

SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2009 - 2010



Academics • Service • Life

For students and parents/guardians whose primary language is not English, this handbook will be translated upon request. Requests for a translated version should be made to the Principal.

Para los estudiantes y padres/guardianes cuya lengua primaria no es el inglés, este manual será traducido a otras lenguas a su solicitud. La solicitud de una versión traducida debe dirigirse al Director.

Pour les étudiants et les parents/tuteurs dont la langue primaire n'est pas l'Anglais, ce manuel sera traduit à d'autres langues à sa demande. La demande d'une version traduite doit s'adresser au Directeur.

Para os estudantes e os pais/tutores cuja a língua preliminar não é o inglês, este manual será traduzido a outras línguas a seu pedido. O pedido de uma versão traduzida deve dirigir-se ao Diretor.

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SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Inspiring every student to excel in academics, service, and life

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STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of SSCPS to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning, is peaceful, and respects the dignity of all persons. SSCPS does not discriminate, exclude from participation, deny benefits, nor access to programs or facilities based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy or disability, housing status, or English Language Proficiency in all aspects of employment and education including the selection of students or staff. SSCPS and all its programs are fully accessible to all students who can be served by our nurturing, project-based, volunteer intensive, technology-dependent, and college preparatory academic program environment. SSCPS actively seeks a staff that fully reflects the diversity of our society. SSCPS actively seeks partner organizations which will assist in helping to diversify our student and staff population.

Mission Statement

South Shore Charter Public School inspires students to achieve their potential in academics, career, and life. This is accomplished with an innovative curriculum that addresses the learning styles of the individual student and is complemented by a real-life experiential learning program within a community that encourages service, leadership, and respect for all.

Educational Philosophy

South Shore Charter Public School unites an imaginative academic curriculum with work on workshops/projects to form a comprehensive program. SSCPS prepares students for success and teachers work with students to develop a strong academic foundation, marketable skills, and a life-long appreciation for learning. To support this philosophy, we strive to:

- Promote life skills for individual achievement in education, career, community and life
- Foster relationships between students, staff and parents that are respectful and caring
- Nurture the development of a civil community and supportive and safe learning environment through small multi-grade classrooms
- Maintain low student/teacher ratios by hiring dedicated, talented teachers who provide opportunities for individualized guidance and instruction
- Cultivate in students the ability to become independent learners, to take risks and to apply academics to their life experiences
- Produce active, engaged thinkers and communicators who value teamwork and leadership through cooperative and collaborative learning and teaching
- Apply academic knowledge to work in projects/workshops
- Encourage parents, students and teachers to serve the school community and beyond
- Ask students to explore and develop talents and interests outside the classroom
- Create an environment in which the best education occurs through administrators, parents, staff, teachers and trustees working together to pursue common goals.

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Academic Program

South Shore Charter Public School (SSCPS) is an innovative, diverse, and rigorous regional school. The school is organized around five Levels: Level I (K-2), II (3-4), III (5-6), IV (7-8), and High School 9 - 12.

The elements of the SSCPS model are: (1) Academic courses complemented by experiential learning, (2) Multi-grade classes and low student/teacher ratios that provide personalized guidance, (3) Partnerships of students, parents/guardians, and faculty in the school's governance, (4) Opportunities for parents/guardians, students, and partners to serve the school community and beyond, and (5) Extensive access to technology for student learning.

To realize the aims of its model, SSCPS has set the following goals: (1) Improve student learning through academic courses and experiential Projects and Workshops, (2) Promote student-focused and student-centered governance and learning processes, (3) Allow for extensive parent and community involvement, and (4) Create a positive culture of mutual respect and esteem for learning.

At SSCPS classroom teaching is supplemented with Projects and Workshops. Projects and Workshops are experiential learning structures in which student apply the skills and knowledge outlined in the Massachusetts Frameworks to specific tasks that fulfill community needs. These learning communities primarily work within the fields of environmental science, performing arts, visual arts communication and technology. Solid communication between student, teacher, and parent is promoted and as a result, SSCPS has a strong sense of community and mutual respect.

Classroom work in all grades is fast-paced, dynamic, and evocative. Students are active learners and are exposed to the work of the older students in ways that ensure that deeper levels of understanding take place. Learning services are available for all special education students. We work very hard to assure that these services are delivered in a way that is sensitive to individual needs.

The curriculum in Levels I-III is based on the national Core Knowledge Sequence and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Other components of the program include synthetic phonics instruction at Level I, Singapore Math in grades (K – 6), and the Collins Writing Program which is vertically-integrated into all Levels.

The SSCPS 7 – 12 academic program is college-preparatory. The secondary Level has developed a sequence of core courses that are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The arts are an integral part of the curriculum and expression through music, painting, and singing is encouraged. The same can be said for Spanish, which is offered K-12. South Shore Charter Public School is an innovative school committed to improving the abilities and lives of every one of its students.

Goals for students at SSCPS

SSCPS cherishes the hope that each student:

1. Nurtures personal growth through interaction with family, peers, and the larger community.
2. Deepens personal awareness of the need for peace and justice in the world and develops an understanding of one's obligation to be a responsible, contributing member of the diverse communities to which one belongs.
3. Contributes to and maintains a non-threatening atmosphere which generates a sense of joy in learning, social interaction, and school pride.
4. Values intellectual interest and completes the academic preparation for entrance to and success in college and life-long learning.
5. Learns to think critically, speak clearly, and write effectively.
6. Appreciates the visual and performing arts.
7. Acquires the necessary skills to assume responsible participation in a democracy.

EXPECTATIONS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Students, volunteers and staff who choose the South Shore Charter Public School (SSCPS), need to agree to become responsible to and for each other. This means that they are expected to sign an annual student Statement of Expectations and to encourage others to also abide by these expectations and the Code of Conduct for the good of all members of the SSCPS.

Students are expected to attend all classes and other activities, endeavor to learn as much as possible, complete all assignments in a timely manner, and work diligently to complete all exit standards. They are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity. All student work should be their own and students should not contribute to nor assist other students in cheating or plagiarizing.

SSCPS fosters an environment and culture in which students are expected to respect the dignity of all persons and make others feel safe and included. They will not lie, intentionally harass nor haze others. Students will behave in a manner that does not disrupt the learning environment by exercising a civil and courteous manner at all times and participate in Projects and Workshops and field trips in a way that reflects positively on the SSCPS community and the student. Additionally, students will respect the property of others and the school, dress in a manner that is appropriate to an academic setting, as well as obey the Code of Conduct.

Parents/guardians are expected to reinforce the above expectations with their child. They should actively support their child's education and assist them in developing a lifestyle and habits that will foster a love of and respect for learning. This includes the development of good eating and sleeping habits, punctuality, organizational skills, self discipline, and respect for others. Parents/guardians can further assist students by establishing a time and place for study, encouraging his or her efforts, reviewing homework, and reading with him or her or discuss what they are reading. By communicating and working positively with the student's teachers and advisor in a respectful partnership, parents/guardians will be able to support their student's education and demonstrate to the student the importance of learning. Parents/guardians are also expected to support the school in the fair administration of consequences for their student's non-adherence of the above or of the Code of Conduct.

It is important for parents/guardians to show their support for their student's education by attending parent meetings and conferences, school events, and volunteering for or in the school regularly. This shows the student that their parents/guardians are concerned and value their child's education and learning environment.

If a parent or student is reluctant to sign the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, the school will explore with them whether SSCPS is the most appropriate learning environment for their child. However, not signing does not change the need for the student to adhere to the SSCPS Code of Conduct.

Level I Exit Standards – Grades K, 1, 2

By the completion of Level I, each student must meet all but one of these minimum standards to be promoted to Level II. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards if determined to be appropriate. All students with the support of their teachers must submit evidence that he/she has met all but one of the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Any student or his/her parent/guardian may request a waiver of no more than one additional exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

Internal and External Performance Evaluations

1. Satisfactorily complete all curriculum requirements in Language Arts and Math.
2. Prove competency in the following:
 - Score 75% on a dictation test covering material that was taught in the 2nd Grade reading program.
 - Score 75% on a math computation and concepts test of material covered in the second grade Math Program. Complete addition and subtraction problems for numbers from 0 to 18 at a rate of 14 per minute for addition and 9 per minute for subtraction with 100% accuracy.
 - Prove reading fluency and comprehension and math competency by performing at a grade equivalent level.
 - Perform in at least two school performances per year. These may be performed either in school or outside school.
 - Demonstrate memorization by reciting one of the following:
 - “Bed in Summer ” by Robert Louis Stevenson
 - “Bee! I’m expecting you” by Emily Dickinson.
 - “Something Told the Wild Geese” by Rachel Field.
3. Meet the goals of a teacher led year-long Project.
4. Portfolio: Complete the following writing portfolio using the written SSCPS standards which, includes a scoring rubrics guidelines:
 - Friendly Letter
 - Paragraph
 - Book Report
 - Scientific Writing
 - Poem
5. Satisfactorily complete two Exhibition of Mastery presentations each year in attendance at SSCPS: one connected to the Project and one Science Fair.
6. Complete and document five acts of community service for each year in attendance on Level I.

Level II Exit Standards – Grades 3 and 4

By the completion of Level II, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level III. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards if determined to be appropriate. All students with the support of their teachers must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Any student or his/her parent/guardian may request a waiver of no more than one additional exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

Internal and External Performance Evaluations

1. Satisfactorily complete (progressing or better on final progress report) all the following curriculum requirements: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science. (Evidence is documented in Progress Report.)
2. Prove competency in the following:
 - Receive a passing grade memorizing multiplication facts through 10's with 97% accuracy.
 - Prove reading fluency and comprehension and math competency by performing at a grade equivalent level.
 - Perform in at least two school performances per year. These may be performed either in school or outside school.
 - Demonstrate memorization by reciting one of the following:
 - "Dreams" by Langston Hughes
 - "Afternoon on a Hill" by Edna St. Vincent Millay
3. Complete year-long Project competencies every year enrolled in Level II. (Evidence is documented in Progress Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.)
4. Portfolio: Complete five required written pieces meeting SSCPS standards (see supporting documentation). The written pieces include a scoring rubric that must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 2 on a 4 point scale must be obtained.
 - Friendly Letter
 - Personal Narrative (Non-fiction) five paragraphs
 - Three single draft reading response paragraphs from September, January and May One paragraph summary of a short piece of expository writing
 - Poetry
 - Short Story (Fiction)
 - Submit a sample (or evidence) of best artistic work from a course or Project to the portfolio; this may include literary work, dance, music, drama/theater or visual arts.
 - Present one written portfolio piece, twice a year, to a panel of judges that includes pod teacher and peers.
5. Satisfactorily complete two Exhibition of Mastery presentations each year in attendance at SSCPS; one is connected to the Project and one Science Fair.
6. Meet Level II Technology requirements. (Evidence is documented on Technology rubric.)
7. Each student must complete 10 acts of community service for each year enrolled in Level II. (Evidence is documented in student reflection paragraphs.)

Level III Exit Standards – Grades 5 and 6

By the completion of Level III, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to Level IV. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards if determined to be appropriate. All students must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

Internal and External Performance Evaluations

1. Achieve an annual average passing grade (70 or better) each trimester in all curriculum requirements: Literature, Composition, Math, Social Studies, Science and Spanish. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports.)
2. Prove competency in the following:
 - Prove automaticity of multiplication facts by scoring 97% proficiency on a timed 100 facts quiz.
 - Prove reading fluency and comprehension and math competency by performing at a grade equivalent level.
 - Perform in at least two school performances per year. These may be performed either in school or outside school.
 - Demonstrate memorization by reciting one of the following:
 - “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost.
 - “O’ Captain, My Captain” by Walt Whitman.
 - “The Gettysburg Address” by Abraham Lincoln.
3. Complete year-long Project competencies every year enrolled in Level III. (Evidence is documented in Progress Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.)
4. Portfolio: Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include at least one faculty member and the Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 80% must be attained for each piece and for the final presentation.) Complete five required written pieces meeting written SSCPS standards which, includes a scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces.
 - Business Letter
 - Cause and Effect Essay
 - Compare and Contrast Essay
 - Multi-scene Play
 - Poem
 - Investigative Research Paper to accompany an Exhibition of Mastery.
 - Sample of best artistic work from a course or Project (which may include literary work, dance, music, theatre or visual arts).
5. Satisfactorily complete two Exhibition of Mastery presentations each year in attendance at SSCPS; one is connected to the Project and one Science Fair.
6. Acquire Level III Technology Competencies (Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in the technology competency checklist.)
7. Community Service: A student must complete and document 15 hours of community service for each year enrolled in Level III. Documentation includes standard reflective paragraphs.

Level IV Exit Standards – Grades 7 and 8

By the completion of Level IV, each student must meet these minimum standards to be promoted to SSCPS high school. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards if determined to be appropriate. All students must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the Level Coordinator and Principal. Any student may request a waiver of no more than one exit requirement by written appeal to the Level Coordinator and Principal.

Internal and External Performance Evaluations

1. Achieve an annual average passing grade (70 or better) in the following curriculum courses: English Language Arts, Math, History, Science and Spanish. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports.) Students must attend 90% of their scheduled classes. Students with over 18 absences from a year-long course will not receive credit in the course unless a long-term absence is documented and the absences are excused by the principal.
2. Prove reading fluency and comprehension and math competency by performing at a grade equivalent level.
3. Receive an average passing grade (70 or better) in Project. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports.)
4. Portfolio: Present a portfolio to a panel of judges, which must include at least one faculty member and the Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 80% must be attained for each piece and for the final presentation.) The Eighth Grade Portfolio must include edited and revised pieces. At least one piece must reflect SSCPS research standards. Pieces must represent the following areas:
 - English Language Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - History
 - Spanish
 - Reflective Project Essay
 - Research paper
 - Resume
 - Art piece
 - Choice piece (optional)
5. Complete a Science Exhibition of Mastery and a Project Exhibition of Mastery. Each must include a paper and a presentation with a grade of 70% or higher for every year in Level IV. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Progress Reports and on Exhibition of Mastery scoring rubrics.)
6. Acquire Level IV Technology and Research Competencies (Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in Project Progress Reports.)
7. Community Service: A student must complete and document 20 hours of community service for grade 7 and 25 hours of community service for grade 8. (Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in reflective paragraphs included in the student portfolio.)

Exit/Graduation Standards – High School Grades 9 – 12

By the completion of high school, each SSCPS graduate must meet these minimum standards. Student must submit evidence that he/she has met all the Exit Standards to the portfolio panel and Principal. For students with an IEP or 504, the IEP or 504 may contain details on any modification of Exit Standards if determined to be appropriate. Any one Exit Standard not required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Department of Education for a diploma may be waived in extraordinary cases by the Board of Trustees after petition to, and recommendation by the Education Committee, Principal and the Executive Director.

Internal and External Performance Evaluations:

1. Achieve a passing grade (70 or better) in all the following subject areas: English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science and Spanish, each year enrolled at SSCPS. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade Report.) Courses taken outside of the High School program must be approved by the department, guidance and the Principal. Students must attend 90% of their scheduled classes. Students with over 18 absences from a year-long course will not receive credit in the course unless a long-term absence is documented and the absence(s) are excused by the principal.
2. Receive a passing grade (70 or better) and meet the year-long workshop goals, including two related Exhibitions of Mastery per year enrolled in the High School. (Evidence of meeting this standard is documented in Grade Reports and Exhibition of Mastery Scoring Rubrics.)
3. Meet the Massachusetts MCAS graduation requirements.
4. Portfolio: Present a portfolio at the end of each academic year to a panel that must include student's advisor and Level Coordinator. (Scoring rubrics must be attached to all student portfolio pieces. A minimum score of 80 must be obtained.)
 - a) Five required works approved by the teacher in the following subjects:
 - English Language Arts
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Spanish
 - Choice piece (Optional)
 - b) Reflective essay related to student's Workshop or Project work
 - c) One MLA formatted investigated research paper earning a grade 80% or better in any subject criteria determined by grade.
 - d) One resume
 - e) One reflective essay on community service work
 - f) A sample of best artistic work from a course or Project (which may include literary work, dance, music, theater or visual arts) (Only in junior year)
5. Students must meet SSCPS technology benchmarks.
6. Complete, with a passing grade 75 or better, two pre-approved three-credit courses at an accredited college or university. At least one of the courses must be taken on a college campus.
7. Attain a score of 70 or above on a presentation of Senior Project to a panel of faculty members and students.
8. Attain a score of 70 or above on Senior Debate.
9. One accredited college or university letter of acceptance.
10. Two letters of recommendation from student's advisor, faculty member, guidance counselor or Principal.
11. Community Service: A student must complete 30 documented hours per year for freshman, sophomore and junior year and 45 documented hours for senior year. (Evidence of meeting this requirement is documented in reflective paragraphs included in the student portfolio.)

GRADING AND HONOR ROLL (Level IV and High School)

Grading System - Number grades are used to record academic progress at SSCPS for each of the four quarters and the two semester exams. A final average is used to determine the grade for the course. For Level IV students throughout the year and for high school students for the first two quarters of the year the minimum grade recorded is a 50. High school students will have the actual grade earned recorded for quarters three and four. For Level IV and high school students, grades for midyear and final exam will be the grade earned for the exam.

Grade	%Equivalent	Quality Point
A+	97-100	4.33
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
F	0-69	0
INC	Incomplete	0 See Make-Up Work (p.13)
WP	Withdrawn Passing	See Make-Up Work (p.13)
WF	Withdrawn Failing	0
MED	Medical Exemption	

A student may achieve honor roll in the following categories:

High Honors – Grade point average of 90 or above with no grade less than 80 and a project or workshop grade of 90.

Honors – Grade point average of 83 or above with no more than one grade between 73 and 79 and a project or workshop grade of 83.

PARENT CONFERENCES AND REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Progress Reports - Parents/guardians may request, through the Guidance Office or Principal, a Progress Report of the student's current academic work.

Interim Warnings - approximately halfway through each term, students and parents/guardians will be notified by mail of any impending academic deficiency. Should a student's progress deteriorate after warnings have been issued, the parents/guardians will be contacted by phone.

Parent-Teacher Conferences - In Levels I, II, and III Goal Setting Meeting are held in September and October and conferences are scheduled after the first report goes home in early December. For Level IV and the high school, conferences are scheduled following the distribution of interim warnings for the first and second quarters. In addition, parents/guardians may request an appointment with any teacher throughout the school year.

Report Cards - In Level IV and the High School Report Cards and Progress Reports are distributed to students for the first three quarters during an advisory period. The fourth quarter Report Card will be mailed. For Level I - III students, Report Cards/Progress Reports for the first two trimesters are given to the students. In Levels II and III, Interim Reports are also issued in the middle of every term for students who are not performing well. The Report Card/Progress Report for the third trimester will be mailed.

COURSE FAILURE (LEVEL III – HIGH SCHOOL)

A student will fail for the year by receiving a final average of less than 70.

Students failing a course for the year must make up that course during the summer. If a student fails to make up a failed course over the summer, the student will be retained in grade until the course has been made up and credit restored so that the student is on track to graduate.

A student receiving a final average of less than 50 in a course will be unable to make up a course through local district summer school or tutoring. The course could be made up only by taking the equivalent of a full year course or a 3 credit college course.

Making Up a Course – A failed class may be made up in the following ways:

1. Attend a summer school class.
2. Attend a 3 credit college class closely related to the failed course.
3. During the summer only – Private tutoring consisting of 20 contact hours with the tutor using a curriculum and final assessment approved by the teacher, curriculum coordinator and principal. This may only occur between the end of school in June and the first day of school in August. Parent/guardians are responsible for the cost of tutoring and summer school.

Policy Governing Repeating the Year and Promotion -

Students who fail three or more courses in an academic year have lost a significant amount of academic background/content that cannot typically be recovered through summer school make up or tutoring. Any student who fails three (3) or more classes, including Project/Workshop, during a single academic year will be required to repeat that academic year. In addition, to be promoted to the next grade students must pass English and Math. If a student fails both English and Math, he/she will be retained.

Students who are struggling academically (a number of failures or other indications of not performing at grade level) or who have been absent for a substantial portion of the year resulting in incompletes may be asked to repeat the year to ensure a strong foundation for future academic success. This would happen after consultation with parents/guardians and faculty.

High School Workshop Failure Policy

According to the High School Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements, all students must pass four years of Workshop. Should a student fail a Workshop, it must be made up in order to receive a diploma. To make up a Workshop, the student must take a course approved by the Principal in consultation with the Workshop Leader, in summer school. In order to receive credit; the student must pass the course with a 70 or above. The student will not be financially reimbursed for any course that is taken to make up a failure.

APPEALS PROCESS RELATED TO ACADEMIC AND ATTENDANCE ISSUES

Students and their parent or guardian will be provided an opportunity to appeal decisions related to academic or attendance issues, such as loss of credit for excessive absence or repeating the year for three or more course failures.

- 1) Upon notification by the school that credit will not be earned or the year must be repeated, the parents or guardian or student (if 18) may request a hearing on the matter. The request must be made to the Principal within 15 calendar days of the notification. For seniors, the request must be made by the last day of senior exams.
- 2) The Principal will convene a hearing and collect and review all pertinent data relating to the student's academic and/or attendance record.
- 3) The hearing may consist of the Principal, Guidance Counselor, a teacher and/or Level Coordinator, and the School Nurse (if necessary). Other parties may be invited to participate as needed.
- 4) Parents or guardians and student will have the opportunity to present information in support of their appeal.

- 5) The Principal will render a decision within three (3) school days after the conclusion of the hearing and will notify the parents or guardians and student of the decision.
- 6) If the matter is not resolved by the Principal’s decision, the parents or guardians and student may appeal to the Executive Director. This appeal must be made within ten (10) days or receiving notification of the Principal’s decision.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for a South Shore Charter Public School diploma a student must complete the equivalent of 24 full courses in grades 9 – 12 including the following courses credits:

English	4	Social Studies	4	Science	4
Math	4	Foreign Language	4	Workshop	4

In order for a high school student at SSCPS to participate in graduation exercises all Exit Standards must be completed. Sequential courses in major areas are available in all college preparatory subjects. Courses are offered on a yearly basis and receive 1 credit. Students carry five one-credit courses plus a one-credit workshop. All exit standards, except the Senior Project must be completed prior to the end of the third quarter. The Senior Project must be completed by a date set forth by the administration each year in the school calendar.

Under extraordinary circumstances, a student failing to complete the Exit Standards by the end of the third quarter may petition to graduate. The petition must contain all outstanding material and the date by which the requirements will be completed. The completion date for outstanding material must be no later than two weeks prior to graduation. The petition to graduate must be filed no later than the end of the third quarter and must be approved by the Principal.

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

Course Selection (High School) - Students follow a college preparatory curriculum and are assigned to specific courses each year. In the spring, students may apply for a specific workshop for the next year. The Administration reserves the right to alter a student's program of studies whenever scheduling or an insufficient number in a class makes this necessary. Students are required to complete the courses for which they have been scheduled.

If in June a student is not meeting the prerequisites for the next course, the student will be reassigned to an appropriate level in the subject area the following year. If a student qualifies for a course beyond the grade level, placement will be made on an individual basis.

Course Changes - because of the interdependent nature of the program and the size of the school course changes will require the approval of the Level Coordinator, Guidance Councilor and Principal.

Should a student feel a course change is necessary; the student consulting with Guidance begins the process. The student and Guidance Counselor will consult with the appropriate teachers, Level Coordinator, and parents/guardians. After the initial 10 days of the year, if it becomes necessary to drop a course, it will be recorded as WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing) on the Permanent Record. Grades received in courses dropped after the 10-day time period may be averaged into the grades received for the first quarter in the new course. In all cases, the final decision for course changes and disposition of grades is left to the discretion of the Principal. Note: A student must continue to attend all classes until details of a change have been worked out and approved.

HOMEWORK, MAKE-UP WORK, EXTRA HELP, AND SEMESTER EXAMS

Homework policies and procedures vary by level. As a general rule homework is given to reinforce the daily classroom learning and to extend this learning beyond the classroom situation. Older students should plan for considerable home study in order to complete successfully both short and long-range assignments. High School students should expect about two hours of homework per night.

Extra-Help - Teachers will schedule after-school sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday to offer students the additional help they may require. These sessions take precedence over all extra-curricular activities.

Make-up work - Students must make arrangements with each teacher to make up work upon return to school from any absence. Students are given two school days for each day absent, up to three days absent, to make up any work. Any work not made up in that time will be graded a zero. In the High School for absences lasting longer than three days, Guidance will coordinate homework and makeup work. Teachers cannot be expected to provide tutoring for students who are absent because of personal vacations.

In the High School once the quarter closes, no late work will be accepted. All missing work will be graded a zero (0) for the computation of quarter grades. No change of grade will be permitted for handing in missing or late work unless previously approved in writing by the teacher. If, because of serious illness or other extenuating circumstances, a student has not completed sufficient class work to receive a report card grade, the faculty member may, with the approval of the Administration, assign an "incomplete." This designation must be changed to a number grade within two weeks of the report or it automatically becomes a "0," unless prolonged illness dictates that other arrangements be made.

Semester Exams (Grades 7-12) - are administered in January and June. These exams are in a 90-minute format for High School students. Each exam weighs 10% of the student's final average in the course (each quarter weighs 20%). Semester exams are scheduled for courses that meet daily in a semester. The process of semester testing is a necessary part of the college preparatory educational process.

STUDENT LIFE

STUDENT ACTIVITIES, ATHLETICS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

Sports Program - In addition, SSCPS offers an inter-scholastic sports program on the varsity and middle school level competing in the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization (MCSAO).

Athletic Eligibility - Student athletes are often looked up to as role models by other, especially younger, students. They are encouraged to set for themselves the highest academic standards and standards of conduct. The student must be in good standing at SSCPS and meet all the requirements of the MCSAO.

National Honor Society (High School) - The purpose of the National Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to give service, to promote responsible leadership, and to encourage the development of good character in all the students at SSCPS. Membership in the National Honor Society is recognized as one of the highest honors that can be given a high school student. Students do not join the society. A faculty selection committee selects students based upon the NHS criteria: academic excellence, leadership, service, and character. Only juniors and seniors are eligible for membership. Those students who feel they qualify must submit an application to the faculty moderator. The committee meets in September to consider students for membership. Once selected, a student must maintain the criteria by which he or she was selected. Failure to maintain these standards results in a warning to the student. A hearing for dismissal will result for any member of the NHS who has received two consecutive warnings without showing any consequential improvement.

Dances and other Special Events at SSCPS

1. Students and guests are expected to act with common sense, common courtesy, and those applicable standards of conduct set forth in this Handbook.
2. Students bringing guests who do not attend SSCPS must register those guests with the principal prior to the day of the event.
3. Students may not leave and re-enter the building once they have arrived at the event.
4. SSCPS students should introduce their guests to the chaperone(s).
5. No smoking is permitted at school functions.
6. The school reserves the right to refuse admittance to or to expel from the premises anyone who does not comply with the above guidelines.
7. Students who work may come to the event after normal start of the event, if they have permission from the principal in advance.
8. Students may not leave earlier than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled end of the event.
9. A student may bring and purchase a ticket for one guest from outside the school depending on the event. The name and telephone number of the guest must be provided at the time the ticket is purchased.
10. Students enrolled at SSCPS must purchase their own ticket and register with those sponsoring the event.
11. Once tickets are purchased a student may not sell or give the tickets to another student without the permission of the faculty moderator of the event.
12. Tickets are non-refundable. SSCPS and the sponsoring organization are under no obligation to buy back unused tickets.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Town Meeting - Students at SSCPS are encouraged to be active members of their school community. On a weekly basis, students beginning in Level II meet as a group to review and give input on issues before them regarding school life, school policies under consideration, and items to improve the school community. These meetings are moderated by a student who is elected in the beginning of the year. In the High School these meetings are conducted according to modified Robert's Rules of Order. School Election Procedures:

1. The Level Coordinator conducts the elections.
2. Elections are announced to the student body. Candidates should complete a nomination and present it to the Level Coordinator. The Level Coordinator then publishes a list of candidates who desire to run for office.
3. To be eligible for election, a student must be in "Good Standing."
4. Failure to maintain "Good Standing" will result in the student being put on probation or being asked to forfeit the office. Any board member may be removed from his or her position by vote of the remaining board members for failure to attend meetings, failure to represent his or her group properly and fairly, failure to carry out his or her duties, or for any other actions that are detrimental to the welfare of the school.
5. At a town meeting, each candidate addresses the assembled students giving:
 - a) reasons for running for office;
 - b) qualifications for holding office;
 - c) background of service and dedication to class and school.
6. At a subsequent meeting, students vote via secret ballot.
7. Any variation of the above should receive specific approval from the Principal.
8. Results of the elections are published and given to the Principal, Level Coordinator, and Guidance Director.
9. Officers of Student Board, President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, are elected in the spring. Elections for all other positions are conducted in September of the new school year.

Student Board (High School) - The purpose of the Student Board is to establish closer cooperation between the students and the faculty of SSCPS, to instruct its members in the principles and responsibilities of a democracy and to promote the general welfare of the school community.

The Student Board in the High School is composed of four (4) officers elected from the student body as a whole as well as one each from each advisory group. The Student Board acts as the umbrella organization for student activities and plans activities for the student body that are beneficial to the school and the community. The Student Board consults with the faculty moderator and the Level Coordinator.

Judicial Council (High School) - The Judicial Council consists of 5 student members. The purpose of the council is to advise the Level Coordinator on matters of student disciplinary action to be taken in cases in which suspension would be considered the minimum action. The council is not determining guilt or innocence. The council would be convened by the Level Coordinator (non-voting member) and testimony would be heard from the accused party. The council would then make a recommendation on the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken.

Student Representative to the Board of Trustees (High School) - This student serves on the Board of Trustees for a term of one year.

Student Representative to School Council - Two students from the high school and one from Level IV, are elected to represent students on the School Council. They serve for a term of one year.

GUIDANCE SERVICES (High School)

The aim of the Guidance Program is to help the students in their personal and academic growth and development. The close relationship between the students and the faculty at SSCPS is exemplified in the Guidance Program.

The school provides comprehensive, developmental assistance through the direction of the Guidance Office, which conducts group sessions, classes, workshops, and presentations. It also provides opportunities for students to schedule individual appointments with the guidance counselors. Students are assigned a Faculty Advisor each year and advisory services are always available through faculty, coaches, and administrators. Parents/guardians may request appointments with the counselor and faculty advisors by phoning the school.

College counseling is an effort to match the desires and abilities of the student with a college so that both benefit. Choosing a suitable college is a difficult task. Special evening programs and workshops are scheduled for parents/guardians regarding College Financial Aid programs and the college selection and admissions process.

Students may use computer programs to assist them in their college and career choices. They are regularly informed of college fairs, college information sessions, and college open houses. College visits are encouraged and should be planned during the summer, on the teacher Professional Development Days, holidays, and school vacations.

Testing Program - The standardized testing program includes:

Freshman:	MCAS, Science; SAT II
Sophomore:	MCAS, ELA and Math; PSAT; SAT I; SAT II
Junior:	MCAS, History; PSAT/NMSQT; SAT I/ACT; SAT II;
Senior:	SAT I/ACT; SAT II; AP Exams

Progress Reports - Parents/guardians of high school students may request an Academic Progress Report through the Guidance Counselor. For Level I – IV students, please speak with the Level Coordinator regarding Academic Progress Reports. This may be initiated mid-quarter — two weeks prior to warning notices or two weeks after quarterly grades. The Guidance Counselor or Level Coordinator will speak with the teacher and will furnish appropriate information to the student and parents/guardians by personal contact, telephone call or conference. Reports are also available on-line at www.edline.net. Please contact the school regarding setting up an account.

Transcripts - All transcript requests must be in writing, on a Transcript Request Form and go through the Guidance Office. The Transcript Request Form may be obtained at the front desk and in the Guidance Office. Transcript requests cannot be done over the phone.

Official Transcript - This is a transcript of the student's final grades sent directly from the high school to another high school, a college or an employer. Most colleges, technical colleges, and scholarship programs require an "official transcript". For grades 7 -12, the official transcript lists final grades only. Progress Reports will not be sent to individual schools. For grades K-6, there is no "transcript". Instead, the most recent report card will be sent.

Unofficial Transcript - This transcript is provided directly to the student or their parent/guardian. Even if it is sealed in an envelope and we provide it to you or your parent/guardian, it is considered "unofficial". This transcript will be stamped "Issued to Student".

Transcript Release Form - Every transcript we send must be released by the student's parent or guardian. To release or "give us permission" to send a transcript, you must sign a Transcript Release Form. Forms are available in Guidance or at the front desk. If the student is 18 years of age or older, the student may authorize (sign) their own transcript request. You may also mail or fax a transcript request in a signed and dated letter. However, we cannot send the transcript until the fee is paid.

Transcript Fee - For current SSCPS students, the first transcript request sent for a college admission is free. After that, there is a \$2.00 fee for each transcript we send out or provide for you. If you are not a current student, the fee for transcripts is \$2.00 for any transcript we provide. The transcript fee is used to offset the cost of producing the transcript and the postage to send the transcript.

If you are a current high school senior, you may use the college application transcript request form instead of the SSCPS form. The transcript will not be sent until the \$2.00 transcript fee is paid.

How long will it take to send a transcript? Every attempt will be made to get transcripts out as soon as possible. During the college application season (October – January) it may take 5 to 7 business (school) days. Thus please plan accordingly.

Student Employment - The Faculty and Administration considers the primary occupation of those who attend SSCPS to be that of student. While economic circumstances may dictate the need for a student to hold a part-time job, such employment should not take precedence over the educational goals of the student. The program at SSCPS requires home study on a nightly basis and encourages the pursuit of interests beyond the classroom. SSCPS recommends that students and parents/guardians carefully weigh the competing needs of study, physical activity, leisure activity, and rest with financial gain before committing to a part-time job during the academic year.

HEALTH SERVICES

General concern for the good health of the student is evident in the many programs and services generated at the school. Classes in health inform the student in diet, health, nutrition, AIDS, human sexuality, and other related topics; special assemblies deal with current facts on alcoholism and its effects on the body. A full-time Certified School Nurse is available to assist in the health needs of the student. Students may not leave the school for illness without first reporting to the nurse. They are not to call home for health dismissal; the nurse will make the arrangements as necessary. The nurse must be kept informed of medications taken at home for specific conditions (e.g. Attention Deficit Disorder, Asthma, Diabetes, Depression, etc.) and injuries (e.g. sprains or fractures) requiring temporary exclusion from Physical Education. These latter exclusions require Physician's notes indicating the date of return to normal activity. It is also helpful to inform the nurse of individual adjustment problems that may occur.

Physical examinations are required of all students entering the school and grade 7. The State Health Form must be returned to the Health Office no later than October 1. Sports Physicals are required annually for all students participating in interscholastic sports. No student will be allowed to participate in a sport if the exam form has not been returned to the Health Office prior to the start of the season.

Immunizations - All students entering the school must provide complete up-to-date copies of their immunization records. Massachusetts Law requires that students be excluded from attendance at school until it is known that they have received the required immunizations

Medication Guidelines - The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, promulgated March 26, 1993, regulations governing the administration of prescription medications in public and private schools. In compliance with these, the following guidelines have been adopted.

It is generally accepted that the School Nurse will assume responsibility for dispensing necessary medication ordered by a physician. The School Nurse cannot, according to Massachusetts State Law, dispense over-the-counter drugs such as Tylenol and cold remedies without a *written order* from a physician. A note from the parent is not a substitute allowed by this law.

It is general practice to discourage medication in school.

1. Medication, including the psychotropic drugs (Ritalin, Dexadrine, Haldol, and Lithium) can be Administered only under the following conditions:
 - a. With a written order from a physician which must detail the name of the drug, dosage, and time interval that medication is to be taken, and diagnosis and reason for the medication to be given in school. Any change in dosage or time must be made in writing by the M.D. to the school.
 - b. With a written parent/guardian consent for medication administration.
 - c. Medication must be in a container labeled by the pharmacy or physician. A baggie or other type container is not acceptable. It is advisable to request the pharmacist to provide a separate, properly labeled container for school when a prescription is filled.
2. School personnel must refer all requests for administration of medication to the school nurse.
3. In the nurse's absence, a dispensing procedure will be established by the RN with the Principal for each student in question.
4. A daily record must be kept of all medication administered and the name of the person dispensing the medication.
5. The school's position is to allow the student to be responsible for the following medications:
 - a. Inhalers - they are frequently needed during an acute episode or prior to exercise (PE) when it is not convenient to go to the Health Office. The student's physician needs to provide a written order approving self-administration. Inhalers should also be labeled with the student's name as they are often found after recess and in classrooms.

STUDENTS SHOULD NOT SHARE MEDICATION OF ANY KIND INCLUDING TYLENOL. ANY SHARING OF MEDICATION BETWEEN STUDENTS WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION BEING TAKEN.

A copy of the medication guidelines and the medication forms for the doctors and parents/guardians are sent to each family in the summer mailing.

AIDS Policy - the incidence of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in the United States has reached epidemic proportions. While no known cases of this disease exist in our school community, we realize that there is the possibility that members of our school community may become infected. SSCPS must respond to the future possibility.

SSCPS, as an educational institution, takes seriously its responsibility to create and support a learning environment that is compassionate and just, one that respects the dignity and rights of each of its members. It is from this fundamental stance that we have instituted our policies and procedures regarding members of the community who may become infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. We do so with the intention of maintaining their membership and participation in the school community insofar as the health and safety of all permits.

The document, "Policies and procedures for those infected with HIV and/or diagnosed with ARC or AIDS," is retained for reference in the Principal's Office and in the Health Office. The school has also implemented procedures to prevent transmission of HIV and provides appropriate educational instruction to students regarding this disease.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE

At SSCPS our mission is inspiring every student to excel in academics, service, and life. In support of this mission all teachers and staff members are expected to:

1. Build strong relationships with students.
2. Encourage the growth of self-discipline.
3. Personalize and differentiate the curriculum, and to keep learning interesting.
4. Challenge individual students academically and also help them succeed.
5. Develop an approach to classroom management that supports emotional and physical well being.
6. Provide positive and negative consequences that will encourage appropriate behavior and discourage inappropriate behavior.
7. Work closely with parents/guardians in disciplinary situations when additional support is necessary.

GOOD STANDING STATUS

A SSCPS student is considered to be in "Good Standing" unless any of the following are true of the student:

The student

- Has any failing grade from the previous quarter or term in the present school year.
- Did not complete his or her public Exhibition of Mastery for the previous semester.
- Has been suspended during the current school year.

SSCPS students who are not in "Good Standing" may not do the following without the written consent of the Principal:

- Represent SSCPS in any dramatic, academic, or athletic competition.
- Go on SSCPS field trips (this does not pertain to normal, local project visits) or participate in extracurricular activities.
- Qualify for any SSCPS award, scholarship, or fellowship.
- Serve on the Student Board, School Council, any SSCPS committee, or student Judicial Council.

The process by which the Principal may decide to waive not in "Good Standing" consequences follow: a written appeal by the student containing the student's statement of the events that led to the loss of "Good Standing" and grounds for the appeal. The Principal will meet with the student within five (5) days and render a decision within two (2) days following the meeting. All decisions may be appealed to the Executive Director.

DRESS CODE

The South Shore Charter Public School is a learning environment and students are expected to take pride in their appearance and to come dressed in an appropriate manner prepared to learn. As such, parents are expected to monitor the attire of their children. All students, faculty, staff and visitors must abide by the following dress code. Violators may be asked to leave the school premises and/or be subject to the school's disciplinary code. The Administration reserves the right to determine what may be considered appropriate clothing.

All students, faculty, staff and visitors must abide by the following dress code or you may be asked to leave the school premises or be subject to the school's disciplinary code.

- No profanity, offensive language or symbols, offensive or insinuating imagery, drug, alcohol, or tobacco language or symbols may be displayed on clothing, backpacks, etc.
- Shorts or skirts must be no more than three inches above the knees.
- The straps of tank tops, shirts (etc) must be at least one inch in width.
- Midriff and stomach area must remain covered at all times.
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair.
- All clothing must be worn in an appropriate manner as judged by faculty.
- Dress code for field trips, after school and extracurricular activities is the school dress code or can be modified at the discretion of the Administration in consultation with the activity advisor.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating and plagiarism destroy academic integrity and honesty and are a hindrance to a good education. Plagiarism is the copying or borrowing of ideas or information from another without giving proper credit. Because of the serious nature of cheating and/or plagiarism, each student involved will receive a zero for the assignment and will be subject to disciplinary action. All incidents of cheating must be reported to the Level Coordinator. The growing availability of translation services online poses a threat to the academic integrity of all classes, especially World Language. Therefore, the use of such translation services for completing assignments is prohibited and shall be considered cheating. In addition, multiple infractions may lead to failure for the course for the year.

CIVIL RIGHTS

It is the policy of the South Shore Charter Public School that all programs, activities, and employment opportunities are offered with regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability.

The Coordinator of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for the South Shore Charter Public School is Daniel Falkner. He can be reached at the school at (781) 982-4202 Ext. 311 or dfalkner@sscps.org. Title VI "prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color, and national origin."

The Coordinator of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 for the South Shore Charter Public School is Daniel Falkner. He can be reached at the school at (781) 982-4202 Ext. 311 or dfalkner@sscps.org. Title IX "prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in education programs based on sex."

The Coordinator of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for the South Shore Charter Public School is the Learning Service Director, Jo Feldman. She can be reached at (781) 982-4202 Ext.201 or jofeldman@sscps.org. Section 504 "prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability."

Anyone having questions or concerns about Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 should contact the appropriate person in writing at 100 Longwater Circle, Norwell, MA 02061; by fax at 781-982-4201 or by calling the Executive Director at 781-982-4202.

HARASSMENT POLICY

SSCPS strives to build a community based on respect and the dignity of each person. Thus we seek to provide an environment free of bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, national origin, appearance, or gender. Such inappropriate behavior includes unwelcome advances, unwarranted remarks, or derogatory or discriminating comments that can occur between any two individuals or groups of individuals.

Anyone who believes he/she has been harassed should implement the following procedures:

1. Let the offending person or persons know that you want the behavior to stop. Say "no" firmly, looking directly and unapologetically at them to give a clear message about how you feel. If you are unable to confront the person(s) alone, take a friend along or write a letter. You may want the assistance of an adult (e.g. guidance counselor, administrator, and teacher) in preparing the letter as well as in presenting it.
2. If your objection does not cause the behavior to stop, keep a record of when, where, and how you have been harassed. Include witnesses, direct quotes, actions, evidence, and any written communication.
3. Promptly contact someone at the school about the situation —an advisor, faculty member, guidance counselor, or administrator.

A response from the Principal or Daniel Falkner the school's Civil Rights Officer will be made in consultation with the person making the complaint; it will be made discreetly to protect the confidentiality of the information and the reputations of those involved. Retaliation in any form against any person who has filed a complaint relating to harassment is forbidden. If retaliation occurs, it could be cause for dismissal of staff, personnel, or student.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

1. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been discriminated against or harassed should contact in writing the Principal or the Civil Rights Representative, Daniel Falkner as soon as possible, normally within thirty days of the discrimination.
2. The Principal or the Civil Rights Representative, Daniel Falkner or 504 Coordinator will meet with the person(s) to discuss the situation within seven days of receiving the written complaint. The South Shore Charter School will promptly investigate every complaint of discrimination. Please refer to Civil Rights Complaint Form at the end of the Student Handbook.
3. The Principal, Civil Rights Representative, or 504 Coordinator will have fourteen days to respond to the grievance in writing. Any complaint may also be lodged with state agencies responsible for laws prohibiting discrimination in schools: The Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA (781- 388-3300) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA (617-727-3990). The agency responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex is the Office of Civil Rights within the United States Department of Education, which is located at the John W. McCormack Building, Post Office Square, Boston, MA (617-223-9662).
4. A party may appeal in writing, the administrator's decision to Prudence Goodale the Interim Executive Director of SSCPS, 100 Longwater Circle (781-982-4202) within fifteen days after receiving a copy of the decision. The decision will be reviewed to ensure the adequacy of the investigation and the decision. Parties will be given an opportunity to submit additional relevant information. The Executive Director will make a final decision and provide it in writing to the respective parties within 30 days.

HAZING

In November of 1985, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts made law an Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing. The Act requires that we print the following sections:

Section 17. Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or

recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment of forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

Section 19. Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebes, pledges or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY —ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Acceptable Use, General Principles:

Access to computer systems and networks owned or operated by South Shore Charter Public School, imposes certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to school policies, and local, state, and federal laws. Acceptable use always is ethical, reflects academic honesty, and shows restraint in the consumption of shared resources. It demonstrates respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, system security mechanisms, and individuals' rights to privacy and to freedom from intimidation and harassment.

Acceptable Use, Guidelines:

In making acceptable use of resources you must:

- Use resources only for authorized purposes.
- Protect your user-id and system from unauthorized use.
- You are responsible for all activities on your user-id or that originate from your user-id. Access only information that is your own, that is publicly available, or to which you have been given authorized access.
- Use only legal versions of copyrighted software in compliance with vendor license requirements. Be considerate in your use of shared resources.
- Refrain from monopolizing systems, overloading networks with excessive data, degrading services, or wasting computer time, disk space, printer paper, or other resources.

In making acceptable use of resources you must NOT:

- Use another person's system, user-id, password, files, or data.
- Use computer programs to decode passwords or access control information.
- Attempt to circumvent or subvert system or network security measures.
- Engage in any activity that might be purposefully harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, damaging files, or making unauthorized modifications to school data.
- Use school systems for commercial or partisan political purposes (unless directly allowed as part of a project) such as using electronic mail to circulate advertising for products or for political candidates.
- Make, use, or store illegal copies of copyrighted software, on school systems, or transmit them over school networks.
- Install, use, or store any software or other executable files on school systems, or transmit them over school networks, without permission from the school's technology coordinator.

- Use mail or messaging services to harass or intimidate or threaten another person, for example, by broadcasting unsolicited messages, by repeatedly sending unwanted mail, or by using someone else's name or user-id.
- Waste computing resources or network resources, for example, by using unauthorized programs, intentionally placing a program in an endless loop, printing excessive amounts of paper, or by sending chain letters or unsolicited mass mailings.
- Use the school's systems or networks for personal gain; for example, by selling access to your user-id or to school systems or networks, or by performing work for profit with school resources in a manner not authorized by the school.
- Engage in any other activity that does not comply with the General Principles presented in this Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy or those of the South Shore Charter Public School mission and policies.
- Install any software.

Enforcement

The South Shore Charter Public School considers any violation of acceptable use principles or guidelines to be a serious offense and reserves the right to copy and examine any files or information resident on schools systems allegedly related to unacceptable use, and to protect its information resident on school systems allegedly related to unacceptable use, and to protect its network from systems and events that threaten or degrade operations. Violators are subject to disciplinary action as prescribed in the South Shore Charter Public School Code of Conduct, South Shore Charter Public School Policies, and the employee handbook.

Offenders may be prosecuted under the terms described in such laws (but not limited to) as the Children's Internet Protection Act, CIPA, Privacy Act of 1974, PL 93-579, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986, 18 USC Section 1030, the Computer Virus Eradication Act of 1989, HR 5061, HR 55, (amendments to 18USC, section 1030), Interstate Transportation of Stolen Property, 18 USC section 2314 and Aiding and Abetting, 18 USC section 2 and the Massachusetts Computer Crimes Act, and the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

POLICY ON CELLULAR TELEPHONES, PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES, AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

South Shore Charter Public School exists to improve the learning, knowledge and skills of each of its students and to build a community of individuals who work together for the common good. One of the functions of the school is to create an environment in which teachers can teach effectively and the greatest number of students can study effectively with the least amount of disruption. To that end, members of the community need to interact in constructive ways in all settings during the school day. These settings and environments should be as productive as possible including hallways and common areas. These should be places where each person can interact freely and constructively with those around him or her. In order to accomplish that, students and teachers, should be as free of outside interruptions as possible.

The proliferation of electronic devices in recent years has become an increasingly distractive force in schools. Cellular telephones, ipods, disc players and other electronics have been readily accessible to many students. It is important that electronic devices not be a presence that disrupts the learning situation.

On school grounds, students will not be allowed to carry cell phones, mp3 players or any other handheld electronic music and/or gaming devices on their persons from 8:15 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. These devices if brought to school must be kept in their lockers for the duration of the day. Exceptions include IEP and 504 students, who have the use of individual music devices as part of their accommodation plans. Use of these devices on fieldtrips and other school events (e.g. school-sponsored athletics or social events) will be up to the proctoring teachers. Students who have their phones or other devices confiscated during the school day, will be given a Saturday detention as a consequence. Additionally, one of their parents or guardians will have to come to school to retrieve the device. Multiple infractions can lead to suspension at the discretion of the administration. For the second and all other infractions, the devices will be confiscated for five days and a parent or guardian will have to come to the school to retrieve the device. Refer to Code of Conduct.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A School system needs a code of discipline to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment, in addition to teaching the personal benefits of living a disciplined life. Everyone needs to feel safe and secure wherever they are. Everyone has a right to learn in an environment that is conducive to learning. This Code will help assure that.

Too many students perceive discipline as a negative word. They often think of it as the word associated with behavior that is not allowed for some reason. They also think of it as a word associated with punishment: here's what will happen if you do something wrong.

This Student Handbook and Code of Conduct of the South Shore Charter Public School (SSCPS) includes the policies, rules, regulations and consequences associated with discipline in the South Shore Charter Public School. In this school, however, we encourage everyone to think of discipline as a positive aspect of our educational program and a part of what everyone should learn. Disciplined people know what will make them successful in achieving personal and academic or occupational objectives. People who are successful also have the strength of character to conduct themselves accordingly.

Yes, there are unpleasant consequences of undesirable behavior, as one can see by reading this Code. But more importantly, there are personal rewards for commendable conduct, the same sort of rewards people experience when they have accomplished something worthwhile or made a contribution to others through their own effort and ability. Although all students should read this Code and be familiar with its contents, the majority of students – those who have learned self-discipline—will never experience the consequences associated with the misconduct that is specified.

If you have any questions or concerns related to the Code, please feel free to consult your Teacher, Level Coordinator, Guidance Counselor, or Principal. Any one of us would be happy to meet with you or a family member regarding the interpretation or implementation of the Code.

RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS

A student's right to due process means that the rules are applied fairly and that the student has notice of the charged violation of school rules and an opportunity to explain him/herself. Some of the steps in affording procedural due process will vary in degree of formality according to the degree of the disciplinary sanction that might be imposed. For suspensions of ten (10) days or less, informal due process is sufficient. This means that a student must be informed of the charge against him/her and have an opportunity to present his/her side.

In the event that a long-term suspension or expulsion is considered, the student will be afforded a written notice of the hearing, a specific statement of the infraction(s) involved, a list of the witnesses and a description of their testimony, and will be informed of the right to bring a representative or attorney to the hearing. In a reasonable time after the completion of the hearing, the student will be informed in writing of the administration's decision.

Students under the age of 18 will be suspended only to the custody of parent(s), guardian(s), or another person designated by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

DISCIPLINING OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The disciplining of special need students is governed by federal and state special education laws and the regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 § *et seq.*, and Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 71B.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Policy on Disciplining Students with Special Needs requires that the Team evaluation determine the students' handicapping condition and if it requires the modification of the rules and regulations as outlined in the student handbook. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:

1. The IEP or 504 Plan for all students with disabilities will indicate whether the students can be expected to meet the schools' Code of Conduct or if the students' disability requires a modification to such.
2. When it is known that the suspension(s) of special needs students will accumulate to ten days of a school year, a review of the IEP or 504 Plan will be held to determine the appropriateness of the students' placement or program. The Team will make a finding as to the relationship between the students' misconduct and their disability and either a) design a modified program for the students or b) write an amendment to provide for the delivery of special education services during the suspension and any modifications of the IEP or 504 Plan relative to the school's Code of Conduct expectations

Special needs students who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student's disability. Additionally in certain circumstances, special needs students may be removed for additional periods of up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct.

For infractions related to carrying of a weapon or the possession, use, sale, or solicitation of drugs or controlled substances on school property or at a school event, school personnel may order a change in the placement of a special needs student to an interim alternative school setting for not more than forty-five days.

For additional information on the details of these regulations, you may contact Jo Feldman, Director of Learning Services. She can be reached at (781) 982-4202 Ext. 201 or jofeldman@sscps.org.

CATEGORIES OF VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Although it is understood that some of the following rules and regulations might be more germane at one level of education than at another rules and regulations apply nonetheless to all students, grades kindergarten through twelve. In certain cases, a conference involving the parents/guardians, the students, Principal and Level Coordinator will precede the imposition of consequences arising from violations of the Code of Conduct. At all levels, the Principal or designees will interpret these rules and regulations and will extend their application in a manner consistent with their intent, but taking into consideration the age of the student. At the South Shore Charter Public School in-school suspension may be offered (at the discretion of the Principal or his designee) as an alternative to the stated consequence. The Principal's designee is typically the Level Coordinator.

The South Shore Charter Public School administration has made an effort to detail numerous violations and their consequences. However, the list below is by no means exhaustive and the School reserves the right to impose discipline for offenses not listed below, following the procedures detailed below, as they are deemed appropriate.

GROUP A - This group contains minor disruptions and distractions that may result in a teacher action

1. Disrupting the learning environment.
2. Refusing to do assigned work.
3. Refusing a reasonable request.
4. Unexcused and undocumented tardiness to class.

Consequences K - 6

- Determined on a case by case basis

Consequences 7 - 12

- Teacher detentions determined on a case by case basis.

Teacher Detentions – Are to be served before school, at lunch, or after school (24 hours notice will be given)

GROUP B - This group contains disruptions and distractions to the learning environment that require administrative attention.

Disruptions

1. Failure to attend teacher detention
2. Disrupting the learning environment.
3. Refusing to do assigned work.
4. Refusing a reasonable request. Defiant behavior toward any school personnel whether on or off school property.
5. Failure to properly identify oneself upon request of school personnel acting in their official capacity.
6. Unexcused and undocumented tardiness to class after previous teacher consequences.
7. Three undocumented tardies to school of less than one hour each or any one undocumented tardy of more than one hour.
8. Inappropriate and/or unwanted public displays of affection.
9. Violation of the dress code. (Refer to Student Handbook for Dress Code.)
10. Displays on clothing, bags or hats of any promotion of illegal drugs or alcohol or any denigrating images based on race, gender, religion or sexual preference.
11. Unauthorized card playing.
12. Unauthorized use of cell phones, radios, tape recorders, pagers, cameras, walkman or other player (or any other electronic equipment deemed by the Administration to be a distraction or disruptive to the learning environment), roller blades or skateboards. Items will be confiscated and returned only to parent/guardian. For electronic devices for the second and all other infractions, the devices will be confiscated for five days and only returned to a parent or guardian.
13. Failure to attend detention.

Consequences K - 6

- 1st Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and specific written consequence determined on a case by case basis
- 2nd Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and specific written consequence determined on a case by case basis
- 3rd Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and specific written consequence determined on a case by case basis
- 4th Offense: Suspension of one (1) day (letter sent to parents/guardians and put in student's file)
- For 5th and subsequent offenses, the cycle of three (3) warnings followed by suspension begins again. The second and any subsequent suspension can be for two or more days. Once ten days of suspension have been reached, an expulsion hearing would be scheduled for the next offense.

Consequences 7 - 12

- 1st Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and a Saturday detention
- 2nd Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and a Saturday detention
- 3rd Offense: Written warning and notification of parents/guardians and a Saturday detention
- 4th Offense: Suspension of one (1) day (letter sent to parents/guardians and put in student's file)
- For 5th and subsequent offenses, the cycle of three (3) detentions followed by suspension begins again. The second suspension would be for two days, the third for three days, and the fourth for four days. Once ten days of suspension have been reached, an expulsion hearing would be scheduled for the next offense.

Saturday Detention - 9:00 a.m. - noon, arrival after 9:00 A.M. will be considered a skip as there will be no admission after 9:00 a.m. School work will be done during detention. Missing one detention will result in two Saturday detentions; missing a second detention will result in suspension with the Saturday detentions still to be served. PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of parents and students to arrive on time (9:00 a.m.) for Saturday Detention and to be picked up no later than noon.

Note: if a student does not receive a Class B write up for an entire marking period, one of the previous Class B write ups will be dropped. This can have cause a student who had a suspension in a previous marking period to regain Good Standing Status.

GROUP C – This group contains infractions subject to suspension.

Violations

1. Cutting class, unnecessary tardiness or early departure from class.
2. Two cuts of a detention.
3. Use or possession of tobacco products of any type on school grounds (including school buildings and buses) or at school-sponsored activities wherever held.
4. Sexual harassment or sexual activity.
5. Disrespect of a staff member or insubordination.
6. Stealing.
7. The use of obscene, abusive or profane language (oral, written, or gestured), and any language that is derogatory in its nature and denigrating based on race, gender, religion, sexual preference, ethnic origin, age or disability.
8. Harassment of any kind including, but not limited to: threats, unsolicited remarks, gestures, physical contact or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory in nature and related to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability directed at an individual because of gender, sexual orientation, religion, race or disability.
9. Bullying or other form of intimidation of a student of any kind including, but not limited to: threats, unsolicited remarks, gestures, physical contact or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures of a derogatory nature.
6. Leaving school grounds without proper authorization.
7. Truancy.
8. Behavior that might endanger persons or property and/or disrupts the orderly administration of the school (e.g., excessive pushing/shoving on the playground, throwing snowballs, food, or other objects; making excessive noise, etc.)
9. Fighting on school property or at a school sponsored event.
10. Cheating, including plagiarism.
11. Malicious destruction of, damage to or theft of school or personal property. (See note 3 below.)
12. Failure to operate a motor vehicle in a safe and reasonable manner on school property, in the vicinity of the school or when driving to and from school or to and from school sponsored activities, wherever held.
13. Gambling.
14. Forgery of a school related document, willful use of a forged school related document and/or tampering with a school related document.
15. Violation of the Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy. (See Student Handbook for policy)

Consequences K - 6

- First Offense: First Suspension – from one (1) to ten days
- Second Offense: Second Suspension – from one (1) to ten days
- Third Offense: Third Suspension – from one (1) to ten days
- Fourth Offense: Fourth Suspension – from one (1) to ten days

Consequences 7 -12

- First Offense: First Suspension – from one (1) to ten days
- Second Offense: Second Suspension – from two (2) to ten days
- Third Offense: Third Suspension – from three (3) to ten days
- Fourth Offense: Fourth Suspension – from four (4) to ten days

** The accumulation of ten (10) total days of suspension, regardless of the violation, will result in an expulsion hearing.

Notes

1. One who is suspended may not attend classes and school activities on the days(s) of suspension. In all cases a letter is sent to the parents/guardians and is put in the student's file.
2. Warnings/suspensions are considered "inactive" at the end of the school year for the purposes of determining "Good Standing" (See Student Handbook for definition).
3. Destruction or theft of school or another person's property would require restitution be made in the form of replacement or repair of the property.

GROUP D - This group contains the most serious offenses; ones that pose a direct threat to the safety of the members of the school community.

Violations

1. Threats of violence (assault) directed toward any member of the school community.
 2. Acts of arson, bomb threats, and false alarms.
 3. Use or threat to use weapons, such as knives, clubs, slingshots or other articles which may be determined dangerous. This includes the use of firearms and explosives (including fireworks).
 4. Possession and/or sale of explosives (including fireworks.)
 5. Physical and/or mental violence (battery) directed towards fellow students.
 6. Threats of violence (assault) directed towards fellow students.
 7. Obtaining money, material goods or favors by physical harm.
 8. Possession and/use of drug paraphernalia or a substance represented as a drug.
 9. Hazing as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269. (See Student Handbook for a copy of the law).
 - * 10. Physical and/or mental violence (battery) directed towards any member of the school staff.
 - * 11. Sale or distribution of drugs on school property or at school sponsored events, wherever held.
 - * 12. Possession of weapons, such as knives, clubs, guns or other articles which may be determined dangerous.
 - * 13. Possession (on person/in locker), use or being under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages on school property or at school sponsored events, wherever held.
- * These violations are covered by M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 37 H and the consequences are IMMEDIATE suspension followed by an expulsion hearing.

Massachusetts General Law Citing

M.G.L. Chapter 71: Section 37H Policies Relative to Conduct of Teachers or Students

Section 37H. The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures assuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of other student's civil rights. Codes of Discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Chapter 71: Section 37H 1/2 Felony Complaint or Conviction of Student;
Suspension; Expulsion; Right to Appeal

Section 37H1/2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the

general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

STUDENT EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 71, Section 37H) provide that students may be suspended or expelled by the Principal, with a right of appeal to the Executive Director, for certain types of offenses.

These offenses include (a) being in possession on school premises or at a school sponsored or school related event, including athletic games, of a dangerous weapon including, but not limited to a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin; and (b) assaulting a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other staff, including volunteers and guests, on school premises or at a school sponsored or school related event, including athletic games.

Students charged with these offenses will be notified in writing of the opportunity for a hearing at which time the student may have representation and the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses on his/her behalf.

In addition, students may be suspended or expelled as a result of a felony charge, conviction, or admission of involvement in a felony, again with a right of appeal to the Executive Director. (M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 37H1/2).

Students may also be expelled for other serious violations of school rules by recommendation of the Executive Director to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees may conduct a formal hearing after written notice to the student of the charges and his/her right to representation and to present evidence and witnesses at any hearing.

STUDENT APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSIONS (HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)

A High School student has a right to appeal to Judicial Council a disciplinary action pertaining to a violation that would lead to a suspension. The purpose of the Judicial Council is to make a determination if a violation of the Code of Conduct occurred and the disciplinary action is justified and make a recommendation to the Administration.

The student has twenty-four hours from the time a copy of the disciplinary write-up has been given to the student to submit a written request for appeal to the High School Level Coordinator. This request for appeal must contain the student's statement of the events and grounds for the appeal. The Level Coordinator will submit the appeal to Judicial Council on that level. The Council will convene as soon as possible to consider the matter and speak to all relevant parties as necessary. The Judicial Council will notify the High School Level Coordinator and student of its decision. If the Council upholds the disciplinary action, the Level Coordinator will impose the appropriate punishment as dictated by the Code of Conduct. If the Council overturns the disciplinary action, all record of the action will be removed from the student's file. Once the Judicial Council has ruled, no further appeal is possible.

ADDITIONAL ACTION

Involvement of the Police Department will be determined by the Principal/Executive Director if the offense warrants additional action, per the Memorandum of Understanding with the Norwell Police Department.

For more detailed information about any of the policies and procedures described in the Student Handbook please see the school's administration.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND EARLY DISMISSAL POLICY

According to Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 76 Section 2, it is unlawful for a parent/guardian to absent a child between the ages of 6 and 16 for more than (7) seven days in a six month period. Such incidents will be reported to the principal who will take appropriate action. In cases of truancy, excessive absences, and/or continued tardiness, the school will help the family to change this pattern. If the parent/guardian is resistant to complying with the state's mandatory requirements, reports can be filed with DCF for educational neglect or the school may consider filing a CHINS (Child in Need of Services) with the courts.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has mandated that all students be in school 180 scheduled days with 900 hours of scheduled learning time for elementary students and 990 hours for high school students. Failure to maintain that attendance rate may affect a student's right to appeal MCAS testing results as well as affect the standing of the school. Regular attendance and promptness are also essential to a student's academic career, social development, and sense of responsibility. Therefore, each student is expected to attend all scheduled classes.

Extended Absences: All absences beyond three consecutive school days are considered extended absences. Students returning to school after an extended absence are required to provide documentation of the absence to the principal. The principal will determine the steps required for reentry.

Any Grade 9-12 student who accumulates more than ten (10) unexcused absences for a year will receive no credit for that course or courses. Grades for that course or courses will be maintained for the purposes of calculating GPA. Loss of credit may be remediated through summer school. Any student Grade K - 8 who accumulates more than ten (10) unexcused absences for a year may be required to repeat the year. The students whose number of unexcused absences reaches five (5) will be notified in writing. Students who have exceeded the number of unexcused absences may appeal their loss of credit.

Permitted Absences

Absences in the following categories would be counted as excused:

- a) Personal illness verified by Doctor's certificate.
- b) Medical, dental, legal appointments verified by note from the professional.
- c) Religious observances.
- d) Documented family emergencies (i.e. funerals).
- e) Extenuating circumstances approved by the Principal in advance.
- f) College interviews with documentation from the Admissions Office.

Students who miss 18 or more school day or 18 or more classes, whether the absences are excused or unexcused, will not receive credit for the year and will need to repeat the grade. Exceptions may be made for students with documented long-term absences, more than five days of consecutive absences from school.

Tardiness

Excessive tardiness jeopardizes a student's academic progress, future employment, or college admission. Students are to be present at the beginning of school at 8:15AM. Students who arrive after 8:15 AM are considered tardy. Late students report directly to the Administrative Assistant. Students will not be allowed to enter a class once the class has started without a permission slip.

Students arriving late and missing class must make arrangements by the end of the school day to make up missed work.

Students who are tardy must have a written explanation from their parent/guardian to excuse the tardy. The explanation must be in conformance with the absence policy in order for the tardy to be excused. The note will be given to the Administrative Assistant upon arrival or no later than the next morning. The parent/guardian's note should state the specific reason for the tardiness and include a phone number that can be called for verification.

Students who are tardy without documentation three (3) or more times *a term* will be subject to developmentally appropriate disciplinary action according to the Code of Conduct. Three (3) unexcused tardies will be counted as one (1) day of unexcused absence. (See Group A offenses.)

Early Dismissal

A student being dismissed early requires a note to be submitted the morning of the dismissal to an Administrative Assistant in the front lobby. The note must be from a parent/guardian stating the time and the reason for the dismissal. The student who is to be dismissed must report to the Administrative Assistant and parent/guardian must sign the Early Dismissal Log before leaving the building.

High School Exam Day Attendance

Exam schedules will be published at least one-week prior to examination periods. Students are expected to abide by published attendance regulations.

Accidents - Every accident in the school building, on the grounds, at any practice session, or at any event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to the Administration. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Students are required to have on file an Emergency Card which contains at least two phone numbers that can be used to locate parents or guardians, and the name and number of a relative or neighbor who can be contacted in the event that neither parent can be reached.

Age of Majority - Students who are eighteen years old or older have the legal rights of an adult. When the rights or responsibilities of a parent or guardian are referred to in this handbook, it is understood that they include students who are eighteen years old or older. A student who is eighteen years old or older may act with the same rights and responsibilities of a parent or guardian in such areas as:

1. Decisions concerning academic issues;
2. Decisions about guidance and special education services;
3. Decisions about withdrawal from school;
4. Absence, tardy, and dismissal notes and permission slips.

Upon reaching the age of 18, a student has the right to take over from his/her parents/guardians' full responsibility for his/her school life. Students wishing to exercise this right must fill out a form and present it to the Principal who will maintain a copy of it in the student's record. Unless the school is informed in writing of the student's decision to exercise his/her right, the school will continue to involve the parents/guardians in these matters.

Even if a student chooses to exercise his/her rights and responsibilities in these matters, the Principal reserves the right to send copies of all school communications (letters, report cards, disciplinary notices, etc.) to the student's parents or guardians. The administration will continue to contact parents/guardians regarding discipline issues. The school will provide parents/guardians with access to student's records pursuant to Mass. Gen. Laws, c. 71, S34E.

Automobile and Parking Regulations

Safe driving behavior is important to all of us at SSCPS. Permission to drive to school is a privilege and comes with responsibilities. Student parking is a privilege and there is limited parking space available on campus for students. To obtain a parking space, students must successfully complete the Advanced Driver Training program. The Torri Wightman Safe Driving Fund pays for the course and it is part of the school's Health, Wellness and Safety curriculum. If the number of student applicants for parking exceeds the number of available student spaces, a lottery will be held beginning with seniors. Students may never park or arranged to be picked up off school property. This includes any parking lots adjoining the school or on the street.

Students that obtain a parking space on campus must present their license and registration to register their car and pay \$15 for a parking sticker. This sticker must be permanently attached to the inside of the driver side rear window.

Students must observe the following regulations:

1. Students must park only in designated areas on school property. Cars parked outside defined lines, off school property, or without a sticker may be subject to towing and the driver subject to disciplinary action and loss of driving privileges.
2. During afternoon dismissal, student drivers should exercise extreme caution when leaving the parking lot. Student drivers must observe a maximum speed of ten (10) MPH in the school driveway and five (5) MPH in the school parking lot.
3. Students may not return to their cars during the school day without permission from the Administration. Students who visit their cars during the school day without permission may be required to turn their keys in to the Principal and disciplinary action will be taken.
4. Any careless driving or excessive speed reported by a teacher or responsible adult will result in the student's loss of driving privileges for one week or more and possibly other disciplinary action.

Change of Address/Phone - Students must notify the Records Office of any change of address or telephone number so that mailing lists and other data are kept current.

Child Custody and the School - SSCPS is aware of the enormous burdens placed on children as a result of separation or divorce. Parents/guardians need to be aware of the difficulties this can create for the school's administration. The parents/guardians or custodian must deliver to the school's administration a copy of the Court Order or agreement as is applicable to the custody and visitation rights of the divorce or separated parents, or custodian. The Administration is entitled to deal with each parent equally if no divorce decree, or separation decree, or written custody agreement (signed by both parents/guardians) is presented to the school.

When a student is picked up at school during school hours, for an illness, doctor's appointment, or other bona fide reason, the student must be picked up by the parents, or the custodial parent, or the custodian, or by a person designated in writing by the parent. The same is applied to a student who is to be picked up after school has ended for the day. The Administration should not have to determine who the proper party to pick up the child is.

This same policy applies to progress reports, report cards and notices of disciplinary action. These will always be sent to parents jointly, or to the custodial parent or custodian as designated in writing to the school. Whenever there is a change in the custodial rights of a parent or other custodian (whether temporary or permanent) the school must be notified immediately in writing; otherwise, the school will continue to rely upon the original written arrangement on file in the Records Office.

Collections - Students are not permitted to collect monies or materials for their own purpose or for any organization in or outside of the school without permission from the Administration.

Field Trips - On varying occasions during the year students may be invited to participate in field trips related to class study. Parental approval is required.

Fire Drills are an important safety precaution and are held throughout the year. Students are asked to observe the following:

- close windows and doors of room.
- turn off lights.
- follow posted directions
- observe silence and stay with the group.
- assemble in designated areas away from the roadway.
- respond to roll call.

Food and Drink - The eating and drinking of food/beverages is an important safety and health issue because of potential allergies and the cleanliness of the building. Water is available at all times with the approval of faculty. Other food and drink should to be consumed only at designated times and places.

Lockers - Each 7 – 12 student is assigned a single locker and a lock. Lockers are used to store books and personal material such as jackets, sweaters and lunches so that students don't have to carry them throughout the day. Improper use of the locker may result in the loss of the locker.. Students should not tell anyone their combination. They should not share or trade lockers with anyone. This school is not responsible for and will not replace items stolen from school lockers. Students should not place valuables in the lockers, and should empty their lockers over weekends and vacations. The lockers are owned by the school and are subject to search at any time for reasonable cause. Students who wish to sign out a lock may do so with an Administrative Assistant. Students will be held responsible for payment if that lock is lost. Any lock signed out by a student must be returned with books at the end of the school year.

Messages from Parents/Guardians - In order to limit the number of interruptions in the school day, the school will deliver messages from parents/guardians to students only in the event of an emergency. Routine changes in schedule or pick-up cannot be treated as emergency information.

No School Announcements - In case of severe storms, SSCPS considers the decision of Norwell Schools and other neighboring school systems. Announcements are made using the emergency phone system and on the following television and radio stations: WCVB-TV Ch. 5, WFXT-TV CH. 25, WHDH-TV Ch 7, and WRKO AM 680. The school will use the emergency phone system to announce the closing of school.

The school discourages parents/guardians from telephoning the school office if winter storms begin after school is in session. Should a severe storm occur during school hours, the school administration may allow student drivers to leave with those who carpool with them. The school recognizes the inexperience of young drivers and precaution is taken for the safety of the students. If forecasters predict that an early morning storm will end quickly, the school may announce a delayed opening.

Parent/Student Sponsored Events or Activities - Parents/guardians and students are cautioned that they may not solicit participation or promote an event or activity on school grounds nor use the school's name in promoting, sponsoring, or arranging such an event or activity without the expressed written (seems to me this permission is often verbal) permission of the Administration. Events or activities include, but are not limited to, trips of any kind, parties, dances, and athletic events.

Personal Property - Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, electronic equipment, cameras, and/or other expensive property to school. If this is unavoidable, students should contact the Administration about storing the property during the school day. All valuables found, *i.e.*, rings, watches, money, etc. should be taken to the Administrative Assistant. These items may be claimed after school.

Posted Materials - No posters, flyers, or announcements, whether for SSCPS events or programs outside the school may be posted until previously approved by the Administration. Any organization that posts announcements, flyers, or posters is responsible for the removal of the same following the event announced.

Teacher Absence - Should a teacher not report to class, one student from the class should report the absence within five minutes of the start of the period. No other student may leave the room and the classroom doors will remain open until a substitute arrives.

Textbooks - Textbooks and library books are the property of SSCPS. All textbooks must be kept clean, covered and handled carefully. Issued texts are the direct responsibility of the student. If textbooks are lost or damaged, the student must pay for the book before a new textbook will be issued. It is expected that all students have the text, workbook, and other materials necessary for each of their classes.

Visitors - The school policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business at the school. Guests and visitors must register in the school office. Visitors to the school are greeted with courtesy and attention and can expect from any student a simple greeting and a, "May I help you?"

Work Assignments - At times, students will have assigned tasks in helping to clean and maintain the classroom or the grounds. Taking some part in caring for the immediate environment increases the respect the student has for it. (Do we want to make this a daily expectation?)

Working Permits - A student under 16 years of age may require a Working Permit for employment. These Permits may be obtained from Guidance.

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SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant

Name: _____

Staff: _____ Student: _____

Grade/Position: _____

Home Address:

Phone #:

Complaint Against

Name: _____

Staff: _____ Student: _____

Grade/Position: _____

Home Address:

Phone #:

Relationship to you:

Nature of Complaint

- (1) Employment Discrimination
- (2) Harassment
- (3) Intimidation
- (4) Threats
- (5) Coercion
- (6) Other

If you have checked any of the above, please indicate the basis of the civil rights violation or discrimination. (You may check more than one category.)

Race National Origin Disability
 Religion Sexual Orientation
 Gender Age Ethnicity

Marital Status Retaliation for Filing a Complaint
 Other

SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

2009-2010

Please return this slip within one week to your pod teacher or advisor.

The Administration, Faculty, and Staff of South Shore Charter Public School are all dedicated to the education of the students who attend the School. We expect that you, as student, and you, as parent/guardian, have familiarized yourselves with the School's program of academics, the policies and rules stated in this Handbook, and those found in other school publications used in the School.

I have read the above and the necessary school publications. As a student I agree to the school regulations.

Student Signature

Grade

I am aware of the policies and practices of South Shore Charter Public School as set forth in the school publications.

Parent Signature

Date