



## **STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK 2016 - 2017**

### **Sylvan Heights Science Charter School**

**915 South Thirteenth Street**

**Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17104-3402**

**Telephone: (717) 232-9220**

**Fax: (717) 232-9221**

**Website: [www.shscs.org](http://www.shscs.org)**



**Our mascot--Dr. Whooo!**

*Sylvan Heights Science Charter School is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate in employment, educational programs or activities on the basis of race, sex, color, origin, religion, age, or disability. Inclusion of this policy in this document is in accordance with State and Federal laws including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.*

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## **WELCOME**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff of Sylvan Heights Science Charter School, I would like to welcome you to our educational family.

We work hard to provide your children with a safe, positive, welcoming, and nurturing learning environment. We hold high expectations for our students and provide guidance and rewards for their efforts. But it is only with the help of parents that we can meet the high expectations we set.

Parents are very important members of the SHSCS family. As such, we encourage your participation in helping to make your child's school experience rich and meaningful.

The new school year holds much promise for success. At SHSCS, we want all of our students to be successful. When students experience success, they will attempt to learn more challenging levels of knowledge. In addition to learning science, math, reading and other subject areas, our goal is also to teach our students to love learning, to persevere, and to show initiative. We will be working with each family to help their children reach academic and behavioral goals.

We invite you to share in the many exciting and rewarding opportunities awaiting your children at SHSCS.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and productive school year. We hope you will visit us often and be an active member of our school community throughout the school year.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Timothy Hess, M.Ed.  
Principal/CAO

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## **MISSION**

The mission of the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School is to enhance children's lives through educational experiences that are grounded in a comprehensive, science-driven interdisciplinary program highlighting discovery and creativity.



## **VISION**

We envision our school to be a place where ...

- All students experience success.
- Students become proficient in the Sciences, Reading and Mathematics and become prepared for their next level of education.
- The sciences are infused throughout the curriculum.
- The curriculum, programs and services are routinely reviewed to ensure that they meet quality standards.
- Different learning styles and stages of development are recognized, and the faculty and staff help each child progress to reach his/her maximum potential.
- Students are engaged in the creative and performing arts.
- The school community reflects diversity in all of its dimensions.
- The school complements the broader educational community and works collaboratively with the community to ensure students are equipped with the necessary skills for future career opportunities.
- Learning opportunities are provided to our parents and others in the community.
- The faculty and staff are dedicated to teaching and learning in a charter school environment, which they believe in and respect.
- The school nurtures and supports the learning of faculty and staff by providing ongoing professional development opportunities.



## **SOME CORE BELIEFS**

We believe that ...

- All children are entitled to a quality education in a safe, nurturing environment.
- A child's education is a shared responsibility between the family and the school.
- Successful learners demonstrate self-discipline and personal responsibility through a structured and academically challenging environment.
- The learning atmosphere promotes creativity and effective approaches to problem solving.
- Inquiry-based science and hands-on learning experiences are pathways to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing, high-tech society.
- The learning atmosphere promotes and encourages diversity.
- The school community is respectful of the beliefs, ideas and values of all people.

## **ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

In the event of a serious accident or illness at school, parents or guardians will be called. If we are unable to reach parents or guardians, emergency numbers will be called.

When parents register children, they must fill out a form indicating who is responsible for their child if parents cannot be reached. We ask that parents and guardians make emergency contact persons--neighbors or relatives--aware that they may be called in case of emergency. If at any point during the school year this information should change, please notify the school immediately so that we are able to update our records.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER NETWORK (Policy 815)**

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School supports the use of computers, iPads, Internet and other network resources in the school's instructional and operational programs in order to facilitate learning, teaching and daily operations through interpersonal communications and access to information, research and collaboration.

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School wishes to allow its students to be able to access curriculum based information resources from the Internet. The Internet can provide students with access to the most recent research and the most up-to-date information on a variety of subjects. However, the Internet can also provide the students with access to less than desirable information. Filtering software is

in use, but no filtering system is capable of blocking 100% of the inappropriate material available on the Internet. Sylvan Heights Science Charter School will not permit its Internet access points to be used for illegal, obscene, or inappropriate purposes.

Student use of the Internet is under the direct supervision of school staff, and students are obligated to use it appropriately. Both staff and students should conduct themselves responsibly, ethically, and politely while on-line. Inappropriate use of the Internet is prohibited. Use of obscene or illegal materials, or indulging in activities in support of such activities is prohibited. All students must sign and return an "Acceptable Use for the Network/Internet Promise" form and obtain parental permission. The parent and student will not hold the teacher or school liable for any materials retrieved from the Internet. However, parents should report any suspected misuse of the Internet to the teacher or administrator.

### **General Computer Use**

Computers and iPads are provided for students to do computer-based learning, conduct research and complete assignments. Access is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege - not a right. As such, general school rules for behavior and communications apply, and users must comply with school standards and honor the agreements they have signed.

### **General Network Use**

The network is provided for students to conduct research, complete assignments, and store data. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway.

Network storage areas are treated like school lockers. School administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on school servers will be private. Unapproved or inappropriate material will be removed by school Administration.

### **Consequences for Inappropriate Use**

Violations of this policy by students will be handled within the guidelines of the student code of conduct. Multiple offenses may result in the loss of all school computer privileges, and or, school suspension. Illegal use of the network will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

## ARRIVAL TIME & SCHOOL HOURS



The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. every day. Staff hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Students are **NOT** permitted arrive prior to 8:10 a.m. The school breakfast program is available and begins serving at 8:10 a.m.

Occasionally, teachers may keep students after school to finish class work or for disciplinary reasons. If a student will be kept after school, parents/guardians will be notified.

Unless working with a teacher, waiting for a ride or a brother/sister, students are expected to leave school and go directly home at the end of the school day. Parents should arrange for the pick-up of their children beginning at 3:30 PM and no later than 3:45 PM.

## ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to report to school every day and on time. Illness is the primary excuse for absence. Students should return to school from an absence with a parent/guardian's note or doctor's excuse.



Written medical excuses are required for an absence of three (3) or more consecutive days and for ALL absences after 10 absences have been accumulated for the current school year. If a student will be absent for more than three (3) consecutive days, the parent/guardian should notify the student's teacher so that the parent/guardian can arrange to pick up assignments.

Any absence that is not verified with a written excuse note from the parent/guardian or a doctor will be recorded as an "unlawful absence." If a parent/guardian forgets to send or bring the required excuse note on the day that the student returns to school, the parent/guardian shall have three (3) days following the absence to send the written excuse note to their child's teacher.

Parents/guardians will receive a notification letter after three (3) unlawful absences. After five (5) unlawful absences, parents/guardians will receive a second notification letter, a warning and a truancy elimination meeting will be held with the parent/guardian. Accrual of more than five (5) unlawful absences will result in citation and may be subject to a fine from the district justice of Dauphin County.

## **Tardiness**

Students' attendance and tardiness to school are recorded and reported to the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School office daily.

**Students arriving after 8:30 AM must enter the building through the Front Entrance with their parent or guardian.** The parent or guardian must sign in at the Receptionist Desk. All other doors will be locked at 8:30 AM. This enhances school safety while ensuring that each tardy offense is verified.

Students will be issued a tardy letter after three (3) tardy offenses. A copy of the letter must be returned to school with the parent/guardian's signature. After five (5) tardy offenses, the student will receive a one-hour after school detention (3:30 – 4:30 PM). Parents/guardians will be responsible for transportation. The parents/guardians will also be expected to attend a conference with a school representative to discuss tardiness.

After an accumulation of ten (10) tardy offenses, the student will be suspended for one day and recommended for an Administrative Review. Students are responsible for completing all schoolwork during the period of suspension.

## **Early Dismissal**

For a student to be released early from school, there are two methods a parent/guardian may use. Parents/guardians may either phone the school receptionist no later than 2:30 PM with the request, or parents/guardians may send a note to the child's teacher at morning arrival. Early dismissal from school should be for medical appointments or real emergencies, not for convenience. You will be requested to present photo identification for verification purposes at time of pick-up. If someone other than the parents are to pick up a child, that person must have a photo I.D. and be listed on your child's emergency contact sheet before the child will be permitted to leave the building. Early dismissals for convenience disrupt the learning process for other students in the classroom. **Parents must send a doctor's note verifying the early dismissal, lateness or half-day absence.**

When an early dismissal is necessary, parents/guardians must enter the building to sign students out at the Front Desk. Students will only be released to the parent/guardian of record or to persons designated on the school's emergency forms completed by the parent/guardian. Written notification is required to release a child to anyone other than the legal guardians. If the names of the persons on the emergency form changes, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to send a note to the school administration with the changed information.

### **Educational Trips**

Absences due to family trips are expected to be of an educational nature, and are limited to five (5) days per school year, with prior application and approval (at least one week) from the principal. The interactive nature of teaching and learning cannot be duplicated when missed in a classroom. When possible, prior written work will be provided by teachers. Written work may be made up upon return to school. Students will be held accountable for the skills that were presented in the classroom during the absence. This may result in a lower test score or a reduced grade if there are gaps in skills caused by the absence. We urge parents to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of these experiences when making travel plans that may result in absence from school. For students in third and fourth grade who are required to participate in the PSSA tests, educational trips will not be approved during PSSA testing periods.

### **BIRTHDAYS & CLASSROOM PARTIES**

To preserve the learning environment in the classroom and in complying with our school's nutrition policy, individual birthday celebrations will not be permitted. On their birthday, students will be honored with announcement of their name on the morning announcements. Birthday treats, gifts, and balloons will not be permitted. To prevent hurt feelings of students, birthday invitations are to be distributed outside of school.



### **BULLYING AND EXTORTION**

**Bullying** is a pattern of abuse or aggressive behavior by one student or a group of students carried out repeatedly and over time. Bullying may be physical, verbal and/or emotional in nature.

**Bullying** behavior includes, but is not limited to, physical intimidation or assault; oral or written threats; teasing, putdowns, or name calling that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; psychological cruelty, such as spreading rumors of false accusations; shunning the individual; and cyber-bullying via any form of electronic communication, including but not limited to, phone, text messaging, internet, websites, e-mail, blogs, chat rooms, and/or instant messaging.

**Extortion** is the action of one student or a group of students to obtain or withhold the property of another student by force, threat of violence or other harm, or intimidation.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully another student or to extort property from another student on school grounds, during the time traveling to and from school, or at any school related event on or off of the grounds.

The school expects staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying or extortion to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying/extortion persists, s/he shall report the bullying or extortion to the school principal or designee for further investigation.

If a student or parent becomes aware of an act of bullying or extortion, s/he should report it to a staff member or principal for further investigation.

Consequences for students who bully others or extort the property of others will be subject to disciplinary options that may include counseling, parent conference, detention, suspension or other consequences as provided in the Code of Student Conduct. Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Positive Behavioral Interventions Support (PBIS)**

Sylvan Heights Science Charter School has joined many schools across the nation in adopting PBIS, which is a research-based, school-wide disciplinary framework having the purpose of increasing academic achievement and improving behavior for all students. With PBIS, behavioral expectations are taught as any academic subject matter.

As part of this framework, all students will be taught prosocial skills through Second Step and other lessons. School staff will encourage prosocial behaviors daily. Students' progression toward behavioral goals are monitored, assessed, and recognized. Student successes are celebrated.

The PBIS approach teaches appropriate social behavior as a preventative measure which will support students' acquisition of knowledge and skills. If PBIS is not fully successful in stopping negative behavior, consequences will be assigned for student misconduct.

### **SECOND STEP**

Success in school is not just about reading and

math. It is also about knowing how to learn and how to get along with others. We will be using the Second Step program to teach these critical skills.

- **Skills for Learning:** Students develop skills to help themselves learn, including how to focus their attention, listen carefully, use self-talk to stay on task, and be assertive when asking for help with schoolwork.
- **Empathy:** Students learn to identify and understand their own and others' feelings. Students also learn how to take another's perspective and how to show compassion.
- **Emotion Management:** Students learn specific skills for calming down when experiencing strong feelings, such as anxiety or anger.
- **Problem Solving:** Students learn a process for solving problems with others in a positive way.
- **Bullying Prevention:** Students learn how to recognize, report and respond to bullying behaviors.

At Sylvan Heights, we demonstrate **P.R.I.D.E.** in everything we do by being **Prepared, Respectful, Involved, Dedicated** and **Encouraging**.

### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

*In the classroom, we demonstrate our **P.R.I.D.E.** by:*

- Being **PREPARED** for our learning...
  - Being where you need to be
  - Using listening skills (eyes watching, ear listening, voice quiet, bodies still)
  - Returning completed homework
  - Being in proper school uniform
- Being **RESPECTFUL** to others and of property...
  - Using appropriate language
  - Using manners (please, thank you, may I?)
  - Working as a team
  - Keeping hands, feet and belongings to self
  - Waiting your turn to speak
  - Carefully handling school equipment and materials
  - Pushing our chairs in when we leave our seat
- Being **INVOLVED** in our learning...
  - Following directions the first time they are given
  - Asking for help when we don't understand
  - Keeping our area clean
- Being **DEDICATED** to our learning...
  - Giving our best effort
  - Trying even when things are hard
  - Being positive
  - Using time wisely
  - Telling the truth
  - Admitting mistakes
- Being **ENCOURAGING** to others...

- Being helpful
- Accepting differences
- Using problem solving steps to solve problems in a positive way
- Using empathy skills
- Sharing

Generally, the classroom teacher addresses behavior problems. Positive interaction between the teacher and student is encouraged to establish more appropriate means to deal with specific concerns. In most instances, the principal will respond to those matters which are more serious or repetitive. If you are ever uncertain about a particular policy or procedure, call the office for clarification. Do not wait to ask questions after an incident has occurred.

### **Hallway Travel**

*In the hallway, we demonstrate our **P.R.I.D.E.** by:*

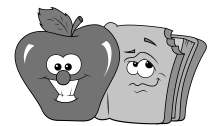
- Returning to class quickly and quietly
- Listening for directions
- Removing our hat when inside the building
- Respecting people, property and hallways
- Following directions
- Keeping our hands and feet to ourselves **HALL** (Hands at your side, all eyes forwards, lips are locked, low speed)
- Using quiet voices **ONLY** if an adult speaks to us
- Maintaining physical space in line
- Walking on the right side of the hallway
- Keeping our hallways clean
- Going directly to destination and right back
- Greeting others appropriately



### **Cafeteria**

*In the cafeteria, we demonstrate our **P.R.I.D.E.** by:*

- Being prepared to leave with our teacher
- Making healthy food choices
- Keeping our hands, feet and belongings to ourselves
- Using manners
- Having polite conversations using appropriate language.
- Waiting quietly and patiently.
- Using inside voices.
- Eating our own food
- Staying seated and raising your hand for help
- Keeping our area clean by throwing away our trash
- Following directions
- Walking
- Going through the lunch line one at a time and remembering our lunch card
- Leaving all food and drinks in the cafeteria unless we have been given special permission
- Being sensitive to the food choices and needs of others



- Picking up food, wrappers, etc. in our area and cleaning our tabletops.
- Sitting according to the assigned seating plan.
- Being courteous, considerate, and respectful of others at all times.

## Office

*In the office, we demonstrate our P.R.I.D.E. by:*

- Having required materials ready to conduct our business
- Entering quietly and waiting to be recognized
- Speaking in appropriate volume
- Promptly conducting our business
- Recognizing the needs of others
- Ensuring accuracy in our work
- Following prescribed procedures
- Using manners and appropriate language

## PLAYGROUND RULES

*On the playground, we demonstrate our P.R.I.D.E. by:*

- Lining up promptly when recess is over
- Wearing appropriate clothing and footwear
- Staying away from classroom windows and doors
- Keeping our hands and feet to ourselves
- Showing positive sportsmanship by including others
- Following the playground rules
- Leaving stones, tanbark and snow on the ground
- Cleaning off our shoes/boots before entering the building
- Reporting any broken equipment
- Using equipment safely
- Staying active for at least ½ of the time
- Playing fairly
- Being visible to teachers at all times
- Enjoying our recess
- Using Second Step problem solving steps to handle conflicts
- Using Second Step strategies to calm down
- Taking turns
- Including everyone in games and starting a new game if/when there are 3 or more kids waiting to play

**Playground equipment must be used for its intended use only. Playground equipment rules are as follows:**

- Wrestling, karate, tackling, football and play fighting are not permitted. (NO contact sports)
- Slide-down only, one at a time, in a seated position.
- Playground balls-keep on the blacktop. Only school provided playground balls are allowed.
- Jump ropes may only be used for jumping.
- Students are expected to kindly share playground equipment.

Favorable things to do at recess include: basketball, jump rope, four square, and hopscotch.



Students are expected to use courtesy and to be respectful toward others. Students should use “Second Step” approach whenever possible to resolve conflicts. The Problem Solving STEPs include: Say the problem (without blame), Think of solutions (safe and respectful), Evaluate consequences (what would happen if...), Pick the best solution (make your plan). **Fighting is never tolerated.**

## RECESS EXCUSES

All students will be expected to participate in outdoor recess activities and physical education classes unless the school has a written note from a doctor requesting that the child not go outside or participate in physical education classes. Parents may request their child be kept indoors for a day or two following an illness by sending a note to the school nurse. Any request beyond two days must come from a doctor. During cold weather, students should be dressed warmly, including hats, scarves, and mittens/gloves.

## FIRE & EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted monthly. All students should proceed in a quick, quiet, and orderly fashion during evacuation of the building. Fire exits are indicated in each room, and there is an assigned route for leaving the building. When the fire alarm rings, students should follow the assigned route which will take them far enough from the building so as not to interfere with emergency personnel. Class groups shall stay together in these assembly areas to enable teachers to account for each student. A signal will indicate when students are to return to the building.



### **Procedures:**

*Students are to:*

1. Line up quickly and quietly to exit the building.
2. Walk quietly in the halls when exiting the building.
3. Walk swiftly and quietly to the designated area outside the building, following the route assigned.
4. Remain quiet when standing outside.
5. Return to the classroom quietly.

Additionally, severe weather drills are conducted annually.

## ENTRANCE AGE

All children entering kindergarten must have reached their fifth birthday on or before the first day of September.



## FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Family Advisory Committee meets monthly and serves as a liaison between the families and the school; assists with public relations and publicity; and leads the in-school fundraising efforts.

If you are interested in joining, please attend our next monthly meeting! This is an excellent way to fulfill the school's volunteer hour expectations.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned as additional education experiences for our students. Permission forms will be sent home prior to a field trip. These forms must be signed and returned for students to take part in any field trip. Parents and guardians will receive advance notice and information about upcoming field trips. Occasionally, teachers will contact parents to assist in supervising a field trip. To be permitted to volunteer during field trips, Chaperones are required to submit a report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police, Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human Services, results of a TB test and a fingerprint-based federal criminal history (FBI Clearance).

## HEALTH AND MEDICATIONS

Parents and guardians need to bring special health concerns to the attention of teachers, the school nurse, and the school office. The nurse is at SHSCS daily for two (2) hours over the lunch period (11:00 AM-1:00 PM) to provide health services to students and staff. During this time, she is available to discuss health concerns with parents and guardians.



***It is extremely important to keep the emergency contact sheets accurate and complete with the person to be called in the event of an emergency or illness, the name of the child's physician, and any special health concerns (such as epilepsy, asthma, allergies, etc.). If a contagious condition or illness is suspected, the nurse will notify the parents, and the student will be sent home from school.***

**Sylvan Heights Science Charter School recognizes that parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. Although the school recommends that medication be given at home, it realizes that the health of some children requires that they receive medication while in school. When medication absolutely must be given during school hours, the following procedures must be followed:**

## **PRESCRIPTION AND NON-PRESCRIPTION (OVER THE COUNTER) MEDICATION**

The parent/guardian must provide the school nurse with an "Authorization for Medication during School Hours" form filled out completely, signed by the physician and the parent/guardian. You may get this form in the school nurse's office. (Form is also available for downloading on our school website).

- Only medications that are to be administered between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm will be given in school except for emergency medications. Medications that a student receives at any other time must be given at home.
- The medication must be brought to school in the original container from the pharmacy and the label must match the information on the "Authorization for Medication during School Hours" form. This also applies to inhalers.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for picking up the student's medication if it is discontinued, the student is transferred to another school or at the end of the school year.
- All medications must be **hand delivered to the school by the parent/guardian or other adult.** Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to carry any type of medications (prescription or over the counter) such as Advil, Tylenol, cough drops, eye drops, and the like.
- **No student is permitted to carry and self-administer asthma medications.**
- The medication will be for school use only. When getting the prescription filled, request a separate container labeled for school use only with the information above. If your child uses an inhaler to treat asthma, parents or guardians should also request a doctor's prescription to obtain a spacer for school use.

### **Health Screenings**

Health screenings consist of the following:

- Vision
- Hearing
- Height
- Weight

These screenings are done based on state guidelines and requirements. If parents or guardians do not want their child to participate in this program, parents or guardians must notify the Principal.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned as an extension of the daily school program. It is expected that parents will provide a home environment that encourages and supports their child's learning. Each night, a parent/guardian and child should:

- Provide an adequate, quiet, well-lighted place to study.
- Read for at least 15-30 minutes.
- Memorize math facts.
- Talk about the school day.
- Review papers sent home.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep each night (8-10 hours minimum).



Examples of other homework assignments a child may have are:

- Making-up work after an absence.
- Reviewing individual math fact or sight word flash cards.
- Practicing basic skills in math, language arts, or reading.
- Collecting or reading materials for writing reports.
- Gathering news and other current information from newspapers and magazines.
- Special projects.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

If you are not sure if there will be school due to bad weather, please tune to television WHP 21, WGAL 8, WHTM 27, or WPMT 43. **We follow the Harrisburg School District schedule for snow delays and closings.** Announcements of school closings will be made as early as possible. Notice of school delays and closings will also be posted on the school website ([www.shscs.org](http://www.shscs.org)).



Sylvan Heights has an **alert system** for notifying parents of school safety issues, closings, delays, or other time-sensitive information. Alerts will be sent via Text messaging, Email, Web, or Voice, based on your preferences. A valid email address is required when setting up a contact profile. Visit our school website at [www.shscs.org](http://www.shscs.org) to sign up. Click on "ALERTS" on the Quick Links located on the left sidebar of the homepage.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are turned in at the front desk. Wallets, jewelry, **cell phones** and other valuable items are kept in the office. Have your child check the "Lost and Found" to recover lost items in the Multi-Purpose Room. It is important that you:

- Encourage your child to be responsible for his/her personal property.
- Label all personal articles.
- Leave all valuables and money at home.

## Free and Reduced Lunch Programs

Sylvan Heights participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program. Breakfast and lunches are prepared off-site by the Nutrition Group, meet Federal requirements, and are offered free to all students.

## GUM CHEWING

Gum is not permitted on school grounds.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY AT SCHOOL

Children should **not** bring extra money, radios, toys, iPods, CD players, hand-held electronic devices, trading cards, collectibles, or other such objects to school or on the bus. These items can be easily lost, broken, or stolen. The school cannot assume responsibility for their loss or breakage. If such items are brought to school, they will be held in the office until a parent can pick them up. Repeated offences will result in items kept until school's end in June.

Cell phones must be turned in at the office daily before classes begin and can be picked up immediately prior to dismissal. **Students are not permitted to have cell phones in the classroom at any time.** We strongly discourage students from bringing cell phones to school.

## REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards are distributed three (3) times during the year. In addition, two (2) formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in November and March to discuss student progress. If other conferences are required, they will be scheduled by parents and teachers as needed. Report cards are distributed to parents at the two (2) formal conferences. Progress reports are sent home midway between marking periods. The final report card is mailed to parents in June.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

The following special services are available to students at SHSCS:

- Speech therapy
- Hearing and vision screenings
- Counseling
- Special education resource and itinerant services
- Occupational/physical therapy

At some time during the school year, it may be beneficial for teachers and parents to request the help of these specially trained people. Written permission from a parent or guardian is needed for some of these services.

***Be sure to visit the school website's special education links for more information and policies regarding services for students with special needs.***

### **Child Find and Screening**

The verification of children with disabilities is one of the most important aspects of both Federal law and state special education regulation. It is important that children who need special education services receive them. The verification process is the means for determining those children who are in need of special education services. The purpose of this policy is to provide assistance to multidisciplinary evaluation teams as they assess each child who is referred for an evaluation to determine if he/she is a child with a disability and in need of special education services.

The Principal or designee shall ensure that the following public awareness activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend the charter school:

1. Directly or through the intermediate unit, publish once annually a written notice, in a newspaper or other media with circulation adequate to notify parents/guardians throughout the Harrisburg area, of child identification activities, and available special education services and programs, of the manner in which to request services and programs, and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal law. Public awareness activities will include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.
2. Post conspicuously on the Internet home page of the charter school and in student handbooks the information described in this policy.
3. Display conspicuously in the charter school building the information described in this policy.

### **Outreach**

The Principal or designee shall ensure that the following outreach activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend the charter school: Directly or through the intermediate unit, offer parent/guardian and family training and information activities and

publicize the availability of such activities to all parents/guardians.

Directly or through the intermediate unit, provide periodic training to regular and special education staff of the charter school concerning the identification and evaluation of, and provision of special education programs and services to, students with disabilities.

### **Screening System**

The Principal or designee shall establish a system of screening to accomplish the following, and, whenever practicable, the system thus established shall use existing building-level supports, services, and processes:

1. Assessment at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects.
2. Use of such assessments to provide additional instructional opportunities for students not achieving at the proficient level or otherwise not performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects, including but not limited to use of alternate instructional strategies, opportunities for extended learning time, and ongoing assessment of student response.
3. For students who are not performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects, a determination that the performance deficit is not the result of a lack of English language proficiency or cultural differences.
4. For students who are not responding to the core program of reading or math instruction, provision of scientifically-based instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel, as indicated by observations of routine classroom instruction, with repeated, formal assessments of achievement and progress conducted at reasonable intervals, the results of which shall be provided to the parents/guardians of the student.
5. For students with behavioral concerns, completion of a systematic observation of the student's behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty and, based thereon, implementation of group or individual positive behavior interventions and strategies, and if necessary, a functional behavior assessment (FBA).
6. Provision of peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum.
7. Completion of hearing and vision screening in accordance with Section 1402 of Pol. 209 the Public

School Code of 1949, 24 P.S. § 14-1402, for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education.

8. Identification of students who may need special education services and programs prior to referral for a special education evaluation.

### **Rights Preserved and Waiver of Pre-Evaluation Screening**

The screening activities described in this policy shall not serve as a bar to the right of a parent/guardian to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time.

When the completion of screening activities prior to referral for a multidisciplinary team evaluation will result in serious mental or physical harm, or significant educational regression, to the student or others, the Special Education Director may opt to initiate a multidisciplinary team reevaluation without completion of the screening process. Whenever an evaluation is conducted without a pre-evaluation screening, the activities described in this policy shall be completed as part of that evaluation whenever possible.

The School shall comply with requirements of state and federal laws and regulations when conducting evaluations. A student shall be assessed in all areas of suspected disability.

### **STUDENT PICTURES**

In the fall, all students will have the opportunity to have their pictures taken by a professional photographer.

Advance notification of picture day and price lists will be given to parents and students.



### **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask SHSCS to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure of school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, our school discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington DC 20202-4605

## TELEPHONE CALLS

### Calls for Faculty/Staff

If parents wish to talk to a faculty or staff member, please call either before or after school (8:00-8:15 or 3:30-4:00). During the school day, the receptionist will take your number and notify the faculty or staff member to return your call.



### Messages for Students

If parents or other persons have reason to contact a student while that student is in school, they must do so by first contacting the office. In all non-emergency cases, a message will be given to the student as soon as possible. In case of serious emergencies, the student will be called to the telephone. To ensure that a student receives a message by the **end** of the school day, please call no later than 2:00 p.m.

## TRANSPORTATION

For Harrisburg School District residents, First Student Transit provides bus transportation to students that reside more than one and a half (1.5) miles from school. Parents are responsible for students on the way to and from the bus, as well as at the bus stop. For safety, video and audio surveillance systems are used on school buses.

### **Conduct On the Bus**

*On the bus, we demonstrate our P.R.I.D.E. by:*

- Listening to the driver during drills and emergencies
- Taking all belongings with us when we exit the bus
- Exiting the bus and going directly to our destination
- Keeping our bodies and objects inside the bus
- Keeping our hands, feet and belongings to ourselves
- Being courteous, use appropriate language, tone, volume of voice
- Keeping the bus clean and in good condition
- Keeping the aisle clear
- Keeping food and drink in our bag while on the bus
- Promptly sitting and staying in our assigned seat
- Following directions and safety expectations
- Telling the truth
- Admitting mistakes
- Only bringing approved equipment and instruments on the bus
- Reporting problems to the driver
- Treating others the way we want to be treated
- Asking for permission before opening windows



- Ensuring that all of our actions on the bus are respectful of our peers, the driver, and persons in view of the bus.

### **Transportation Changes**

To ensure the safety of all students, when temporary changes in transportation are required, it is imperative that parents or guardians contact the school as soon as possible, no later than 2:30 p.m. Changes in transportation should be kept to a minimum to reduce confusion for teachers and students at this busy time of the day.

### **Walking Students**

Student conduct and safety on the way to and from school should be a matter of concern to parents. The school will cooperate with parents in these matters. Parents should discuss the safest route to school emphasizing the use of sidewalks and not trespassing on private property. Again, children should **NOT** arrive at school before 8:10 a.m.



## UNIFORMS

Students are required to wear school uniforms at SHSCS. Sweaters, jumpers, shorts, skirts, skirts and long pants must be navy in color. Shirts/Blouses should be white or light blue in color. They should be plain, without logos, designs, stripes or words.

Boys are expected to keep their shirt-tails tucked in at all times.

Only closed-toed shoes are permitted to be worn at school for health and safety purposes and should be solid black or white in color without logos or stripes. Shoelaces should also be black or white in color.

Students are not permitted to wear coats or hoodies during school hours. Students should wear only a navy sweater **without a hood** during school hours, if they feel the need to wear additional clothing.

Physical Education uniforms are gray or navy sweat suits, gray or navy t-shirts, gray or navy shorts and sneakers. These, too, should be solid colors, having no logos, designs, stripes or words. Sylvan Heights School t-shirts may be worn as part of the gym uniform.

Socks and tights should be solid white or navy in color. Hair and other accessories (bracelets, etc.) should be kept to a minimum.

When students arrive to school without being properly dressed in uniform, parents will be contacted to bring suitable clothing. Repeat offenders will be assigned an after school detention

for each subsequent violation and will be ineligible for future “dress down” day privileges.

**All removable clothing items, including hoodies, coats, hats, sweaters, and sweatshirts, as well as lunchboxes and book bags, should be marked with your child’s name so that misplaced items can be returned to your child in a timely manner.**

## **VISITATION**

(Policy 907)

Sylvan Heights welcomes and encourages interest in the school’s educational programs and other school-related activities. The school recognizes the critical importance of parental involvement in a child’s education and wishes to promote a climate where all visitors feel welcomed while also maintaining a safe and secure environment that protects the integrity of the delivery of academic instruction for all students.

Upon arrival at the school, **ALL** visitors must enter through the 13<sup>th</sup> Street entrance, register at the Front desk, present photo identification, sign in, and receive a visitor’s pass. The visitor badge is to be worn at or above the waist and in clear view at all times. Upon leaving the building, the visitor must sign out and return the assigned visitor’s badge.

Visitor may not confer with a student in school without the approval of the Principal. Visitors are not permitted to go directly to a classroom to deliver or “pick-up” a student or speak to teachers unless such visits have been approved by the Principal.

### **Classroom Visitations**

Parents/Guardians may request to visit their child’s classroom. This request must be made 24 hours prior to the visit, unless otherwise permitted by the Principal. The Principal must grant prior approval for the visit, and shall notify the classroom teacher prior to the visit.

Parents/Guardians shall be limited to one (1) class period, per month, per child in the school for classroom visitations, in order to minimize disruption of the classroom schedule and the educational program. Under exceptional circumstances and upon request of the classroom teacher or parent/guardian, the Principal may authorize additional or longer classroom visits.

Parental participation in classroom activities or programs such as back-to-school events and chaperones for field trips shall not constitute a classroom visit for purposes of this policy.

The Principal and classroom teacher have the authority to ask a visitor to leave if the visitor disrupts the classroom routine, educational program or daily schedule. Failure to leave when asked or repeated, documented disruptions may result in loss of classroom visitation privileges.

Students will be referred to only by their first names.

**All** communication devices including but not limited to cell phones, palm pilots, iPhones will be turned off prior to entering the classroom. Phone calls only are permitted in the waiting area by the front desk.

Visitors should refrain from talking, eating, moving around the classroom or other disruptive behavior during the instructional period.

All visitors will keep their observations in the strictest of confidence, except for information and observations necessary for the development and implementation of a program for the child that is the subject of the observation.

Photographic and video representations of school programs or students by school visitors are prohibited, except with explicit permission of the Principal for a verified and legitimate purpose.

Any visitor who fails to follow these rules will have his/her right to visit immediately revoked.

## **VANDALISM**

Any persons willfully damaging SHSCS property will be assessed the total cost of all replacement or repairs. This includes books, desks, chairs, walls and other property.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Sylvan Heights recognizes that volunteers can make valuable contributions to the educational program.

**Each family is expected to volunteer at least 15 hours of service to the school per school year.** We encourage and welcome parent volunteers to help in the classroom, special classes, school office, lunchroom, playground and bus, and with Family Advisory Committee fund-raisers and activities. If you are interested in helping at the school on a volunteer basis, please contact the office or your child’s teacher.

Subject to legal requirements and administrative procedures, volunteers are required to submit/complete the following: a report of criminal history from the Pennsylvania State Police; a Child Abuse History Clearance from the Department of Human

Services; the results of a TB test; and a fingerprint-based federal criminal history (FBI Clearance).

If a volunteer is arrested for or convicted of an offense enumerated under Section 111 (e) or (f.1) of the School Code after commencement of volunteer service, the volunteer shall provide the Principal with written notice not later than seventy-two (72) hours after such arrest or conviction.

### **Denial**

A volunteer applicant will be denied approval to volunteer where the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has verified that the applicant is named in the Statewide database as the perpetrator of a founded report committed within the five-year period immediately preceding verification pursuant to this section. Convictions of the following offenses also preclude the applicant from volunteering: homicide, aggravated assault, stalking, kidnapping, unlawful restraint, rape, statutory sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, indecent exposure, incest, concealing death of a child, endangering welfare of children, dealing in infant children, prostitution and other related offenses, obscene and other sexual materials and performance, corruption of minors, sexual abuse of children, and the attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to do any of the above mentioned acts.

### **General**

Following the completion of all required paperwork, a list of approved volunteer names will be maintained for school-wide use. Volunteers shall not be asked to assume the professional responsibilities of the school staff. Volunteers may provide assistance that is supportive, when under the direction of a staff member.

Volunteers will not be permitted to administer student discipline nor will they be permitted to administer first aid, except in the case of an emergency. Volunteers shall report all student disciplinary issues or concerns to the classroom teacher, instructional assistant, student activity advisor or building principal.

The volunteer position is not a right, but rather a privilege. As such, any volunteer position may be eliminated at any time for any reason. In addition, any volunteer may be removed from a volunteer position for any reason.

### **Registration Procedures**

Volunteers are required to meet any standards that may be established by federal, state or local government, or by the Board or administration, from time to time. The volunteer must agree to be bound by all applicable privacy laws and regulations. In addition, the volunteer shall adhere to all rules and regulations and administrative guidelines governing the conduct of the school's professional employees.

### **Duty to Report**

Volunteers who have direct contact with children are mandated reporters under the Child Protective Services Act. Mandated reporters shall make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse. Any person required to report child abuse who willfully fails to do so may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.

Any person who intentionally or knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or intentionally or knowingly induces a child to make a false claim of child abuse may be subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Mandated reporters who suspect child abuse shall immediately make either an oral report of suspected child abuse to the department via the statewide toll-free telephone number, or a written, electronic report to the department via the DHS Child Welfare Portal.

A mandated reporter who makes a report of suspected child abuse shall immediately, after making the initial report, notify the Principal and also provide the Principal with a copy of the report confirmation.

All volunteers must review the Department of Human Services Fact Sheet for Volunteers and sign a verification page acknowledging that they have received, read, understood and agree to abide by the CPSL and Department of Human Services Fact Sheet.

### **WITHDRAWING A STUDENT**

The following procedure must be followed if you are planning to withdraw your child from SHSCS:

- Please notify the office of the date your child will be leaving and sign a withdrawal form.
- Ensure that all books/materials have been returned and all fees paid.
- When you enroll your child at the new school, you will sign a release of information form. We will transfer copies of the student's records after we receive this from the new school.