



**Seacoast**  
CHARTER ACADEMY

**STUDENT HANDBOOK  
AND  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Welcome

Dear Seacoast Families,

We are so excited to be starting a new year with you! We know that you have options for your child's education, and we are so glad that we are your choice. We believe that parents are the first and primary teachers. They are responsible for their children's basic needs and values. Our goal is to partner with you so that your child has the very best educational experience they can have. In order to do that, communication is key. In this handbook, you will be introduced to the Seacoast way and get some insight on how our school runs. Hopefully this will provide you with a clear picture and answer any questions that you may have for us.

One thing that we pride ourselves on is having a great staff. Our staff is a family and loves coming to work each and every day. We know the importance of building relationships with each other, as well as with students and families. We have high expectations for our teachers and students, and we provide them with the resources that they need to thrive and shine.

At Seacoast, we believe in educating the whole child. We do teach the Florida Standards, and our students do participate in state testing. We work hard to make sure that our curriculum is current and relevant to the students, and our teachers collaborate to plan the most effective and engaging instruction for our students. In addition to the core subjects, students also have recess and resource classes daily consisting of P.E., art, music, library, Spanish, computers, and character education.

We also feel that it is important to have fun! We have many events throughout the school year to celebrate learning and get families involved. In October, we always have a literacy parade where students dress up as their favorite book characters, and families are encouraged to come out and wave as the students march by. In December, we always have a North Pole Breakfast. This is a wonderful time to fellowship close to the holidays. Students get to come in their pajamas, sing carols, have breakfast, and drink hot chocolate. This is also our largest contribution to our community as we collect canned goods and donate them to Arlington Community Services. Throughout the year, we also have music performances that are fun for all, and we have a science night in the spring where students are challenged with hands on experiments and activities. Closer to the end of the year, students always have a blast participating in field day and water day activities as they have worked so hard and are ready to release some energy!

Thank you again for choosing to be a part of our team. We look forward to a great year of learning and fun. Please let us know if you have any additional questions or concerns after viewing the handbook.

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## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Seacoast is to provide a student-centered education, focusing on the whole child. We want our students to develop a true love for learning by creating a positive learning environment with innovative technology and high-quality education focused on an arts integrated, hands-on curriculum with the overall goal of giving our elementary students a lifetime appreciation of learning and the development of their unique talents and abilities.

## **Philosophy**

Instruction can best occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Effective instruction requires good order and discipline--absence of distractions, friction, and disturbances that interfere with the effective functioning of the student, class, and school. A friendly, yet business like atmosphere, in which students and school personnel work cooperatively toward mutually recognized and accepted goals, embodies effective instruction. As each student progresses, it is reasonable to assume that an increase in age and maturity will result in his assuming greater responsibility for his actions. The differences in age and maturity will require different types of disciplinary action. However, the procedures identified will apply to all students in all grade levels.

## **Basic Principles of Operation**

The philosophy of the School must be student-centered, positive, and courageous. It must be believed by its practitioners and must result in a worthy educational program.

Seacoast must face the realities and necessities of community living. It must assure each pupil successful living in an atmosphere of genuine joy and pleasant daily practice of thoughtful, responsible, purposeful activity. It must saturate each pupil with the necessity for making his own decisions, for expressing himself in doing a good job of whatever he/she attempts under positive direction. It must help him/her to see what he/she learns at school, at home, and in the community as an integrated whole. It must apply those social controls that prevail in a democratic society relying on development of self-direction and self-control. It must result in independence, but not non-conformance, frankness but not freshness, confidence, but not complacency. It must construct direction and control.

The program of the Seacoast Charter Academy must be a cooperative enterprise based on the interests and needs of the pupils. It must be founded on a thorough knowledge of the pupils, their home environments, their parents, and the social economic aspects of their community. It must recognize personality, which implies freedom to act without arbitrary prohibitions, and acceptance of responsibility for one's actions. It must treat subject matter as a means, and skills, attitudes, knowledge, and understanding as ends, taught at the intelligence level and social maturity of the individual as his/her interest is aroused and his/her personal need is established. It must realize that successful living is built, not on textbooks alone, but on student-centered expression, and appreciation gained through real and vicarious experience. It must prepare him as a competent worker for continued learning and for wholesome recreation. It must provide him with activities, curricular and extra-curricular, that will result in community participation and service.

## **Educational Objectives**

***For the intellectual and academic growth of students, the school should endeavor:***

1. To train students to evaluate all subject matter.
2. To promote high academic standards, encouraging students to use their potential and work to the best of their ability.
3. To work with students at a level appropriate to their development and ability, recognizing the uniqueness of each student.
4. To assist students to see that their total being, including their mind and learning, is an instrument.
5. To teach basic facts, concepts, and skills necessary for further education and subsequent experience by:
  - a. Teaching and encouraging good study habits.
  - b. Training students in the development of effective communication skills in the area of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
  - c. Introducing students to the fundamentals of independent research, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and enjoyment of learning.
  - d. Helping students to use their talents creatively and resourcefully and to develop an appreciation for the talents of others.
6. To assist students to develop the capacity to understand people, including those of other national, ethnic, and social groups.
7. To teach responsible citizenship, preparing students to become participating members of society, with respect for our legacy of freedom, proper submission to authority, and the determination to uphold standards.
8. To aid students in the interpretation of international events.
9. To produce an understanding of and appreciation for the world, an awareness of man's role in his environment, and his responsibility to use and preserve it properly.

***Working with school families, the school should desire:***

1. To assist parents in instructing their children to lead wholesome lives.
2. To provide parents with resources regarding healthy family living.
3. To foster consistency, cooperation, and communication between the home and school.
4. To help parents understand the purposes and programs of the school and encourage them to be actively involved in the life of the school.
5. To seek parental input on important school issues.

## **ENROLLMENT AND CURRICULUM**

### **Enrollment and Admissions**

You're making a personal decision to enroll your child(ren) at Seacoast Charter Academy in order to provide your child with a unique educational opportunity. Students will be considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. Your desire and decision to enroll your child at Seacoast Charter Academy is based upon your desire to become an active partner in the education of your child. Please recognize that Seacoast Charter Academy is a public charter school of choice, not an entitlement. Therefore, the Parent Engagement Contract is required to be signed and submitted as well.

**School Registration Under Florida Law:**

- A child must have successfully completed kindergarten in order to be eligible for first grade.
- Children may enter kindergarten if they will be five years old on or before September 1st.
- Children may enter first grade if they will be six years old on or before September 1st, and have successfully completed kindergarten.
- All children who will be six years old by February 1st must attend school.
- All children must attend school until they reach the age of 16.
- This is Florida law and there are no exceptions.

The application **MUST** be completed in order to be considered for enrollment. There are no exceptions. Seacoast Charter Academy is a tuition free public charter school with open enrollment. In the event that we have more applications than available seats a lottery will be held for the available seats. In this event, the school will give you dates and times of the lottery and the process. If you have any questions, you can contact the school anytime.

After you have submitted your application, you will receive an Acceptance Letter or Lottery Letter based upon availability. In order to complete the process and be a Seacoast family you must provide the following documentation:

- Address Verification (JEA bill, cable bill, etc.)
- Florida certification of immunization or exemption
- Physical examination for all students who have never attended a Florida public or private school (physical must be no more than 12 months old at the time of the student's enrollment)
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Copy of Social Security Card
- Copy of most recent Report Card
- If applicable, Copy of FAST or Standardized Test Scores
- If applicable, Most Recent IEP or 504

Controlled Open Enrollment allows a parent from any school district in the state to enroll his or her child in and transport his or her child to any public school, including charter schools, that has not reached capacity.

- School Capacity for K-5: 514

In order to withdraw, parents must notify the front office of the student's last day. Parents must sign the withdraw and records release forms so that the special assignment can be removed and records can be sent to the next school.

**Student Records**

Each child has a student record that travels with them from school to school. This record is private and confidential. A child's parent/guardian and authorized school personnel are the only ones that can see these records and they must be kept under lock and key each day. At the request of and with written permission from parents, others may have access to the records as well.

## Curriculum

The primary goal for K-2 is to teach students to read, foster a love of learning, and set the foundational skills needed to succeed. In grades 3-5, students are now reading to learn. They are challenged through the standards-based curriculum and hands on activities. Students will have 90 minutes daily in reading and math instruction and will also have instruction each week in science, social studies, and language arts/writing.

Seacoast seeks to educate the whole child addressing the intellectual, social, emotional, creative, physical, and collaborative aspects of education. We are committed to pursuing high academic achievement through the education of the whole child. We will do this through:

- A climate that focuses on high student engagement that goes beyond just learning the material to the application of real-world experiences.
- A student behavior system that does not focus solely on the negative, but that fosters optimum behaviors for the classroom society.
- Trained teachers in effective teaching techniques, standards-based learning, assessment, and data management.
- A curriculum that meets and exceeds the Florida standards.
- Classrooms that are print-rich with visual supports for the school community and various genres of material.
- Lessons planned around the student body
- Project-based learning – school-wide culminating activities around a universal theme showing the different learning styles and modalities of our students.
- Academic support systems that provide target remediation, extensions or enrichment. Differentiated work will be used in classrooms when needed.

Seacoast feels that the best way to integrate technology is through an interactive classroom. Utilizing Promethean technology and Chromebooks, an interactive classroom takes advantage of the tools that provide students with a world of resources. It facilitates instruction that accommodates students and varied learning styles and includes timely frequent assessments of progress. It provides many opportunities for students to acquire what has been called “21st-century skills,” including the ability to think critically, analyze information, comprehend new ideas, communicate, collaborate and make the kinds of decisions necessary in today’s society.

The rewards of this environment include improved student performance, an enriched context for learning, more efficient classroom teachers, an extension of the learning environment beyond the school walls, better connections between schools and families and between schools and the global communities, and students who have the skills to succeed in the 21st-century workplace.

SCA believes the education of the whole child should include work in drama, music and visual arts. Every day at school should involve opportunities to play, invent and discover. The arts represent innate aspects of our common humanity, providing an inherent foundation for communication and a bridge for understanding one another across boundaries of age, race, gender identity, socioeconomics and culture.

Students from kindergarten through fifth grade participate weekly in visual arts and music. The school’s music and art teachers collaborate with classroom staff to organize shows and performances and to integrate the

arts into the regular curriculum. Music, for example, can inspire appreciation of mathematics and physics; likewise, students learn geometry through visual and graphic arts. Thus, students become well versed in a broad range of art media and techniques as they enhance their core competency skills. They also learn the impact and importance of the arts socially, historically and multiculturally. SCA arts staff are active and accomplished artists in their respective fields.

## **Student Assessment and Grade Reports**

At Seacoast, communication is essential, and students and families are continuously kept informed of academic performance. Our students receive grades in Renweb, our grade portal, from their teachers. Progress reports are emailed on a weekly basis to keep families updated on student progress. Students will also receive a report card at the end of each 9 weeks to show how students are performing on grade level.

Students take baseline testing at the beginning of the school year to help us better support them throughout the year. All students from kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade take state progress monitoring assessments at the beginning of the year for reading and math to determine strengths and weaknesses and to help group students for differentiated instruction. All students also complete i-Ready diagnostics in reading and math to set them on individual learning paths to fill in learning gaps. Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students complete Reading A-Z assessments to determine reading levels. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students take science baseline assessments from our curriculum to predict how students are projected to perform on the state tests.

We use diagnostic data along with classroom data to determine student gaps. Students that are not making adequate progress in reading or math begin Response to Intervention (RTI) small group services with the classroom teacher to try to close those gaps. Teachers also begin progress monitoring plans for those students. They will discuss the plans with parents and put a plan of action in place. If sufficient progress is not made, students will begin more intensive one on one RTI services and be referred to a team for further testing and evaluation to see if there are other causes for concern. For additional instructional time, we offer free afterschool tutoring throughout the year for students not performing on grade level.

Mid-year, students take the baseline assessments again to determine growth and/or decline in progress. At this time, we determine which students are in danger of failing and send out possible retention notices. We also determine which students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are in danger of not passing the reading state assessment and need to begin a portfolio as these are requirements for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade promotion.

At the end of the year, students will be assessed again through district and state assessments to determine mastery of the grade level standards. Throughout the year, teachers will keep parents and students updated on student progress with baseline assessments and predictors for state testing. If additional progress monitoring plans or services are needed, parents will be a part of that process.

If any student is in need of additional supports, we have a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) in place. It's a framework many schools use to give targeted support to struggling students. MTSS is designed to help schools identify struggling students early and intervene quickly. It focuses on the "whole child." That means it supports academic growth, but many other areas, too. These include behavior, social and emotional needs, and absenteeism (not attending school). If students are needing academic support, they can move through RTI levels to receive more intense instruction in a small group setting. If students are struggling with behaviors,



behavior plans and tiered support is available. We also have guidance and a social worker to aid in social and emotional needs, as well as, setting up attendance plans as needed.

If your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan, we will provide the necessary services. If your child is coming to us with a plan in place already, please be sure to let the school know so that we can make sure that the plan does not lapse and that we have the proper resources. We have Exceptional Student Education (ESE) teachers on staff, and we have contracts with outside providers for speech and additional services needed.

### **Promotional Requirements**

For student promotion, we follow Duval County's Student Progression Plan and adhere to the Florida state statutes. **It is the intent of the Florida Legislature that each student's progression from one grade to another be determined, in part, upon proficiency in reading, writing, science, and mathematics; that district school board policies facilitate such proficiency; and that each student and his or her parent/guardian be informed of that student's academic progress. 1008.25, F.S.**

In summary, for kindergarten through fifth grade students to be promoted to the next grade level, students must successfully meet state standards in reading and math with a final grade of a D or higher. Additionally, Fourth and fifth grade students are also required to pass science or social studies with a final grade of D or higher.

Specifically for third grade students to be promoted, they must also achieve the minimum score on the state reading assessment unless they meet the criteria for good cause exemption as listed below. Alternatively, third graders that are not successful on the reading state assessment can meet the expectations approved by the state on i-Ready, STAR, or through a portfolio using the district approved Benchmark Advance curriculum.

#### **GRADE 3 GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTIONS:**

- (1) Have less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program based on the initial entry date into a school in the United States; or
- (2) Have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities which indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate; or
- (3) Score at or above the required percentile on the State-approved alternative assessment at the end of the school year or the end of Third Grade Reading Recovery Program; or
- (4) Complete a Student Portfolio in accordance with district guidelines demonstrating that they are reading at least at Level 2 performance on the statewide standardized assessment; or
- (5) Be a student with a disability who participates in the statewide standardized assessment and has an IEP or Section 504 plan that reflects that the student has received intensive reading instruction for more than two years but still demonstrates a deficiency in Reading or English Language Arts AND was previously retained in grades K, 1, 2, or 3; or
- (6) Received intensive reading instruction for 2 or more years but still demonstrate a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, or grade 3 for a total of 2 years. A student may not be retained more than once in grade 3.

**Parent Request for Retention:** A parent may request for a student to be retained if they are not making adequate progress and grades in any quarters have been a D or F. The parent, administration, teacher (and ESE/ELL staff if applicable) will meet to discuss grades and assessments to determine if retention will be beneficial.

**NOTE: A student who is promoted to grade 4 with a good cause exemption shall be provided intensive reading instruction and intervention that include specialized diagnostic information and specific reading strategies to meet the needs of each student so promoted.**

### **Parent Request for Evaluation for ESE Services**

If you as the parent or legal guardian feel your child needs additional services, you may request that an evaluation be conducted during implementation of general education interventions. Seacoast and the district must, within 30 calendar days (unless the parent or legal guardian and the district agree to another timeline in writing), either obtain consent (and complete the evaluation within the 60-day timeline) or provide the parent or legal guardian with a written notice explaining why the district is refusing to conduct the evaluation. The notice must meet the requirements of Rule 6A-6.03311(1), F.A.C. (Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(c) and (f), F.A.C.; 34 CFR §§300.301(b) and 300.309(c)(2)). The district cannot delay an evaluation because general education interventions have not been completed.

As a component of a comprehensive evaluation, the provision of evidence-based interventions and collection of response to intervention data continues as a part of the evaluation. Based on the areas of concern and additional information the team needs, one or more standardized, norm-referenced assessments may be administered. In some cases, standardized assessment will not be required, and multiple sources of formative assessment data used for data-based problem solving, including review of existing data, will comprise the comprehensive evaluation. If you have further questions about the process, please contact the front office and we will meet with you.

### **Homework**

Teachers will explain the homework expectations to families at the beginning of the year as it varies slightly by teacher and grade level. It is an expectation that all students read each night. Homework should not take more than 30 minutes each night in grades K-2 and 1 hour in grades 3-5. If you ever want additional practice, please let the teachers know, and they will be able to assist with that. Students can also complete extra practice lessons using our online resource i-Ready at home as well. This is designed to be on each student's individual level based on their beginning of the year assessment.

## POLICIES

### Hours and Transportation

We do not provide transportation. Parents are responsible for getting students to and from school on time each day. Breakfast begins at 7:45. If students are not going to breakfast, arrival is between 8:00-8:30. Parents drop students off at the designated locations and school personnel will make sure that students get to their classrooms. After 8:30, students are considered tardy, and parents must come into the office to sign students in.

Dismissal begins for K-1 at 2:45 and 3:05 for 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders. Parents will be given a map with specific instructions for the dismissal traffic pattern and will be provided with two car tags at the beginning of the year. Car tags must be visible to pick up students. If the car tag is not available, parents must come into the office and show identification to get students. If additional tags are needed, they can be purchased in the front office for \$3. Students must be picked up by 3:30 (1:30 on early release days). **Any pickups after 3:30 (1:30) will incur a late fee of \$25 for the first 15 minutes and \$20 for every 5 minutes thereafter.**

If you need additional information about before or aftercare, please let the front office know and that will be provided.

We follow the Duval County Public School calendar. We observe the same holidays, planning days and early release days as Duval. We also will close if they do due to inclement weather and emergency situations.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is vital to the success of students at Seacoast Charter Academy. Our mission is to provide a student-centered education focusing on the whole child by providing a positive environment and hands-on curriculum to our students so that they can develop a love for learning. When students are absent, tardy, or checked out early and miss instruction, their learning is disrupted causing frustration for the students and gaps in their learning.

Seacoast Charter Academy attendance policy has been adapted from the Duval County attendance policy. Students will be allowed five absences per semester. After five days, an attendance letter will be sent home. Those absences after more than five days must be excused by written documentation from a licensed/certified health practitioner, the principal for participation in school-sponsored activities, or for recognized religious holidays. In addition, 3 tardies or 3 early checkouts (not excused) will be considered an absence.

Seacoast Charter Academy does not provide transportation to students, so it is the parent's/guardian's and student's responsibility to arrive to school each day on time. Students are expected to be in attendance every day for the full school day. Parents must call the school in the morning to report student absences. If students are excessively absent, tardy, or checked out early, this is considered a violation of 1003.21, F.S. and an attendance plan will be initiated. Failure to comply with the attendance plan could result in being reported to Family Court.

Students must turn in written excuses for an absence to the classroom teacher in order to make up missed class work. Students who accumulate more than ten absences, for any reasons, and have not made up their work, will not receive credit for that class.

Students who miss school without parental knowledge are considered unlawfully absent. When a student has one unlawful absence, the school will contact parents and develop a plan for improved attendance. If the student continues to be unlawfully absent, the student will have to leave the school, and he/she will be reported to Family Court. Cutting school will be dealt with as a disciplinary offense.

### **STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

Per Duval County, the following causes are acceptable excuses for being absent:

1. Illness or injury of the student;
2. Participation in therapy services, to include, without limitation, the treatment of autism spectrum disorder provided by a licensed health care practitioner or behavior analyst certified pursuant to Florida Statutes;
3. Serious illness or death in the student's family;
4. Inclement weather;
5. Official religious holiday of a religious sect or for religious instruction (see below);
6. Insurmountable conditions as determined by the school principal or other designated district or school personnel; and,
7. Students participating in educational activities which constitute a part of the school approved instructional program shall be deemed in attendance.
8. A student shall be excused from attendance on a particular day or days, or for part of a day, and shall be excused from any examination, study, or work assignment for observation of a religious holiday or because the tenets of his or her religion forbid secular activity at such time. Teachers shall give each student the opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work assignment which has been missed for religious purposes and the student shall receive full credit for such work.

### **SICK STUDENT POLICY**

Under no circumstances can a parent/guardian bring or send a sick student to school if the student shows any signs of illness (symptoms requiring removal of student from school) or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular school day. Symptoms requiring removal of student from school include:

- **Fever:** Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100.4°F or higher. A student needs to be fever free without the aid of any fever reducing medication (Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc.), for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Diarrhea:** Diarrhea is described as 2 or more stools within a 4-hour period that are either loose, runny, watery, and/or bloody, or if stool cannot be contained in the diaper/undergarment. A student needs to stay home from school until the diarrhea has stopped, without the aid of anti-diarrheal medication, for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.
- **Vomiting:** A student needs to stay home from school for at least 24-hours to ensure vomiting has resolved.
- Breathing trouble, hacking, or persistent and continuous coughing.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, live lice, undiagnosed rash, or skin condition that resemble childhood diseases.
- Student is irritable, in pain, continuously crying, or requires more attention than school staff can provide

while ensuring the health, safety, or well-being of the other students.

- Open wounds that cannot be covered and/or drainage that cannot be contained with a bandage.

A note from the student's health care provider is needed when:

- the student has been absent for 3 or more consecutive days,
- the student has had surgery,
- the student is returning to school after hospitalization,
- the student has been under the doctor's care for a significant illness, or
- the student is returning to school after being excluded because of a communicable disease.

### **ABSENTEEISM DUE TO HEAD LICE**

- Provide students up to 3 days of excused absences for each identified case of head lice.
- Students will be provided an opportunity to make up all work missed during the excused absentee period.
- Students sent home for treatment of head lice will be readmitted through the school office only when they are personally accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult.
- Trained staff will carefully examine the hair and scalp of returning students. If head lice are present, the student will not be admitted.
- Follow-up screening will be scheduled in 7-10 days.

### **Communication**

Communication is vital for success. The school office is open daily from 8:00-4:00. If you receive an answering machine during those hours as the office is high functioning throughout the day, please leave a message and your call will be promptly returned.

Teachers will provide you with their email addresses and other means of communication at the beginning of the school year. You can reach the teacher via email or phone at your convenience. You can also schedule conferences directly with the teacher, or you may come into the office and fill out a conference request and we will make sure that the teacher receives the message and gets back with you promptly.

Parents will receive weekly emails in regards to grade reports. Parents will also receive a Friday email from the front office staff to keep you informed and with important information and upcoming events.

While it is important that we keep you informed about your child's academics, progress, and behavior, it is also essential that you keep us informed as well. Please let us know any information that may better assist us in helping your child. This includes family issues, medical needs, illnesses, safety concerns, family emergencies, and contact information.

### **Medication and Allergies**

Seacoast front office staff will store and provide prescribed medications to students with medical conditions with parent and doctor approval. Parents must fill out an authorization form and parents must bring the medication to the front office. The authorization form is only valid for the duration of the school year and must be updated when changes to the medication are made. The medication must be in its original container. If it is a prescription, the label must be visible. If it is over the counter, it should be clearly labeled with the student's name, dosage, duration, and expiration date.

Inhalers can travel with a student, but all other medications are kept in the office. Students are not allowed to self-medicate with over-the-counter medications. Please note that cough drops are considered medications and cannot be in a child's possession.

Parents must pick up medications at the end of each year or throughout the year if the medication has expired.

Front office staff and at least one teacher per grade level are trained in first aid, CPR, and AED usage. They also are trained to use Epi-Pens. Logs are kept to record anytime a medication is administered to a student or anytime that a student has a medical need.

Parents must communicate with the school and teachers about any allergy concerns. A form from the doctor should be provided identifying allergies, symptoms, and steps needed if a reaction occurs.

### **Grievances**

Please contact your child's teacher if questions or concerns arise in regards to your child. Teachers should respond respectfully and promptly within 24 hours during the work week.

If you have discussed concerns with your child's teacher and do not feel that the problem has been resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the front office and they can schedule an appointment for you with administration. If specific school issues arise, go directly to administration.

If you still are not satisfied after speaking with administration, you can contact our board parent liaison Angel Gastfield at [agastfield@yahoo.com](mailto:agastfield@yahoo.com) to discuss further.

### **Governing Board**

Our governing board consists of school administrators and personnel, business owners and professionals, community supporters, and parents. The board is responsible for legal and financial obligations, establishing policies, and making sure that the school fulfills its duties as a charter school. Board members are posted on the school website under Governance. The calendar and minutes are also posted as well.

## **BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY EXPECTATIONS**

### **Behavioral Expectations for Students**

Children tend to excel in structured environments when rituals and routines are evident. Teachers at Seacoast collaborate with their teams to form a developmentally appropriate classroom management plan with clear expectations and follow through what they practice with students from day one. Teachers will model appropriate behaviors, praise positive behaviors using reward systems, and redirect negative behaviors using appropriate conflict resolution and consequences.

All classrooms use a fluid clip-chart for behavior where students start on green (ready to learn) for the day and can clip up and down throughout the day to earn a behavior grade. In order for students to receive an A in conduct, they must earn it by clipping up for exceptional behaviors.

At Seacoast, we follow Duval County Public School's Code of Conduct for disciplinary actions. We will keep parents informed of these actions and will work with parents as needed if behavior plans need to be developed in order for students to be successful. We are very strict with policies regarding fighting and bullying. We do not allow students to put hands on one another as safety is our number one concern.

In addition, with reasonable suspicion, school authorities may search student belongings or other areas that may contain prohibited or illegally possessed substances or objects pursuant to Florida Statutes.

It is also important to note that privacy policies will allow us to discuss discipline actions with you about your child only. We cannot divulge which students might have been involved in an incident with your child or what consequences they received.

## **Bullying**

Seacoast takes all reported acts of bullying seriously. Bullying should be reported to the administrator and investigations of alleged incidents will be investigated at the school-level.

### **Bullying is defined as:**

**3.21 (BUL) Bullying/Cyberbullying** – Systematically and chronically, inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees, Bullying includes instances of cyberbullying. as defined in Section 1006.147(3)(b), F.S. Bullying may include, but not limited, repetitive instances of teasing, social exclusion, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, harassment, public or private humiliation, or destruction of property. If the physical harm or psychological distress is not the result of systematic or chronic behavior, evaluate for harassment. **(School must have completed a bullying packet to assign this charge).**

Note: Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, facsimile, texting, social media, creating webpages and weblogs, assuming the identity of another person, distribution by electronic means or posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons which creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

**(UBL) UNSUBSTANTIATED BULLYING** - After a complete investigation and follow up of a reported bullying incident, the investigator determines that there is not enough evidence to substantiate that the incident meets the criteria of a prohibited act under the definition of bullying as listed in the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for all Students Act (section 1006.147, F.S.).

**(UHR) UNSUBSTANTIATED HARASSMENT** – After a complete investigation and follow up of a reported harassment incident, the investigator determines that there is not enough evidence to substantiate that the incident meets the criteria of a prohibited act under definition of harassment as listed in the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up for all Students Act (section 1006.147, F.S.).

## **Bullying Vs. Conflict**

- **Conflict**
  - The students don't get along and are constantly arguing.
  - The students have hit each other or had mutual disagreements at school.
  - Both students have called each other names.
  - Someone called another student a name in class.
  - A student is being mean to another student.
  - Can be solved at the school / teacher / parent / administration level
- **Conflicts are taken very seriously.**
- Parents let the teachers know immediately if you hear of ongoing conflicts.
- Teachers will monitor and separate the students.
- Teachers will send incident reports to school administration.
- School counseling sessions
- Code of Conduct Violations will be assigned to the student.
- We need to stop any conflict before it becomes bullying.

## **Investigations**

- Bullying reported to teacher and school counselor
- Formal investigation will start
- Reported to the County of Bullying findings
- Meetings and/or letters to parents of both the accused and the non-accused
- Legal actions are needed if bullying is found
- Court hearings may need to be made

## **Incident and Accident Reports**

An incident report will be filled out anytime your child is involved in an incident that occurs on campus. We are not allowed to divulge other student's names or consequences as that is a privacy issue. We can only tell you what happened to your child, how he/she was involved, and the consequences that he/she received. Phone calls will be made for severe incidents, but not every minor infraction. The report is always sent home as a means of communication. If you did not receive a phone call and need further explanation or have questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's teacher.

Accident reports are written in the event of an injury. These are sent home as well, and phone calls home will be made for severe accidents resulting in possible medical attention. For emergencies, we would contact parents and emergency care as needed. We do not have a nurse on staff, but we do have staff members trained in first aid, CPR, and AED usage.

## **Acceptable Use for Technology**

Any misuse of the following guidelines will result in the loss of privileges with the use of technology in our school and disciplinary consequences as dictated by the Code of Conduct.

## **Expectations**

- Students will use the computers/technology as instructed to do so by the teacher.
- Students will not share logins, usernames, or passwords, and will only use the school account that is



assigned to them.

- Students will treat the computers/technology with respect. Students will not be permitted to physically or electronically misuse the equipment.
- Students must stay/work with the group and only go the site(s)/apps that they are instructed to access.
- Researching topics related to a school project is the only appropriate use of the Web. (Students are not permitted to check sports scores, go to entertainment sites such as music, TV, movie or band sites, go to game sites, etc.)
- Students may not go to chat rooms or use Instant Messenger programs.
- The teacher will check all in-coming and out-going e-mail messages before students will have access to them should we use e-mail in the classroom.

### **Consequences**

Disciplinary action of inappropriate use of computers and internet will abide by the Code of Student Conduct. Other possible disciplinary actions include but are not limited to: suspension or limited access of the internet, network, or computer access; school suspension and/or expulsion; and appropriate legal action civil and/or criminal.

### **Dress Code**

#### **STUDENT ATTIRE FOR EDUCATION (SAFE) ACT:**

The purpose for this policy is to provide a safe environment for students that fosters learning and improves school safety and discipline. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days. The school reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines. Every student shall wear school uniforms as stated below, and no other attire will be permitted unless an exception from administration as outlined below is given. All school uniforms must be worn properly with the appropriate size and the waist of the garment worn at the student's waist.

#### **TOPS: POLOS**

Only Seacoast Charter polo shirts may be worn. Except on PE days. \*See PE Days section.

#### **BOTTOMS: PANTS/SHORTS/ SKORTS**

Bottoms must be navy or khaki uniform pants/shorts/skorts. All school uniforms must be in good repair, worn properly in the appropriate size, and the waist of the garment worn at the student's waist. Shorts or skorts may not be more than two inches above the knee.

#### **HAIR**

Students must keep their hair neat and clean. Students may not have "unnatural" colors in their hair (i.e., green, blue, purple, pink, florescent red, etc.), including, but not limited to dyes, temporary sprays/dips, braids, and/or clip-in hair pieces. Mohawks, cut-outs, etc. in hair line are not permitted. Boys' hair must not exceed bottom of ears on the sides and collar on back. No hats, bandannas, or headbands may be worn.

#### **SHOES**

Students must wear closed-toed shoes at all times. No sandals, CROCS, or heavy military type boots or

shoes with metal tips may be worn. No shoes with pop-out rollers or sounds. No shoes that pose a danger to students will be permitted as students frequently use stairs.

### **MAKE-UP/JEWELRY**

Girls may wear makeup that is natural and conservative. Extreme makeup should be avoided. Girls may not wear body piercings other than earrings. No jewelry that is rebellious in nature or distracting from the classroom atmosphere will be permitted. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings, body piercings, makeup, or fingernail polish. No jewelry that is rebellious in nature or distracting from the classroom atmosphere will be permitted.

### **OUTERWEAR**

While indoors, students may only wear Seacoast Charter jackets or sweatshirts. No other sweatshirts or jackets are permitted. Absolutely, NO HOODIES are permitted in the building at any time.

### **PE DAYS**

On PE days, students must wear their Seacoast Charter PE shirt and shorts. For cooler weather students may wear plain gray or navy sweatpants or long sleeves under their PE uniform. Students must wear athletic shoes on their PE days.

**IN GENERAL:** At no time are students to wear anything offensive, immodest, or deemed inappropriate by the faculty. If the problem persists, parents will be called and required to bring the correct uniform to school before the child can return to class. A fund will be established to provide assistance to students unable to afford uniforms.

### **EXCEPTIONS TO THE UNIFORM DRESS CODE SHALL BE PERMITTED WHEN:**

A student's parent may request a reasonable accommodation to address the student's disability or medical condition. Such request shall be provided in writing and submitted to the Administrator for approval; or when compliance of the uniform dress code violates a student's sincerely religious belief, the student and the student's parent shall submit a signed affidavit setting forth the religious issue and the exemption to the policy.

### **FREE DRESS DAY**

Fridays are free dress days. Students may wear jeans or Bermuda shorts or modest length skirts with a conservative shirt. All pants/skirts/shorts must fit properly – no excessively tight or loose clothing. No halter tops, backless tops, tops with thin straps, or tops that show midriff or expose the body. No shirts that display profanity, violence, lewd and/or obscene messages, sexually suggestive phrases, or advertisements, phrases or symbols of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, other symbols or phrases that would be offensive. No free dress attire is permissible on non-free dress days unless granted by the administrator.

### **FIELD TRIP ATTIRE**

Unless otherwise specified, uniforms are worn on field trips. Dress code for off campus activities is decided by the administration.

## **Cell Phones and Electronics**

Students are not permitted to have cell phones and electronic devices at school. If a device is necessary as it is needed for students to safely travel to and from school, it must be kept in their backpacks and turned off during the school day. If students are caught with a device, it will be confiscated and taken to the office where a guardian must come and retrieve it.

If students need to call home during the day, they will be permitted to do so in the office. If parents need to contact their child, they will call the office and the front office staff will make sure the message gets relayed.

The school is not responsible or liable for any devices brought on campus.

## **School Safety and Security**

All schools must have a safety and security plan in place that must be approved by the district. Extensive plans are in place for severe weather, fire drills, and suspicious activities.

In addition to our plans that are in place, we make sure that all of our employees and volunteers are background screened. Our employees are also fingerprinted. We have a badge system in place so that unauthorized individuals cannot enter our school without going through the front office. All doors lock automatically including classroom doors.

We have many means of communicating as needed in the case of emergency including walkies, phones, and a PA system. We also have an emergency alert system that immediately notifies staff members and the police of crisis situations, and we have a school guardian on campus at all times.

In addition, if administration or designee has reasonable suspicion that a prohibited or illegally possessed substance is contained within a student's possession or storage area, administration may search the possessions or storage area.

We will provide 2 car tags per student for pick up purposes. Parents also fill out an authorized pick up form to have additional adults over the age of 18 pick up students. In the event that you need to have your child picked up from the office instead of through car line, proof of identification must be shown.

## **Campus Behavior Expectations**

Our door is always open, and we will respectfully work through conflicts and issues that arise. We expect all adults, including employees and visitors, that step foot on our campus to be role models to our students and to use student-appropriate language. Any behavior that disrupts our school environment will not be tolerated. This includes rude, loud, offensive, or threatening remarks, physical contact, and the disregard of school rules and regulations.

If adults on campus are disruptive, they will be asked to stop the behavior. If the behavior continues, they will be asked to leave campus. If they refuse to leave, the police will be called. For repeated offenders or extreme behaviors, restraining or no trespassing orders will be issued. If the offender comes on campus after a restraining order has been issued, the police will be called, and actions will be taken.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Unpaid Meal Charge Policy

#### Notification

All families will be given written notice of the Seacoast Charter Academy's unpaid meal charge policy. A copy of this policy will be included in the Student Handbook, posted online and sent home with each student on the first day of school along with the National School Lunch Program ("NSLP") Application and Instructions.

#### Application Assistance

To enable a student's parent or guardian to apply for meal assistance before school begins, NSLP applications and instructions are sent to parents and guardians via e-mail over the summer. Copies are also available in the office and online at <https://seacoastcharteracademy.org/lunch>. Applications and instructions in Spanish are available upon request. A paper copy of the NSLP Application and Instructions will also be sent home with each student on the first day of school. The Food Services Manager will assist those who request help completing the NSLP application for school meal benefits. The Food Services Manager can be reached at (904) 562-4780.

#### Meal Ordering and Payment

Meals are ordered weekly in advance through the lunch order form sent home each week and funds can also be placed on your child's MySchoolBucks account. Payment can also be made with cash or check at the school.

#### Meal Distribution if No Funds

Those students who want to purchase a meal, and who have not ordered in advance and/or prepaid for a meal, will be allowed to pay for a meal with the office assistant or classroom teacher. If the student doesn't have funds to pay for his or her meal, the student will receive a reimbursable meal. The school will provide the meal and advise the student's parent or guardian that payment is necessary. The student's parent or guardian will be notified on the day of the purchase. The student's parent or guardian may remit payment at the school or online.

#### Payment for Daily Purchases

Payment for meals can be made in cash, check or through the online lunch payment system MySchoolBucks. The online system will accept both credit and debit cards.

#### Outstanding Balance Notification

A payment reminder notice will be sent home with the student at the end of each month. The notice will include a detailed invoice. If a large balance (a balance of over \$100) is due, the notice will be mailed to the address for the student that is on file with the school. If a large balance remains unpaid for a period exceeding two months, the school will contact the parent or guardian via telephone to request payment.

#### NSLP Application Advisement

When the school calls a parent or guardian to request payment for a balance due, the school may learn about family circumstances that make it difficult for the parent or guardian to satisfy the amounts outstanding. In

such a case, the school will strongly encourage the parent or guardian to apply for NSLP meal benefits. Upon request, and another copy of the NSLP Application and Instructions will be sent home with student or mailed to the address of record.

### **Debt Collection**

The collection of outstanding balances will be handled by the Office Assistant. The Office Assistant will have the discretion to make exceptions to this policy in order to facilitate the collection of debts (i.e. setting up payment plans, etc.)

### **Lunch, Snacks, and Celebrations**

If students opt to bring in a school lunch, it should be a nutritious lunch; no candy or sodas please. We are not able to refrigerate or warm lunches brought from home. If a proper lunch is not brought, students will be required to get a school lunch. If students are allowed a snack time in class, the snack should be a finger food that is easy to eat and should not be high in sugar. Students are permitted to have water bottles only in class at all times. If your student has any allergies or specific meal **modifications**, we ask that you complete the form given or send in writing your student's needs. We will do our best to work with you to meet the needs of our students.

We love to celebrate birthdays and special events with families at Seacoast. If you would like to bring in a celebration treat for the entire class, it must be store bought, and you must let the teacher know ahead of time. Please be mindful if you have been informed of class allergies. Any other celebration items such as balloons, stuffed animals, and flowers must remain in the front office until the end of the school day.

### **Volunteers and Visitors**

As you know, we can't do it without you and that is why we ask every parent to volunteer 20 hours for one child or 30 hours for a family. We do know that your time is precious and that is why we try to offer multiple opportunities for you to help in any capacity.

Volunteers that come on campus or chaperone school field trips must fill out paperwork and be background screened. The following is a list of ways that you can volunteer. If you are unable to offer time but would still like to help, you are free to provide donations as well.

- Be involved with PACTS
- Chaperone at field trips
- Help with school functions
- Help with morning duty
- Tear out workbook pages/organize materials
- Help with special classroom projects
- Help with bar-coding library books
- Help with bulletin boards
- Gather items for projects
- Bring items for class parties
- Help with science experiments

- \_\_Help during lunch
- \_\_Work with a small group of students
- \_\_Read to the class

All visitors must sign in to the front office and receive a visitor's badge that must be worn at all times. All visitors must comply with school rules and regulations and use school-appropriate language.

## **PACTS**

Seacoast Charter Academy PACTS (Parents Advisory Council for Teachers and Students) works together to make a difference in the education and the quality of life for our children. We all know that children learn more and have better lives when parents, school staff, students and the community work as one. PACTS brings all of these groups together to share thoughts and ideas about programs and activities that benefit our children. PACTS provides information and resources that strengthen these relationships.

If you would like to join the PACTS team, you simply fill out the appropriate form and send in a one-time membership fee of \$5. By becoming a member of PACTS, your support will bring us closer to accomplishing these goals.

## **Fundraising**

Seacoast usually has several optional fundraisers throughout the school year. Fundraisers are very important to our school. The money that is raised is always used for the betterment of your child's school and education. Information about each fundraiser will be sent out to you at the time that it is taking place. Be sure to always check the weekly email sent out by the office staff as it will have things such as this that you need to know.

## **Wellness and Family Education Policy**

Seacoast Charter Academy is committed to providing an education environment that promotes and protects the health and well-being of its students by supporting a healthy eating and physical activity. Our goal is to enhance the school environment by helping students develop lifelong health and wellness practices in the areas of nutrition, health, physical activity and food service.

Thus, Seacoast Charter Academy is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of Seacoast Charter Academy that:

- The school will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-5 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our school will participate in available federal school meal programs

(including the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program).

- Seacoast assures that the guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issues by USDA.
- Seacoast will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

Our goal at Seacoast is that all family members, students, Board of Directors, school administrators, staff will be activity involved in the development and review of this school wellness policy. The following people were involved in developing and monitoring the Seacoast Charter Academy wellness policy: Administrator, Marla Stremmel; Board of Directors President, Debbie Barker, RN; Physical Education Teacher, Carly Gurley; School Food Service Personnel, Dr. James Young; Parent Group representative (PACTS) and parent, Ms. Idaira Cintron-Ortiz; Teacher, Judy Armstrong; and Students.