

Stephen F. Austin State University Charter School

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http://www.sfasu.edu/charter_school



Informational Guidelines 2017-2018

Revised July 2017

Welcome to the SFA Charter School (SFACS) for the 2017-2018 school year. This handbook provides you a reference for pertinent information regarding our school and questions you may have throughout the year. We strive to provide the best education possible in a safe, supportive and nurturing school environment.

Our goal is to build a reputation for a progressive attitude and involved parents. We encourage you to partner with our school through involvement and support. We know that your commitment, combined with our outstanding faculty, will make this a satisfying year of social, emotional, and academic growth for your child.

Sincerely,
Lysa Hagan, Principal/CEO
"Axe em' Junior Jacks!"



MISSION STATEMENT

The SFACS is based on the twin goals of improving public education and enhancing educator preparation. The mission of the SFA Charter School is to create a learning environment that provides a researched based model curriculum and supports student development of autonomy, openness, problem solving, and integrity through a constructivist inquiry based curriculum. The school also serves as a Field Based Center for the James I Perkins College of Education and provides "hands-on" and observational experiences with children for university students in teacher preparation instructional programs.



SFA CHARTER SCHOOL MASCOT

The mascot of SFACS is the Junior Jack. The school colors are purple and white.



BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Breakfast is served from 7:55 AM to 8:05 AM for grades K-5. Lunch times may be found on your child's classroom schedule. The **Breakfast / Lunch price is \$3.55**. Meal payments may be made in advance in the office by the month-\$70.75, semester-\$318, or year-\$635. Notification of monthly payment amounts will go home periodically and may be found on the school website. **Delinquent lunch accounts will warrant removal from the SFA Charter School to his or her home campus and parent subjection to further university collection efforts.** Meal menus may be found on the SFACS website: http://www.sfasu.edu/charter_school.



WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

When parents wish to withdraw a child from school, they should contact the school office at least one day before the date of withdrawal. School records will be sent upon request from the new school via the TREX system.



ATTENDANCE

Regular, on time, attendance is essential to achievement. Students are expected to be in attendance for a minimum of **98%** of the school year. Perfect attendance will be recognized periodically. Attendance is checked each day at 10:00 AM. If students are missing at that time, they are recorded absent. Parents must provide written documentation for each absence and must provide a doctor's note for **3** or more consecutive days of absence. Students may be automatically withdrawn after **5** consecutive days of absence without contact from parent. **Excessive absences, late arrivals, and early departures without medically fragile documented status, will warrant removal from the SFA Charter School to his or her home campus and parents may face possible court action.** See Student Code of Conduct.



LATE ARRIVAL

Children should arrive on time every school day. Students arriving after 8:05 AM are LATE and must be signed in by a parent. Late arrivals or early departures will accrue into absences. The beginning of the day is valuable instructional time and when students are late, they not only start the day behind their peers, but disrupt the learning process already in progress in the classroom. Please make every effort to allow your child to arrive to school on time. **Excessive absences, late arrivals, and early departures without medically fragile documented status, will warrant removal from the SFA Charter School to his or her home campus and parents may face possible court action.** See Student Code of Conduct.



EARLY DEPARTURE DURING THE DAY

Early departure from school causes students to miss valuable learning time. Leaving school prior to 3:00 PM is an early departure. Any student leaving the building during school hours must be signed out in the office by a parent/guardian who is listed on the child's registration form. School personnel will not release a child to a person who is not on this form. No student is to leave the grounds without permission from the office. **Excessive absences, late arrivals, and early departures without medically fragile documented status will warrant removal from the SFA Charter School to his or her home campus and parents may face possible court action.** See Student Code of Conduct.



EARLY MORNING

The north SFACS entrance is used for student vehicle arrival and dismissal. These doors are open from 7:30 to 8:00 AM and from 3:00 to 3:30 PM. The main entrance is open from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Students in grades K-5 assemble in designated areas. The day begins at 7:45 AM with morning snacks, activities, and planning. The instructional day begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 3:05 PM. Students **MUST** be picked up by **3:30** PM unless they attend after school childcare or a school sponsored activity following the instructional day.



STUDENT DRESS

SFACS students are expected to adhere to dress and grooming standards which do not distract from learning. If at any time a student's appearance distracts from the learning environment, he or she will be asked to change the clothing, hairstyle, or grooming to be more conducive to the goal of learning. Students are expected to wear appropriate athletic shoes for PE and play. For increased safety, each student will need to wear an SFACS shirt on learning excursions/study trips.



PERSONAL ITEMS

Parent cooperation in preventing unnecessary items such as toys, radios, playing cards, CD players, electronic games, etc. from being brought to school is greatly appreciated. These interfere with the learning process. The school will not be responsible for any personal property brought to school, including jewelry. If taken away by school personnel, these items will only be returned to parents. You will be informed by the classroom teacher of dates when certain personal items would be appropriate for the learning environment.



PARENT VISITATION

Parents are encouraged to visit the SFACS throughout the year during academic times. The classroom schedule has designated times for optimal observation opportunities. Please do not expect teachers to stop instruction when parents visit. Making an appointment for a teacher conference at least a day in advance is not only a courtesy, but also enables the teacher to be fully prepared to make the most of your visit. Please sign in at the office before going to any classroom teaching area. Teachers will be happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time. Video taping other students while visiting is not allowed. Through newsletters, information will be provided on family/school partnership opportunities which will be scheduled at various times. You are encouraged to visit often during academic times of the school day.



MEDICATION

Any prescription medication, which cannot be taken at home and must be administered during school time, must be sent to the school in the **ORIGINAL LABELED CONTAINER**. A permission note, signed by Parent or Guardian allowing us to administer the medication must be completed before we give the medicine. Proper utensils for measuring and dispensing the medication must also be sent (spoon or medicine cup). The container and your notes must include: student's name, name of medicine, purpose of medication, dose, time of day when it is needed, and how the medicine is taken.



EMERGENCY CARE INFORMATION

It is very important that we have a completed registration/emergency form on file for each child. All telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and street addresses should be recorded and kept **up to date** so that a contact can be made as soon as possible in the event of an emergency. A parent will be called to pick up a student from school if injured, ill, have a 100° or above temperature. Parents are expected to pick up their child up as soon as possible. Students sent home with fever may return to school when fever-free. Students with lice should return to school after hair has been treated. The school office will release students only to individuals listed on the registration form. Special permission for someone else to pick up your child must be sent in advance and must be in writing. Parents may stop by the school office to add or delete names as appropriate. All parents should have a telephone number where they can be reached during the school day. Persons who are picking up students must provide identification.



TELEPHONE USE

The school phone is a business phone and is not used to make personal calls. Students may get permission from the teacher to use the phone in case of an emergency. If a child needs to call home due to disruptive behavior, his/her teacher or an administrator will be with the student. Students may not possess or use cell phones at school.



NEWSLETTERS AND WEBSITE

Periodic newsletters and informational notes from the school will be sent home. Please take time to read these carefully. They will contain important information to keep you current on school meetings, issues, policies and services. Weekly newsletters will keep you informed of class activities and instruction. Please discuss newsletters, notes, and reports with your child. Your child's teacher will send a Parent Communication folder home each Monday to inform you of your child's progress and important events and information. Please read carefully and respond or ask questions as necessary. Parents are also encouraged to view our website found at: http://www.sfasu.edu/charter_school .



PORTFOLIO CONFERENCES

Periodic Parent Portfolio Conferences are held throughout the school year. During these conferences the teacher will share information with parents regarding their child's TEKS based performance, work samples from the child, as well as, social emotional growth, and self-management progress of the child. Parents and teachers will partner to set goals for the child's progress at school and at home.



AFTER SCHOOL WORK

SFACS expects your child to give his or her all to learning during the school day. Students may be expected to do some homework during the school week. SFACS would like for students to have the opportunity to learn in other areas (sports, music, drama, arts) outside the school day.



EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOR

All students have a right to learn; therefore, no child is permitted to disrupt learning. School-wide rules are communicated to students. Severe disruptions would warrant an immediate Discipline Referral to an administrator. When this occurs, parents will receive copies of the form, which they will sign and return. All parents are required to sign a SFACS Code of Conduct Parent Student Acknowledgement.

SFACS school-wide rules are:

1. Listen to others
2. Respect self, others, and property
3. Make safe choices
4. Strive to always do your best



STUDY TRIPS

Parents will be notified in advance whenever children leave campus on study trips. All study trips are planned for educational purposes only. We appreciate parent volunteers, but space can sometimes be limited on the bus. Please communicate with your child's teacher if you plan to attend a study trip. If personal transportation is used, students must have a permission form signed by the parent.



SECURITY

All visitors **MUST SIGN IN** at the front office and get an identification badge. Outside doors are locked throughout the day with the exception of the doors to the main office. Inform SFACS in writing if special custody or security concerns exist. The school relies on family's to provide copies of court orders that give or deny permission to specific parties.



DIRECTORY INFORMATION

If you do not want the SFACS to disclose directory information from your child's educational records without your prior written consent, you must annually notify the school in writing by the end of the 10th day of school in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.



TRAFFIC AND SAFETY RULES

For smooth and safe student drop-off and pick-up times, all parents/guardians are asked to comply with the following safety rules:

- The **north entrance** is for **vehicle** use for student drop off and pick up.
- The **main entrance** is for **walk in** arrival and dismissal.
- Students are reminded to walk on all sidewalks.
- Students should never be dropped off in the street nor be allowed to cross the street/parking lot unsupervised.
- Keep all traffic in the appropriate lane when using the circle drive for drop-off and pick-up.
- Be patient with the lines that form at pick-up time, we will get your child into your vehicle in a swift and safe manner.
- When the weather is bad, it is especially important that we follow all the traffic safety rules. It will take a little longer, but it will ensure the safety of everyone.



PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

We encourage all parents to become involved in their child's education by joining the SFACS Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). SFACS PTO is a very active organization. Your involvement in your child's school will increase his or her success.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The volunteer program is designed to enable parents to participate in the educational process of SFACS as needed. Volunteers are necessary for many events. All parents are encouraged to volunteer in some manner during the school year. This includes assuring your child's attendance at grade level activities.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee, composed of representatives, provides an important and necessary foundation on which the school program can successfully build. We encourage parents to become involved in their child's education by voicing suggestions through this committee which meets a minimum of twice per school year.



STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Student Advisory Council/Jr. Jacks Give Back, offers students an opportunity for engagement in service learning. Students assist to plan, implement, and reflect on special community service goals.

**The SFACS Informational Guidelines is adapted from the UT Elementary Informational Guidelines.*