authorization form may be obtained from the School. All permission forms must include written authorization and signatures from the parent/guardian and prescribing physician, as well as the following information:

1. Date;
2. Student's name;
3. Name of medication;
4. Correct dosage of medication with instructions on administration;
5. Time schedule for administration of the medication;
6. Dates the medication is to be taken, including a termination date where appropriate;
7. Possible side effects of medication and procedures to be followed if a reaction occurs;
8. Name and contact information of the recommending physician.

Requests for administration of medication that do not meet the requirements set forth above shall be denied, and such medication shall not be administered. The school nurse is responsible for approving the administration of and administering medication during the school day. If the nurse has questions about a request for medication, s/he should contact the child's physician or the school physician to clarify the physician's recommendations. Based upon the physician's recommendations or absent physician recommendations, the nurse

may refuse to administer a given medication. If this occurs, the nurse will contact the student's parent/guardian in a timely fashion.

The consent of the parent/guardian and physician will be valid only for the period specified on the consent form and in no case longer than the current school year, which shall be defined as ending August 31. No medication will be administered if its expiration date has passed or if the physician's orders have expired.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for informing the school nurse of any change in the medication needs of a student. When any change occurs, the parent/guardian must provide documentation from the prescribing physician (where applicable) to the nurse's office.

Emergency medications may be administered by the school nurse as per the standing orders for administration of medication issued by the school physician.

The school nurse will keep records of all medications administered. These records will include the student's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the date, and the time of the administration.

### **SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION AND SPECIFIC RULES REGARDING POSSESSION/USE OF ASTHMA INHALERS, INSULIN INJECTION DEVICES AND EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTORS**

The Board shall permit students to possess asthma inhalers, insulin injection devices and epinephrine auto-injectors and to self-administer the prescribed medication in compliance with state law and Board policy. In appropriate and necessary situations, case-by-case arrangements for self-administration of other medications may be made contingent upon physician recommendation and approval by the parent/guardian, Principal/CEO and school nurse. The school nurse may establish individualized requirements for self-administration of such medication and may revoke permission to self-administer at any time.

Permission for a student to carry and/or otherwise possess self-administered medication must be obtained by the Principal/CEO and/or the school nurse, as per this policy. Permission to carry and/or self-administer medications other than asthma inhalers, insulin injection devices and epinephrine auto-injectors



shall be granted only in very select situations where possession and/or self-administration is deemed by the school nurse to be necessary and appropriate.

Before a student may possess or use an asthma inhaler, insulin device or epinephrine auto-injector during school hours, the Board shall require all of the following:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian that the school complies with the order of the physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring the medication is taken and relieving the School and its employees of responsibility for the benefits or consequences of the prescribed medication.
3. A written statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant that states:
  - a. Name of the drug.
  - b. Prescribed dosage.
  - c. Times medication is to be taken.
  - a. Length of time medication is prescribed.
  - b. Diagnosis or reason medication is needed, unless confidential.
  - c. Potential serious reaction or side effects of medication.
  - d. Emergency response.
  - e. If a child is qualified and able to self-administer the medication.

The student shall be made aware that the asthma inhaler, insulin injection device or epinephrine auto-injector is intended for his/her use only and may not be shared with other students.

The student shall notify the school nurse immediately following each use of an asthma inhaler, insulin injection device or epinephrine auto-injector.

Violations of this policy by a student shall result in immediate confiscation of the asthma inhaler and medication and loss of privileges.

A written request for student use of an asthma inhaler, insulin injection device and/or epinephrine auto-injector shall be submitted annually, along with required written statements from the parent/guardian and an updated prescription.

The School reserves the right to require a statement from a licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant for the continued use of a medication at any time.

### **Self-Administration Requirements**

A student who meets the requirements for the possession and/or administration of a medication in the school setting must demonstrate to the school nurse the capability and competency for self-administration and responsible behavior in use of the medication. It shall be the responsibility and right of the school nurse to determine competency for self-administration, and such determination shall be based on the student's age, cognitive function, maturity and demonstration of responsible behavior. Permission to carry and/or self-administer medication may be revoked at any time by the school nurse.

To self-administer any medication, the student must be able to:

1. Respond to and visually recognize his/her name.
2. Identify his/her medication.
3. Demonstrate the ability to properly handle the medication (if permitted to carry).
4. Demonstrate the proper technique for self-administering medication, including measuring and dosing.
5. Demonstrate the ability to document the administration of medication accurately and reliably.
6. Sign his/her medication sheet to acknowledge having taken the medication.
7. Demonstrate competency and understanding of the nature of the medication and potential risks of improper dosing, including overdosing, under-dosing and missed doses.
8. Demonstrate a cooperative attitude in all aspects of self-administration.

At any time during school hours, while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity and/or during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities, students are prohibited from sharing, giving or selling medications or from using them in a manner for which it is not prescribed and/or for which the school nurse has not granted permission, as per this policy. Such actions shall be considered illegal drug use and shall be subject to discipline according to SCS policy and the Code of Conduct.

If the School denies a student's request to self-carry an asthma inhaler, insulin injection device, epinephrine auto-injector or other medication, or if the student at any time loses the privilege to carry such medication, the student's prescribed medication shall be appropriately stored at a location in close proximity to the student. The student's classroom teachers shall be informed as to where the medication is stored and the means by which the medication can be accessed. The School shall annually notify parents/guardians and students of this policy.

The School shall annually inform staff, students and parents/guardians about the School's policy and procedures governing student possession and use of asthma inhalers, insulin injection devices and epinephrine auto-injectors.

When an asthma inhaler, insulin injection device or epinephrine auto-injector is initially brought to school by a student, the school nurse shall be responsible for the following:

1. Obtain the required written request and statements from the parent/guardian and physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant, which shall be kept on file in the office of the school nurse.
2. Review pertinent information with the student and/or parent/guardian, specifically the information contained on the statement submitted by the physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
3. Determine the student's ability to self-administer medication and the need for care and supervision.
4. Determine the student's ability to self-administer medication and the need for care and supervision.
5. Maintain an individual medication log for all students possessing asthma inhalers, insulin injection devices, or epinephrine auto-injectors.

### **Administration of Medication on Field Trips and/or During School-Sponsored Activities**

The Principal/CEO or his/her designee shall develop guidelines for the administration of medication on field trips and/or during school-sponsored activities. Such guidelines shall be in conformity with Chapter 15, Section 504 and the ADA and shall ensure nondiscrimination against students with disabilities

# SECURITY & SAFETY

SCS has adopted a comprehensive School Safety Plan. Periodic Drills will be conducted to practice various responses to emergency situations throughout the school year. Students must take these exercises seriously. Behaviors that distract from the successful completion of these drills will result in disciplinary action.

## Campus Security Measures

- During school hours, parents and visitors are permitted use of the Main School Entrance only.
- All doors will remain locked on the outside of the building during normal school hours.
- Cameras monitor and record the premises, inside and out, at all times.

## Fire Drills

Fire Drills are held monthly. Students are expected to exit the building quickly and safely and to follow procedures as directed by teachers and staff.

## Building Lock Down

In the event that an incident creates a potential threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students and staff, a Lock Down may be called. Lock Down is a response that indicates something serious has happened, is in the process of happening, or may happen. It is imperative that all students follow the directives provided by school personnel during a lockdown. In the event of a Lock Down, parents will be provided with information as soon as possible.

## Emergency Contact Information

It is imperative that parents/guardians provide the school with a **current** list of phone numbers, including those for relatives/friends who can provide transportation home if there is an incident at school or if their child becomes ill.

# **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

## **OUTSIDE AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

- SCS addresses individual needs through its innovative project-based curriculum, which allows for interest driven learning.
- Students work at their own pace as well as on their own level of achievement.
- SCS recognizes that, at times, the involvement of outside support is essential to the continued attainment of learning in certain individuals.
- Outside agencies/support may include parents/caregivers, local behavioral health/home health agencies as well as other community resources.
- The mission and purpose of our school will be the thread that holds our collaboration together. Therefore, outside support agencies will be required to follow the rules and regulations determined by the Board of Trustees, Principal/CEO, as well as other staff.
- It is our hope to provide every single student with the best possible support that will enable and provide sustainable learning in order to achieve the highest possible level in academia.

The SCS is committed to providing a quality education to children with disabilities appropriate to their needs, abilities, and interests and that complies with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to the education of students with disabilities enrolled in charter schools.

SCS will have an open enrollment policy: any eligible public school student in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can attend. The school will not discriminate in its admissions policies or practices on the basis of geography, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a student with a disability, test scores, disabilities, etc.

The SCS recognizes that each student is unique, talented, and a critical member of the school community, regardless of his or her level of ability. The school is a student-focused organization that respects individual talent, fosters diversity and innovation across the organization, and strives for the achievement of goals in every aspect of its operations.

The school will comply with all applicable Federal and State legal requirements, including Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code “Charter School And

Cyber Charter School Services And Programs For Children With Disabilities;” applicable provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEA”), 20 U.S.C.A. § § 1400—1419 and its implementing regulations at Title 34 CFR Part 300; applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973, 29 U.S.C.A. § 794,.and its implementing regulations at 34 CFR Part 104; as well as those provisions of the Charter School Law that pertain to the education of students with disabilities, 24 P.S. §§ 17-1701-A, et. seq., and provisions of the Public School Code of 1949 incorporated therein. Special education policies that provide for further information regarding the education of students with disabilities at SCS are available on the School’s website.

## **Guidance and Counseling**

- SCS employs full time guidance counselors to support the social-emotional needs of our students and to serve as a resource for older students exploring higher education or careers.
- Students may be referred for psycho-educational testing if they are thought to have a disability and in need of specially designed instruction. Evaluations are completed by a certified school psychologist.

## **Behavior Support**

Positive rather than negative measures must form the basis of behavior support programs to ensure that all students and eligible young children shall be free from demeaning treatment, the use of aversive techniques and the unreasonable use of restraints. Behavior support programs must include research-based practices and techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student’s or eligible young child’s opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Behavior support programs and plans must be based on a functional assessment of behavior and utilize positive behavior techniques. When an intervention is needed to address problem behavior, the types of intervention chosen for a particular student or eligible young child shall be the least intrusive necessary. The use of restraints is considered a measure of last resort, only to be used after other less restrictive measures, including de-escalation techniques, in accord with this policy.

# LUNCH, SNACKS & DRINKS

## Lunch/Snacks

- Students can either buy lunch or bring in their lunch. Students can also choose to bring in a snack every day.
- SCS will participate in the free and reduced breakfast and lunch program.
- Refrigeration is NOT available to store lunches during the day. Please use ice/cold packs.
- In order to support our commitment to environmental conservation, we ask that lunches and snacks are packed in a reusable lunch box.
- To help keep our areas neat and clean, please consider packing a dish towel or cloth napkin to be used as a personal placemat, particularly for younger students.
- Students may also choose to use a thermos to keep lunches and snacks warm.
- Reusable water bottles or thermoses should be sent for use throughout the day and can be refilled at the school as needed.
- Whenever possible, pack reusable napkins and utensils to reduce waste.
- **Due to food allergies, there will be no food sharing among students.**
- In an effort to help guide the appropriate amount of food for each student, we will attempt to have students return home with all uneaten food.

## Food Guidance

- We ask that parents do not send candy, soda, or food that is not conducive to a productive learning environment.
- Please make every attempt to pack nutritious food.
- No carbonated or sugary beverages.
- Only refillable water bottles will be allowed outside of lunch and can be refilled throughout the day at the water fountains.

## Food Allergies

- You will be notified if children in the class have allergies that the class should be aware of.
- These children's parents take the ultimate responsibility for their child's safety by providing their own lunches, snacks, and treats for their children, but your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

- Nut safe tables will be provided during meal times.
- **Please remind your child not to share food at school! If an extreme allergy is present, your teacher may ask that you avoid packing certain foods in your child's lunch to avoid exposure.**

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

As a community-focused school, we are especially sensitive to children's feelings about celebrations and parties. We want all children to feel celebrated and appreciated in the community meetings we hold. With that in mind, for out-of-school parties, when the entire class is not invited, please mail invitations to the invited children's homes rather than deliver them at school.

Our students have discussed and voted on options for celebrating birthdays at school. Each student is able to choose from a variety of ways to celebrate as we approach their birthday. If their celebration of choice includes food at school, we encourage you to be inclusive, as it strengthens our community. Allergies and food sensitivities are a prevalent part of children's lives today. Please contact the school or reach out directly to other parents to gather more information about specific student dietary restrictions.

Should a student have a summer birthday, we will celebrate his/her half birthday at school, so all students may be recognized throughout the school year.



# DRESS CODE POLICY

## Dress Code

- SCS students are not required to wear uniforms.
- The school will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices disrupts the educational program of the school or constitutes a health or safety hazard.
  - Students should not wear anything distracting, vulgar, offensive, or anything inappropriately revealing.

## A Movement-Rich Environment

- We want clothing to support our learning and development goals for each child, rather than limit them.
- Students should wear comfortable clothing that allows for movement throughout the day, inside and outside.

## Footwear

- Sneakers that light up, flash, or roll on wheels are not allowed, as they are a distraction to others.
- Flip-flops are discouraged and, if worn, are only allowed indoors during the warm-weather months.
- Slippers can be kept at school for kids to wear during the day if they wish. Please label them with your child's name.

## Outdoor Wear

- In the winter months, we may occasionally ask that parents send snow pants and boots to school for outdoor warmth and play.
- Gloves and hats should be brought to school or an extra pair left in book bags for outdoor warmth and play.

## Other Notes on Student Dress

- Please be sure your child is dressed for whatever weather can be expected throughout the day. In fall and spring months, layering may be particularly necessary. Students are welcome to leave sweaters/sweatshirts at school, so they are available when needed.
- Occasionally, a student may need a change of clothes for a myriad of unpredictable reasons. Please don't doubt this! We've had kids fall and end up with mud from neck to ankle. You name it; we've seen it.
  - **Please pack a full change of clothes for all students in grades K-2 to be left at school.**
  - If a student requires a new set of clothes and does not have them at school, parents will be called to bring a new set or pick up their child.
- Please **clearly label** each clothing/footwear item brought to school with your child's first/last name.
- Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, technical education, extracurricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to ensure the health or safety of the student and this will be communicated to parents as those needs arise.
- Often, students will be asked to wear SCS t-shirts when we are offsite on field trips, etc.
- Should it be necessary, the Principal/CEO will address individual concerns.

## SCS School-issued T-Shirts

ALL Students are required to own a school-issued SCS t-shirt, so it can be worn on days when we are offsite. This allows us to easily identify students in crowds and unfamiliar surroundings. Reminder notices from the School will be sent out whenever these t-shirts must be worn by students.

# TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

We are pleased to offer our students access to the school's computer network. Access to the Internet and e-mail enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world.

## Technology Policy Fast Facts

1. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access undesirable materials as well. Individual users of the computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over these networks and must comply with school standards. Beyond the clarification of such standards, SCS is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, or controlling the communications of individuals utilizing the network.
2. To protect the integrity of technology systems and the users against unauthorized or improper use of these systems, the school reserves the right, without notice, to limit or restrict any individual's use, and to inspect, copy, remove, or delete any unauthorized use of this technology upon authorization of the Principal/CEO or his or her designee.
3. Students are prohibited from using technology for any unauthorized or unlawful purpose. Using technology to send, save, view, forward, or create harassing or offensive content or message is strictly prohibited. Offensive material includes, but is not limited to pornographic, obscene, or sexual material or comments, jokes, or images that would violate the school policies. The school policies against harassment and discrimination apply to the use of technology.
4. Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored. The following are some of the actions that are not permitted, and violations may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action, including expulsion.
  - a. Any attempt to guess passwords, break in to other accounts, or gain unauthorized access to administrator accounts
  - b. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures

- c. Using obscene language
- d. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
- e. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks
- f. Violating copyright laws
- g. Using another's password
- h. Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- i. Intentionally wasting limited resources
- j. Employing the network for commercial purposes

## **Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

A comprehensive Acceptable Use of Communication and Information Systems Policy will be provided to and acknowledged by each parent, student, employee, and guest of SCS.

## **School issued computers & technology devices**

It is our vision at SCS to allow all students to access a computer daily and to increase technology opportunities for all students.

- All kindergarten through second grade students will have shared access to computers or iPads during the school day.
- All students from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up will be issued a Chromebook, laptop, or other personal device.
- Teachers will utilize other additional forms of technology in the classroom.

It is imperative that, if taken home, students bring their personal device to school daily, fully charged, for the benefit of their learning.

A comprehensive Student Laptop and School Issued Technology Device Handbook will be provided to and acknowledged by each parent and student.

- It is important that parents and students read carefully and understand this policy, as they may be financially liable for the loss, theft, or damage to laptops and technology provided by the school.

# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Students and Parents understand that bullying of any kind and in any manner is unacceptable at SCS and can be grounds for removal from school. Students agree to comply with our anti-bullying policy and understand the consequences of actions related to bullying.

## **Summit Charter School Anti - Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy**

Updated: 11.13.19

### **Purpose**

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students at SCS. The Board recognizes that bullying and intimidation have a negative effect on school climate, students who are intimidated and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success, and bullying can lead to more serious violence. Therefore, it shall be the policy of SCS to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and harassment, in any form, are not tolerated.

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits all forms of harassment and bullying of students by all SCS students. This policy will deal with issues of bullying.

### **Definitions**

Bullying, including cyberbullying, means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is a pattern of abuse over time and involves a student being "picked on." Bullying can take many forms and can include many different behaviors, including, but not limited to, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation and threat of violence.

**Bullying** includes physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation. A bullying situation creates an imbalance of power in a relationship. Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

**Contractor** – Any individual who, by contractual agreement with SCS, provides a program, activity or service to SCS and has or may have direct contact with children during the course of his/her providing such program, activity, or service.

**Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technological tool and includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings, including blogs. All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of SCS, offenders shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences.

**School Employee** – Any individual employed by SCS who provides a program, activity or service sponsored by SCS and has or may have direct contact with children during the course of his/her employment.

**Volunteer** – Any adult individual holding an unpaid position with SCS and who is responsible for the welfare of one or more children or has direct contact with children.

**School setting** – in an SCS building, on SCS grounds, in an SCS vehicle, at a designated SCS bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by SCS.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The SCS Board of Trustees, each SCS employee, volunteer, and/or contractor shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free from all forms of bullying. Employees, volunteers, and contractors who observe an act of bullying shall take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to the employee's, volunteer's, or contractor's safety.

Employees, volunteers, and contractors who become aware of an act of bullying shall promptly report it pursuant to the procedure set forth in this policy.

Incidents should be reported to the Principal/CEO. In the Principal/CEO's absence, incidents should be reported to the Operations Manager and copied to the President and Vice President of the Board of Trustees.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students, to ensure the rights of his/her fellow students, and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying. The Board expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to the Principal/CEO for further investigation. Any student who retaliates against another person for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences.

The Principal/CEO or designee shall ensure that this policy is reviewed annually with students. Students shall be informed that they may choose to report bullying complaints to school employees, volunteers, and/or contractors.

The Principal/CEO or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.

Principal/CEO shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:

1. Board's Bullying Policy.
2. Report of bullying incidents.
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

## **Discrimination/Discriminatory Harassment**

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination and discriminatory harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Title IX Compliance Officer ("Compliance Officer"). If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination or discriminatory harassment are identified, the Compliance Officer shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.

## **Retaliation**

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, to the best extent possible, consistent with the School's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good-faith reports of bullying.

## **Guidelines**

An SCS Student & Family Handbook, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students and parents, in which student expectations and discipline policies can be found.

This policy shall be accessible at the "front desk/office" of the school, in every classroom, on the School's website, and by contacting the Principal/CEO.

## **Complaint Procedure**

1. A student shall report a complaint of bullying, orally or in writing, to a school employee, volunteer and/or contractor, who shall inform the student of his/her rights and of the complaint process. The school employee, volunteer and/or contractor must report the problem within twenty-four (24) hours to the Principal/CEO, who shall verify that the student was informed of his/her rights and of the complaint process. If the Principal/CEO is the subject of a complaint, school employee shall report the complaint directly to the Board President. The Operations/Administrative staff of SCS should be informed of every incident and follow up action taken.
2. The Principal/CEO shall immediately conduct a prompt, impartial, thorough, and confidential investigation of the alleged bullying behavior.
3. All actions of students and staff shall be documented on the SCS Discipline Tree by both school staff and the Principal/CEO.
4. Parents of both the offending and offended students will be called and notified of the behavior/circumstances on the same day of an incident whenever a physical action has taken place.
5. The Principal/CEO or designee shall summarize the investigation as per school procedures, recommending disposition of the complaint.



6. If the investigation results in a substantiated charge of bullying, the Principal/CEO will inform parents/guardians of the victim and the person accused, and SCS shall take prompt corrective action to ensure the bullying ceases and will not recur. Such action may include, but is not limited to, redirecting behavior, counseling, change of seating, change of class or schedule, other methods for separation of the accused and complainant, suspension, or expulsion.
7. If it is concluded that a student has made false accusations, such student may be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the SCS Student & Family Handbook and other applicable board policies.

For bullying occurring outside of the School setting, the School shall take appropriate disciplinary action to the extent permitted by applicable law.

### **Appeal Procedure**

If the complainant or accused is not satisfied with the Principal/CEO's decision, s/he may file a written appeal to the Board.

### **Education**

SCS may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide SCS staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in, and reporting incidents of bullying.

### **Response for Violations**

A substantiated charge against an SCS student shall subject such student to actions consistent with expected behaviors set forth in the Student & Family Handbook and any other applicable Board policies.

- A parent conference
- Justice Committee proceedings
- Counseling
- Therapy
- Loss of school privileges
- Involuntary transfer to another classroom or school bus
- Exclusion from school-sponsored activities
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement officials
- Any other appropriate consequences as determined by School personnel

Depending on the severity of the incident, the Principal/CEO may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing staff support for students as necessary; reporting incidents to law enforcement, if appropriate; and developing a supervision plan with the parents/guardians.

### **2021-22 Email Contact Information for complaints:**

Principal/CEO: Katherine Hernandez

*[Insert email address]*

Office Manager: *[Insert Name]*

*[Insert email address]*

Board President: Jennifer Olson

*[Insert email address]*

Board Vice President: Stacie Golin (Moore)

*[Insert email address]*

### **Family Services**

For families who wish to consider private counseling or therapy, information regarding family-based mental health services, as well as other counseling services, is available from the Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services (CMPMHMR) Office. The contact information for that office is as follows:

#### **Mental Health and Developmental Services – Monroe County**

732 Phillips Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360

(570) 420-1900

<http://www.cmpmhm.com/>

24/7 Mental Health Crisis Hotline

800-338-6467

Any/all private/outside counseling shall be at the expense of the family. The School encourages parents/guardians to notify the School if their child is receiving outside counseling.

## **General Statement of Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of SCS not to discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or any other legally protected classification under the provision of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and any other applicable federal or state laws.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

Qualified students are eligible for admission regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religious creed, disability or use of a guide or support animal because of the blindness, deafness or physical handicap of the user or because the user is a handler or trainer of support or guide animals, or any other status protected under applicable federal or Pennsylvania law. SCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religious creed, disability or use of a guide or support animal because of the blindness, deafness or physical handicap of the user or because the user is a handler or trainer of support or guide animals, or any other status protected under federal or Pennsylvania law, in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

SCS is committed to providing equal opportunity in all programs and services, including admissions, and to compliance with all applicable laws.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

SCS Board members understand the importance of establishing a fair and equitable criterion for student admissions and shall fully comply with all applicable state and federal laws.

Summit School of the Poconos is a tuition-free public charter school operating in the state of Pennsylvania.

### **Bilateral fit - Student and School:**

In order to ensure that parents and students who express interest in attending our School understand and are interested in the specific school culture we provide, we will continue to meet with prospective parents/guardians to further explain what makes us different. Prospective students will continue to be invited to spend time in the classroom for the same purpose.

Parents and their children should understand the importance of interest in project-based learning and participation in our democratic and civic-centered culture. Time spent with prospective parents and students will serve to educate potential students and parents alike on the particular learning style the school will utilize. Parents will need to know that EVERY child will participate in hands on projects on a weekly, if not daily basis. EVERY student is required to participate in our democratic functions such as School Meeting, JC, and restorative practices.

The meeting will not serve as a basis for acceptance, but to more appropriately to introduce families to our school and to ensure that the SCS is the proper fit for the student.

### **Application for Enrollment:**

Parents of children interested in enrolling at SCS will be given the opportunity to apply for admission to the lottery. The date that the lottery opens and will be determined by the school administration each year and will be posted in the school office, announced at several public board meetings as well as on the school's web site. Information may also be distributed via social media and

through local media outlets. The charter school will also provide a courtesy notice to the authorizer.

Parents of children interested in applying for admission must complete and return an accurate application form to the school's main office by the deadline provided by the school.

The SCS will enroll students without prejudice of any kind for any reason, including a special education need. There will be no eligibility criteria to enroll in the School; information regarding disabilities, special needs, IEPs, etc., will not be required as part of the enrollment process. The only criteria are that the students are residents of Pennsylvania, that their parent/guardian can verify residency in accordance with PDE School Enrollment requirements, and that the student is eligible for a grade level provided by the school.

Parents/guardians must complete the School's student enrollment process to demonstrate their intent to enroll their child in the School. All enrollment procedures will comply with the PA Charter School Law and the PDE Enrollment BEC, including public announcement of timelines, deadlines, notification, lotteries, and waiting lists.

Students who reside in the Pocono Mountain School District will receive preference as stipulated in the Charter School Law. Children of a parent who actively participated in the development of the School will receive preference as stipulated in the charter school law. After the launch year of the School, siblings of currently enrolled students will receive preference as stipulated in the charter school law. The School will implement a student information system for maintaining student enrollment information as required in 1730-A of the Charter School Law.

As per Section 1723-A, SCS will be open to all students statewide on a space available basis and will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district. Students must meet minimum/maximum age requirements and will be subject to Pennsylvania current age restrictions for public school admission and funding or qualify for an exception as noted in state regulations.

For students in Kindergarten, SCS will enroll students who meet the admission age that is determined by their resident school district, but generally are age five by September 1st. SCS will follow 24 P.S. § 13-1304, Admission of Beginners, which states, *“Admission shall be limited to beginners who have attained the age of four years and seven months before the first day of September if they are to be admitted in the fall, and to those who have attained the age of five years and seven months before the first day of February if they are to be admitted at the beginning of the second semester.”*

For students in first grade, SCS will enroll students who are six years old on or before September 1st in the school year for which they are enrolling. As per 22 Pa. Code Section 11.12 the maximum age for high school students is 21 years of age. Specific state requirements for enrollment eligibility will be available for interested families on the school’s website. The school will abide by all federal, state, and local policies and guidelines for student admission and will not impose admission requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. The school will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act as well as Every Student Succeeds Act regarding homeless students. Students who meet the definition of homeless shall not be barred from enrolling due to lack of required documents. The lead school administrator will serve as the liaison for homeless students.

Documentation such as a birth certificate, proof of residency, and immunizations and other health records are required prior to the start of school.

Parents and legal guardians of new students are required to provide proof of residency acceptable to the school prior to admission. Acceptable documentation proving residency includes a current and valid driver’s license with photograph or a current and valid Department of Transportation photo identification card AND one (1) of the following original documents:

1. Current utility bill (electricity, public water, public sewer, natural gas, cable television, or land-line telephone), dated within the last 45 days;
2. Current deed to primary residence;
3. Current lease of primary residence;
4. Property tax bill for the primary residence the most current tax cycle;
5. Most recent real estate mortgage statement for primary residence;
6. Homeowner’s insurance policy for primary residence for the current policy period;

7. Copy of a state or federal program enrollment with address, including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Children's Health Insurance Program, etc.;
8. Voter registration card.

All documentation proving residency must match. The name of the parent/guardian and the primary address of the student provided on the student admission paperwork must match the photo identification and secondary source document that is provided.

Students who live with someone other than a biological parent are required to provide documentation proving legal custody and physical residency, no later than the new student/parent orientation. A student residing with someone other than a parent may qualify for enrollment if the requirements of 24 PS 13-1302 are met, and the responsible adult provides a signed affidavit, proof of residency, and proof that they are supporting the child gratis. Students whose parents/guardians fail to provide proof of residency and legal custody acceptable to school administration at or prior to the new student/parent orientation will not be guaranteed admission and will lose any preference in enrollment.

SCS reserves the right to require a student to withdraw from the school if it is later determined that a student has been enrolled at SCS under false pretenses (fraudulent address to gain preference, fraudulent documentation to obtain sibling preference, etc.). By completing the enrollment process, parents certify the information and documentation they provide the school is true and accurate.

### **Enrollment Preference Hierarchy:**

As permitted by the Pennsylvania's charter school law, SCS will give preference in admission to the following categories of students, so long as there is availability:

1. SCS students who are founders of the SCS, which includes existing and former students of Summit School of the Poconos and Founding Coalition Members).
2. Future children of parents who actively participate in the development of the charter school, including children of SCS employees and Board Members.
3. Siblings of students currently enrolled in the school. For the purpose of this policy, a sibling is defined as a child who is related to an



- existing student by blood or adoption, or legal guardianship and who share a legal tie to at least one common parent;
4. Students residing in the Pocono Mountain School District<sup>1</sup> (the school district in which the School is located);
  5. Students residing outside the Pocono Mountain School District (all other school districts within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania).

## **Student/Parent Orientation**

SCS will host at least one new student/parent orientation to provide additional information and to finalize student enrollment. The student who is enrolling and at least one parent/guardian (both are recommended to participate) should attend the new student/parent orientation to complete the enrollment process.

A public lottery, if necessary, will be publicly announced in a newspaper of general circulation as well the Schools' website at least one week prior to the lottery being held. Lottery information will be made available in multiple languages. The charter school will also provide notice to Pocono Mountain School District as to the date of the lottery.

The initial lottery will be conducted by the School, after charter status approval and prior to the first day of school under the charter, and in March of the subsequent years in preparation for fall enrollment. This is only applicable should enrollment interest exceed the number of available slots in any grade after the School grants preferred enrollment using the enrollment preference hierarchy mentioned above.

The school will utilize an electronic system in order to select the names and each student will be assigned a number, rather than be drawn with name. All applicants will be put into grade-level batches and drawn by the lottery software. The order in which the names are drawn creates the list for enrollment and the wait-list.

All families who submitted application forms for the lottery are informed in writing of the results. Students whose names are drawn to fill the grade openings will be provided with registration materials with accommodations made for English Language Learners and those eligible under McKinney/Vento. The

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<sup>1</sup>

school will also contact the family by phone and/or email and will inform them of the deadlines established for the completion of the enrollment process and orientation workshops. The following additional documentation is required for enrollment:

- Student Application
- Student Enrollment Notification Form
- Immunization and medical forms as required by law
- Family Information sheet
- Permission for Field trips form
- Emergency Contact form
- Photo and video authorization or denial form
- Signed and dated Family Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Student & Families Handbook
- Student Transportation Plan Form

If there is no response from the family within the established deadline, they will relinquish their spot and SCS will contact the family of the next student on the waiting list. When openings occur, wait-listed families are notified, in accordance with their pre-established ranking, and are given the opportunity to accept the space. The wait list, which is formed by the lottery, will be valid that academic year. Each year, a new lottery selection will be performed with current students remaining as students unless otherwise determined by parent / guardian communication with SCS. Students who do not get placed and still wish to enroll must submit a new application each year.

As noted in the enrollment process there are some exceptions to this process. They include that siblings of enrolled students will be given preference over other names on the wait-list. Preference will also be given to the children and grandchildren of the founders and board members during the application process.

SCS is an equal opportunity educational institution, is a non-sectarian institution in all respects, and does not discriminate against any student, employee, or other person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, or any other criteria prohibited by law. Admission criteria do not consider intellectual or athletic ability, aptitude, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry. The Student Admissions Policy will be made available to the public.

All students seeking first-time admission at SCS will be given a home language survey in accordance with the requirements of the United States Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

In compliance with federal and state guidelines under the McKinney/Vento Act, SCS is committed to removing barriers to education that face students experiencing homelessness.

## **Notice of Special Education Services and Programs**

SCS provides a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities according to state and federal rules. In accordance with Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, the Principal/CEO or his/her designee shall ensure that children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are enrolled at the charter school and are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated and a practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children with disabilities are currently receiving needed special education and related services. This is known as Child Find.

The Child Find process includes children who are suspected of having a disability under Section 300.8 of the federal regulations that implement IDEA 2004 and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade; and highly mobile children, including migrant children and homeless youth, as appropriate.

To be eligible, the child must:

- Be of school age.
- Have a disability and need specially designed instruction.
- Meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities as set forth in state and federal law:
  - autism
  - deaf-blindness

- deafness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment
- intellectual disability
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems
- specific learning disabilities
- speech or language
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairment including blindness
- developmental delay (in the case of a child that is of preschool age child)

SCS shall publish annually a written notice in means accessible to our families. Such notice must be included in the SCS Handbook and on the website. The Notice may also be made available in means accessible to the public, such as: at the Charter School's main office, in the Charter School's special education office, through local Intermediate Units and/or through other generally accessible print and electronic media deemed appropriate, and with the Board meeting minutes a description of: child identification activities, of the Charter School's special education services and programs, of the manner in which to request services and programs, and of the procedures followed by the Charter School to ensure the confidentiality of student information pertaining to students with disabilities pursuant to state and federal law.

*Identification activities* are performed to find a child who is suspected of having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education

programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called *screening* activities. The activities include review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents/guardians is also an information source for *identification*. After a child is identified as being thought to be eligible for special education services, he or she will be referred to Philadelphia Hebrew Public Charter School's multi-disciplinary team. If the multi-disciplinary team recommends/requests that a student be evaluated, written consent from a parent/guardian must be obtained. Philadelphia Hebrew Public Charter School engages in the following activities and procedures to identify students who are thought to be eligible for special education services:

1. At the start of each new school year, students will be administered assessments that gather information about their current levels of academic functioning. Assessments and data will continue to be obtained throughout the year to measure growth and to assess each students' response to instruction.
2. Teachers will receive and be trained on academic and behavioral checklists designed to identify areas of concern.
3. All students identified as a concern will be referred for regular education intervention and/or review by an Intervention Team (e.g. SAP Team).
4. All student data will be reviewed by the Student Support Team who will determine regular education interventions or referral for a full special education evaluation.
5. Anyone can make a referral if there is a concern regarding a student. This includes students, staff, and parent/guardians.

## **Outreach Activities**

The Principal/CEO or his/her designee shall ensure that the following outreach activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend SCS:

- Offer parents and family (including foster and surrogate parents) information regarding training activities and publicize the availability of such activities to all parents (trainings in the areas of behavior support, response to intervention, inclusive practices, transition, assistive technology, autism, and interagency coordination are important and parents may also be directed to PaTTAN training opportunities). Parent input is to be sought to determine what parent trainings are needed/desired;
- Provide to interested health and mental health professionals, daycare providers, county agency personnel and other interested professionals, including: professionals and agencies who work with homeless and migrant or other highly mobile youth, wards of the state, as well as to students attending private schools (where applicable), information concerning the types of special education programs and services available in and through SCS and information regarding the manner in which parents can request and access those services.
- Provide or obtain periodic training for the SCS's regular education staff and special education staff concerning the identification and evaluation of, and provision of special education programs and services to students with disabilities.
- SCS shall conduct child find activities to inform the parents of its special education services and programs and the manner in which to request them.
- SCS's child find effort must include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.
- Efforts must be made to identify enrolled students who have a native language other than English and to ensure that notices and other outreach efforts are available to them in their native language as required by law and unless it is clearly and absolutely not feasible to do so.

## **Screening**

SCS maintains a system of screening that can include but is not limited to the following activities:

- Identify and provide screening for students prior to referral for an initial special education multidisciplinary team evaluation;
- Provide peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum;
- Conduct hearing and vision screening in accordance with the Public School Code of 1949 for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education if necessary;
- Identify students who may need special education services and programs.
- Maintain the confidentiality of information in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

## **Pre-Evaluation Screening**

The pre-evaluation screening process includes:

- For students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student’s functioning in the curriculum including curriculum-based or performance-based assessments;
- For students with behavioral concerns, a systematic observation of the student’s behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty (“FBA” or functional behavior assessment);
- An intervention based on the results of the assessments conducted;
- An assessment of the student’s response to the intervention, if applicable;
- A determination of whether or not the assessed difficulties of the student are the result of a lack of instruction or limited English proficiency;

- A determination of whether or not the student's needs exceed the functional capacity of the regular education program, without special education programs and services, to maintain the student at an instructional level appropriate to the level and pace of instruction provided in that program;
- Activities designed to gain the participation of parents;
- Controls to ensure that if screening activities have produced little or no improvement within the specified timeframe after initiation, the student shall be referred for a multidisciplinary team evaluation.

The screening activities shall not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time. When the completion of screening activities prior to referral for a multidisciplinary team evaluation will result in serious mental or physical harm, or significant educational regression, to the student or others, SCS may initiate a multidisciplinary team reevaluation without completion of the screening process in accordance with Chapter 711. Whenever an evaluation is conducted without a pre-evaluation screening, the activities described shall be completed as part of that evaluation whenever possible.

## **Description of Special Education Services**

SCS is a public school and is responsible for providing appropriate special education programs and related services that are:

- provided at no cost to parents;
- provided under the authority of SCS;
- individualized to meet the educational needs of the child;
- reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and progress and designed to conform to the Individual Education Program (IEP).

Special education is designed to meet the needs of each eligible student, including specifically designed instruction conducted in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible using supplementary aids and services. Related



services available to students include transportation, corrective and other supportive services that help an eligible student benefit from special education. Examples include speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, social work services, school health services, and assistive technology services.

## **Rights and Protections**

**Prior Written Notice.** SCS must notify the parent/guardian in writing whenever it proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, educational program or placement of a child or whenever it refuses to initiate or make a change in identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement requested by a parent. Such notice must be accompanied by a written description of the reasons for the proposal or refusal, the options considered, if any, and the reason why such options were rejected.

**Consent.** SCS cannot proceed with an evaluation or with the initial provision of special education and related services without the written consent of the parent/guardian. SCS may not seek a hearing to override the refusal of a parent consent to an initial placement in special education. SCS may override the lack of consent for an initial evaluation by requesting the approval of an impartial hearing officer or judge following a hearing. If a parent/guardian fails to respond to a written request for permission to reevaluate, however, SCS may proceed with the proposed reevaluation without consent.

Protection in Evaluation Procedure: Evaluations to determine eligibility and current need for special education and related services must be administered in a manner that is free of racial, cultural, or linguistic bias. Evaluations cannot consist of a single test or assessment and testing must be a valid measure of the psychological, social, emotional or other learning characteristic or behavior that the school is using it to measure. Testing and assessment must be administered in accordance with professional standards and the criteria established by the publisher. It must be administered in the native language of the child.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student files are confidential and accessed only by authorized staff, as set forth by board-adopted policies.

### **Media Release**

- SCS may be approached with requests for interviews and pictures by print and broadcast media outlets. We also use student photos and other information on our school website, social media, in printed brochures and marketing materials, and school yearbooks.
- The school will request permission from you to give us the right to make, produce, reproduce, exhibit, distribute, publish, and transmit by means of live broadcast, videotape, photograph and print your student's name, grade, voice, picture, likeness, and actions as an individual in connection with school activities, marketing, etc. via a media release form.

***We are wishing each of you a great 2021-22!***

*“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” – William Butler Yeats*