



SAC

STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK

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SCHOOL OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Student Handbook is to assist the Science Academy of Chicago (SAC) administration and staff to create an environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe, orderly, and conducive for learning.

It is expected that the parents/guardians of the Science Academy of Chicago students, as well as the students themselves, accept and support the values and attitudes, which the school represents as they are stated in this handbook.

When it becomes apparent that either parent or student are unable to comply with the guidelines and principles outlined in the handbook, it may become necessary for Science Academy of Chicago to advise the parent/guardian to transfer the student to another school.

MISSION STATEMENT

To inspire lifelong learners while building strong foundations for tomorrow’s leaders.

VISION STATEMENT

SAC is committed to shaping each student into to well-rounded and motivated individuals while achieving academic excellence through STEAM curriculum and diverse school culture.

VALUES AND EXPECTATION

We believe that success lies when our families share the same values as the teachers and administration. We believe that the likelihood of a student's success and satisfaction is increased if he or she:

- Conducts himself/herself in a manner that contributes to an orderly atmosphere and ensures the rights of others
- Is considerate of others
- Becomes involved in the extracurricular activities of the school
- Gives his/her best effort to all academic and co-curricular pursuits

We also believe that if each parent develops the following value statements, there will be a significant change on student's school life and his/her success:

- I will establish high expectations for my child.
- I will know what is expected in each of my child's classes.
- I will insist on good attendance.
- I will provide a quiet place and time in our home for study.
- I will encourage my child to become actively involved in the co-curricular program of the school
- I will be supportive of SAC and its Staff.
- I will express my appreciation to school staff members who go above and beyond the call of duty.
- I will model the importance of life-long learning.
- I will work cooperatively with the teacher and administration to do what best for my child.

CHANGES TO STUDENT HANDBOOK

In the event that changes are made, notices of such changes shall be sent to students and families. While the Handbook is intended to provide guidance to students and their families, it is not necessarily comprehensive in entailing all aspects and is not intended to be a limitation on the authority of the Administration to deal with students. The Administrators will assess each situation as they deem necessary and appropriate.

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY-MAKING

As a not-for-profit organization, Science Academy of Chicago has both an operating structure and a governing structure. The operating structure consists of the School Director/Principal, who oversees all faculty, staff, and day-to-day operations, activities, facility, and educational program. The governing structure consists of the School Board who oversees financial resources and policy approvals.

ADMISSION POLICY

Because of the nature of its mission, Science Academy of Chicago is open to all qualified students regardless of race, color, religion, and sexuality. All programs conducted by the school operate on the policy of non-discrimination.

Science Academy of Chicago reserves the right to refuse admission or continued attendance to students whose needs cannot be serviced adequately because of learning, emotional, or physical needs. SAC reserves the right to establish a "probation" policy for students, and if students do not meet standards, SAC administration is responsible for notifying parents.

Any time during the school year Science Academy of Chicago reserves the right to dismiss any student or family who is uncooperative with the teachers and administration, or who fails to accept and abide by the policies and procedures set in this handbook and other bulletins.

WITHDRAWAL

All permanent records will be sent or mailed to the receiving school upon request.

A student's permanent file will not be handed to parents to take to a new school; it will be sent directly by Science Academy of Chicago.

All financial obligations must be paid before permanent records are forwarded. This administrative procedure is also applied to graduating students. No official records are released until financial obligations are met. The Science Academy of Chicago official Withdrawal Policy will apply to all enrollees as part of the enrollment package documents.

STUDENT RIGHTS

- To feel safe in the school environment
- To take full advantage of the learning opportunities
- To work in an environment free from disruption
- To express their opinions, ideas thoughts, and concerns in a respectful manner
- To have a healthy environment that is smoke, alcohol, and drug free
- To use school resources and facilities for self-betterment under appropriate supervision
- To expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from all members of the community
- To be informed of all expectations and responsibilities
- To take part in a variety of school activities
- To have the right to due process

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To be caring and honest
- To do his or her best to learn and master all he or she can,
- To respect and follow school rules, regulations, and policies
- To be sure that personal expressions do not interfere with the rights of others
- To follow state law and school policies concerning substance abuse
- To respect and protect personal property and rights of others, and of the school
- To treat all members of the community with full respect, fairness, and courtesy
- To abide by all the expectations of the school and its community
- To follow the prescribed guidelines for participation in school activities, and
- To adhere to due process procedures.

SCHOOL FACTS

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

- 7:00 AM – Doors open for before care
- 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM – After school Care

CLASS SCHEDULE

- **Preschool – 3rd Grade**
 - Classes promptly begin at 8:20 AM and classes will end at 3:00 PM
- **4th Grade – 8th Grade**
 - Classes promptly begin at 8:20 AM and classes will end at 3:15 PM

BELL SCHEDULE

Bell Schedule		
1st	8:20-9:02	42min
2nd	9:07-9:49	42min
3rd	9:54-10:36	42min
4th	10:41-11:23	42min
5th	11:28-12:10	42min
6th	12:15-12:57	42min
7th	1:01-1:43	42min
8th	1:47-2:29	43min
9th	2:33-3:15	43min

LUNCH/RECESS

Preschool – 3rd Grade

- Students in the preschool – 3rd grade will have lunch during 5th period.
- Students in preschool will have lunch inside their classroom.

4th Grade – 8th Grade

- Students in 4th – 8th grade will have lunch during 6th period.

Students will have recess outside, weather permitting.

UNIFORM POLICY

DAILY DRESS CODE

- Khaki skirt, pants, Capri's or shorts (knee length)
- Dark blue polo with SAC logo (purchased from school) This may be worn with black, white or navy long sleeved shirt underneath polo (no other colors).
- Navy SAC hooded sweatshirt (purchased from school.)
- Navy long-sleeved cardigan (plain/no design)
- Flip flops/open toed shoes/sandals are prohibited

DRESS CODE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Preschool – 8th Grade

Students must wear their regular SAC uniform with closed toe gym shoes on gym days.

SKIRTS

May not be rolled at the waist. Skirts must be at the top of the knee cap or below the knee cap. Tutus/fancy dress wear skirts should be saved for dress down days therefore are not part of the daily dress code.

PANTS AND SLACKS

Must fit properly. May not be baggy or saggy. Belts must fit properly and not hang down when buckled.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- Jewelry and accessories for girls should be appropriate for school and not attract undue attention
- (Facial jewelry is limited to a pair of earrings and excessive rings are not permitted.)
- Artificial fingernails are not allowed.
- Facial and body piercing are not acceptable.
- Tattoos are not acceptable.
- Use of hair dyes and bleach that attract undue attention are not permitted.
- Extreme hairstyles are not permitted.
- Gang affiliated jewelry; paraphernalia and markings are not allowed.
- Roller shoes are not allowed at any time.

OUTERWEAR

- Hats, hoods, caps, and other headgear may not be worn in the building.
- Outwear, such as windbreakers, jean jackets, or ski jackets, snow boots may not be worn inside the building. Coats and boots should be kept in their lockers or the designated areas.

LOST AND FOUND

There is a lost and found container by the main office. If you find books, clothing or personal items on the school grounds please bring these items to the office. If you lose something, check the lost and found container. Please be reminded that the lost and found container will be emptied out and the items will be donated at the end of each month. The school is not responsible for the loss of valuables, including money.

PUBLIC AREAS

Hallways, stairwells, and lavatories are areas used by all members of SAC. Because everyone uses these areas, there are rules of conduct that all students must follow:

- Student may not open the front door of the school without permission
- Student may not loiter in the halls, lunchroom, restrooms, or on the stairs
- Student may not eat in the halls, restrooms, or in the stairwells
- Student may not run in the halls, lunchroom, restrooms, or in the stairwells

- Student may not use any profane or vulgar language on school premises
- Student may not yell, scream, hit lockers or otherwise make excessive noise while on school premises
- Student must do your part to keep these areas clean and safe
- Students must clean up after themselves and appropriately dispose of all trash
- Report any leaks, spills, or other problems in the restroom to a teacher or the office
- Do not roughhouse, push, or wrestle
- During class time, students are not to be in the halls, stairwells, or restrooms without a pass from their teacher or the main office
- Students are not allowed to enter the storage room in the Gym, **no exceptions**

Failure to abide these rules of public areas merits a consequence.

ACADEMICS

CLASSES

All of the Science Academy of Chicago students must take the following yearlong classes.

CORE CURRICULUM	SPECIALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Life Science / Physical Science • Social Studies • Language Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer (starting in 3rd grade) • Spanish / Turkish • Art • Physical Education • Music • Engineering electives • STEM (starting in KG) • Social Emotional Learning

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- All students are required by state law to take Physical Education unless excused in writing by a doctor. A student who must be excused from gym for more than three days must have a request from his or her doctor and bring it to gym teacher. Those who cannot take PE for less than three days must present a note from parent to gym teacher.
- Failure to present a note for a PE excuse will merit a detention. All students must wear proper footwear for gym class.

GRADING POLICY FOR GRADES 4-8

All classes at SAC follow this standard scale for assigning letter. Individual teachers might establish the grading policies and procedures for their classes and their grades correspond to this scale:

A	B	C	D	F
98-100=A+	87-89=B+	77-79=C+	67-69=D+	0-59=F
93-97=A	83-86=B	73-76=C	63-66=D	
90-92=A-	80-82=B-	70-72=C-	60-62=D-	

PROMOTION POLICY

For a student to be re-enrolled at SAC or promoted/graduate to the next grade, his/her final grades from all core courses (Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies) should be D or above.

GRADUATION POLICY

A student may participate in the graduation ceremony and receive the SAC diploma only if he/she has met the promotion requirements and is current in all tuition and fees. A blank diploma will be issued if the student is not current in all tuitions and fees. The SAC diploma will be issued upon completion of all payments.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

If a student gets lower than C- in one of the four major classes (Math, Science, Language Arts, or Social Studies) by the end of the any first three quarters, he/she will be put on probation.

The student on probation has to follow an academic improvement plan. Probation terms include:

1. Extra time spent with his/her teachers
2. Utilization of professional tutors at SAC
3. More disciplined approach to home study
4. Close contact with his/her parents and teachers to discuss progress reports
5. Attendance and punctuality for all classes
6. Other conditions determined by individual needs

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

SAC will provide students with the textbooks for each of their classes. SAC will hold each student responsible for the condition of the textbook issued to him or her. Each student should take care to see that these books are not lost, stolen, damaged, or defaced. Students will have to pay to replace any books that are damaged or not returned.

If student loses his/her book during the course of the year, a new one will not be given to the student until the previous one is paid for. SAC is not responsible for any missing assignments and homework in the meantime.

When textbooks are distributed, make sure you write your name in the appropriate place. Teachers will write down the number of the textbook you have and the condition of the book.

When you return the book, its condition will be checked. If you lose the book or damage it by writing it in or ripping it so that another student cannot use it, you will have to pay to replace the book.

Many of the classes will use consumable supplies – from materials to workbooks. Students will be required to pay for these consumable materials. If there is a special circumstance, families should meet with the administration.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an essential part of a successful educational program. Completing homework will help the students develop many valuable skills such as good study habits, time management, responsibility, and perseverance. Teachers will assign homework that will foster individual learning and growth and that is

appropriate for the subject area. Homework is part of all students' regular evaluations. It is the student's responsibility to complete and turn in homework on time. This is important for students to learn and understand responsibility and time management, a life-long skill that is crucial for their success.

All late work policies will be determined by the teacher(s).

Homework varies per grade level determined by age level appropriateness;

- JK-3rd grade: homework begins in preschool with weekly reading/spelling/math practice.
- 4th-8th grade: on average students in middle school receive 45-60 minutes of homework three times a week.

Since Science Academy of Chicago publishes the grades, assignments and homework on the Internet, parents are able to see that information by using their passwords assigned by Science Academy of Chicago. Parents share the responsibility with the student to check the homework on a daily basis on the Internet.

HOMework REQUEST WHEN ABSENT

If a student is absent, it is the student or parent's responsibility to email or call the teacher/s for missed assignments. Students may also see the teacher for the missed work while absent.

If a student is absent for an extended period of time, homework is to be returned to the teachers or administration and additional work requests are to be made.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

NWEA MAP Testing is administered to all students at Science Academy of Chicago. In order to see the progress of a child in a year, SAC administers the test two times per academic year. The scores and a detailed report of the test results are mailed to the parents or sent home with students.

STUDENT TRIPS

SCHOOL-SPONSORED TRIPS

School-sponsored trips (field trips, class tours, etc.) are conducted by the school periodically during the school year. Since the school organizes these trips for some general purpose, such groups are responsible to SAC. The members of such groups act under the guidelines determined by the school for each particular situation.

TRIPS NOT SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL:

During the school year or summer, teachers organize trips. These trips, while having definite educational value, are not to be considered School-Sponsored Trips. The rules and procedures to be followed on such trips are to be agreed upon by the sponsor or teachers, who organize the trips and the parents of the students who are participating in the trip. SAC does not assume responsibility for these students on such tours, although teachers who organize these trips work collaboratively with administration and supported by Science Academy of Chicago. Permission slips with according trip cost will be handed out by the cooperating teacher.

STUDENT TRIP AND FIELD TRIP REGULATIONS

- Parents or legal guardian must sign permission slips and waivers in a timely manner.
- Students shall always be in full school uniform unless noted differently.
- **Students are prohibited from bringing cell phones or other devices on field trips.**

- Students who do not comply with 1, 2, and 3 above may not be allowed to participate in the trip.
- School disciplinary regulations relating to conduct and behavior are in effect for field trips.
- No refunds will be given for absence or non-compliance with regulations.
- Failure to comply with above-mentioned regulations may result in non-participating in future trips.

SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES

GUEST VISITORS

Visitors for educational reasons are always welcomed at SAC. All guests are required to obtain a visitor pass at the front office. Administration will be informed of all visitors in the building.

ILLNESS AND INJURY POLICIES

SAC administration and staff are trained to handle illness and injuries.

Please do the following if you become ill or are injured during the school day:

1. Report to the office or teacher who is on duty. If you do not inform the office and simply miss class, it is an unexcused absence.
2. **Do not just leave the building.** Always report to the office.

When a child reports to the office for an illness, the school will do the following:

- SAC will contact the parent/guardian and ask the parent/guardian to pick him/her up if the student is not seriously ill or suffering excessive pain.
- If the student is deemed able to continue his/her classes by an administrator or staff member, the student has to join the classes until his/her ride arrives. No student is allowed to wait for his/her ride at the main lobby.
- If parent cannot be reached, then the student's emergency contact will be reached and asked to pick up the student. The student has to continue his/her classes if he/she is not seriously ill or injured.
- If school staff believes that it is a life threatening emergency, an ambulance will be called immediately at the parent's expense and then the parent will be contacted. **Parent/guardians are responsible for all the medical expenses in any emergency cases.**
- Parent/guardians are responsible to let the administration know by written notice about any medical conditions of the student that should be taken into consideration during emergencies and any other time.
- A staff member will always accompany the ill or injured student to the hospital (**If Emergency Authorization was given**) until the parent/guardian until the parent/guardian has arrived and is with their child.

PRESCHOOL POTTY TRAINING POLICY

Children enrolled in PreK at SAC must be potty trained before attending preschool. This policy is in place because these classrooms are operated in true preschool classroom settings. The PreK classrooms are not equipped with a diaper changing table/station or diapering supplies. If a child has three or more accidents within a three week timeframe, a probationary warning will be issued. If another accident occurs during the probationary period, the child will be required to stay home until securely potty trained. The child's place will be held for the remainder of the month. Required potty training is standard practice among area schools. We realize that "accidents" will happen. "Accidents" by definition are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently. Please provide a seasonally appropriate change of clothes (pants, shirt, underwear, socks) in a Ziploc bag marked with the student's name.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication should not be brought to school unless it is essential to the health of the student. If a student must take medicine at school, these procedures must be followed:

- The medication to be administered by designated school personnel and must be sent directly to the front office by the student's parent/guardian.
- The school must receive a Medication Administration Directions Form signed by the student's parent/guardian

On the medication container if prescribed by a physician, the label must contain the following information and must be clearly printed:

- Student's Name
- Name of the medication
- Dosage
- Time the medication must be taken
- Bring in only the amount of medication that is needed for a school day.
- In case prolonged need, send in the amount for a clearly specified period such as one week or one month. Extra medication will not be sent home with a student.
- Aspirin, Tylenol, and other patent drugs are not available from school. If a child requires a fever reducer they are required to stay home.
- Students may carry and administer their medication only if these two conditions are met:
 - It is warranted by a potentially life-threatening condition and advised by their physician and Medication Self-Administration Form is on file in the office signed by the student's parent, physician, and the Director.

ILLNESS POLICY

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Children with the following symptoms or illness should be kept (excluded) from school:

SYMPTOMS, Child Must Stay Home with the following symptoms;

DIARRHEA

Diarrhea free for at least 24 hours, without the use of medicine in the past 24 hours

FEVER

Fever over 100°F

Fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicine

FLU SYMPTOMS

Fever over 100°F with a cough or sore throat.

Fever, diarrhea and vomit free for at least 24 hours, without the use of medicine

COUGHING severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty breathing

Note: Children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written health care plan and authorization for medication/treatment

RASH with fever

Note: Body rash without fever or behavior changes usually does not require exclusion from school, we recommend seeking professional medical advice.

VOMITING

Vomit free for at least 24 hours, without the use of medicine in the past 24 hours

Observe for other signs of illness and for dehydration.

CHICKEN POX

The child is required to stay home until blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days) If blister occurs after vaccination, refer to Health Dept Guidelines.

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)

The child must stay home for 24 hours after treatment has begun for the CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE) and your health provider must state that the child is no longer contagious and may return to school.

HEADLICE OR SCABIES

May return after treated and the child is free from lice.

STREP THROAT

Fever over 100°F, sore throat

May return to school if the child is Fever free and on antibiotics for at least 24 hours, this is fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

COVID-19

SAC will follow local and city health department COVID protocol according to the ILDPH. More information can be found at <https://dph.illinois.gov/>

SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY

If there is reasonable cause to believe that a student possesses illegal or harmful materials or substances, administration has the right to search a student's outer clothing and pockets, bags, as well as lockers. The search is to protect other students and staff, as well as integrity of Science Academy of Chicago community. The administration has also right to do periodical locker search.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Internet access is available to students and teachers at SAC. Science Academy of Chicago believes that the Internet offers vast, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Students and teachers have access to electronic mail communication with people all over the world, information and news, public domain and shareware of all types, discussion groups on topics ranging from diverse cultures to the environment to music to politics and more.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. SAC has taken available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. SAC firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with our educational goals.

SAC will not be responsible for any damages, which you may suffer as a result of, or arising from your utilization of the Internet. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources. If a SAC user violates any of these provisions, his or her access will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied.

INTERNET - TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Students are to login with their own accounts only, unless instructed/permited otherwise by the teacher. If you are found using somebody else's account, you will receive demerits and other disciplinary actions may be considered. If you forgot your password, you should contact your computer teacher. Make your password hard to guess and write it somewhere so that you don't forget it.
- Students must sit in their assigned seats only during classes.
- Students must log-off and turn off the PC every time they are done using the computer.
- Students cannot switch any keyboards, mice, screens, mouse pads, without permission.
- Don't leave your personal belongings (books, notebooks, pencils, etc.). Before you leave, make sure there is no litter around you.
- Students are not allowed to listen to music and watch any videos (Spotify, YouTube, etc.) unless otherwise instructed/permited by the teacher. Any content containing blood, violence, drugs, profanity, nudity, or alcohol is not to be opened and viewed anytime.
- Students are not allowed to play non-academic games anything during the school day. Students may only play approved games when deemed by instructor or club supervisor. Any game containing guns, drugs, alcohol, profanity, nudity, or gore is not to be played at any time on SAC Wi-Fi.
- Students should ask before using headphones. Headphones should always be used when listening to class assigned videos or music. Headphones need to be placed back neatly on hooks, not on the floor or desk.
- Students cannot use their personal devices or accounts music/video/mice/Bluetooth headphones/etc. in the computer lab unless otherwise instructed/permited by the teacher.
- Students cannot install/uninstall any programs and software on lab computers or chrome books
- No chat is allowed/social media is allowed. This includes Google Classroom/Docs unless assigned by the instructor.
- Students are not allowed to visit or try to break into websites blocked by school. Sites that are being blocked will be updated regularly. Infractions will be dealt demerits and permission to access technology will be reviewed.
- Usage of any music/video/data downloading programs is prohibited.
- No illegal/blocked activities or websites are allowed on SAC Wi-Fi at any time, including outside of school hours or on personal devices.
- **Chromebooks/lab PCs/ and SAC Wi-Fi are being monitored; your actions and websites you visit are being recorded**, so please be careful of what you are doing in the computer lab. Such excuses as "I go to this website at home!" and "My mom/dad lets me do this!" are not acceptable.
- If you do not follow instructions of your supervisor, your computer may be locked at any time by your supervisor. You may also receive demerits, detention, or have your access to technology revoked.

Any inappropriate behavior may result in suspension of using computers for a period of time and/or other disciplinary actions.

DISMISSAL & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

DAILY DISMISSAL

OVERVIEW

- Parents/guardians are expected to pick up their child(ren) promptly after school is concluded.
- Parents/guardians are expected to use the dismissal application to announce their arrival.
- Parents/guardians are expected to wait outside the school to pickup their children.
- **Students wandering around after school is concluded will receive demerit points and parents will be charged the daily fee for afterschool care.**

JUNIOR KG- KINDERGARTEN

- Students will be dismissed promptly at 3:00 pm. Students will be waiting in their classroom for their parents/guardians to pick them up. Parents/guardians are not allowed through the secured entrance.
- If the child attends tutoring or after school activities, the teachers will escort them to the proper classroom.
- **Students that are not picked up by 3:20 pm, will be escorted to afterschool care. If the student does not regularly attend afterschool care, parents will be charged the daily fee.**

1ST GRADE– 3RD GRADE

- Students will be dismissed promptly at 3:00 pm. Teachers will follow SAC's dismissal procedure.
- If the child attends tutoring or after school activities, the teachers will escort them to the proper classroom.
- **Students that are not picked up by 3:20 pm, will be escorted to afterschool care. If the student does not regularly attend afterschool care, parents will be charged the daily fee.**

4TH GRADE – 8TH GRADE

- Students will be dismissed promptly at 3:15 pm. Parents and teachers will follow SAC's dismissal procedure.
- The student will report to their afterschool activities promptly.
- Students wandering around the school after school is concluded will receive demerit points and
 - **parents will be charged the daily fee for afterschool care**

EARLY DISMISSAL

Because SAC is very concerned about your safety and well-being, early dismissal from school is an important issue. In all instances of early dismissal, the following precautions will be taken to insure students' safety:

- The Director may release a student before the end of a school day only upon presentation of a written or face-to-face (no telephone call) request from the student's parent or guardian or for emergency reasons.
- A student may be released only to a parent or guardian whose signature is on file in the school office or to a properly identified person, authorized in writing by the parent or guardian to act on his/her behalf.
- No staff member shall permit or cause students to leave school prior to the regular hour of dismissal except for medical reasons.
- Students will not be released from school to any government agency without proper warrant or written parental permission except in the event of an emergency as determined by the Director.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

- Aftercare begins at 3:00PM and ends at 6:00PM.
- Students can be retrieved from the aftercare classroom or playground.
- Students may only be retrieved after parent/guardian signs their child/ren on the timesheet/informs the teacher.
- Aftercare will have a homework/study hall time, play time, hands on/game activities.
- **All students must be picked up by 6:00PM. If a student is late being picked up there will be a fee charged for every minute after 6:00PM.**
- It is suggested that you pack a snack for your child/ren as he/she will mostlikely be hungry after a long day in school.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE

The success of SAC's educational program is based on the daily presence of the students and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. In addition, the regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and their participation in well-planned instructional activities under the guidance of a competent teacher are vital to the success of the educational program. For these reasons, the administration, faculty and staff of SAC will frequently talk about the importance of students being in class and on time.

Promoting and fostering consistent student attendance requires a commitment from the administrators, teachers, parents, and students. No single individual or group can successfully accomplish this task. Members of SAC's professional staff will do all they can to encourage and support student attendance. This ranges from creating a pleasant and safe physical environment to providing meaningful learning experiences and opportunities in every class. In addition, professional staff will:

- keep accurate attendance records to excused and unexcused absences
- incorporate defined, daily participation as part of the teaching/learning process for each grading period

- require accountability for students to complete work they missed while absent including homework, projects, quizzes, tests, and other assignments

ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

SAC recognizes two kinds of absences and tardiness: excused and unexcused. Please read through the definitions of each carefully so that you understand what you and your parents' or guardians' responsibilities are. Also, you need to be very aware of your responsibilities regarding homework, quizzes, and tests when you have an excused absence and the consequences for unexcused absences.

UNEXPECTED EXCUSED ABSENCES

SAC accepts only the following as excusable reasons for absence from school. Under “Missing Child Law”, parents or guardians must notify the school the morning their child is not attending. The excuse shall be submitted to the office and filed as part of the student's school record. An excuse for absence from school may be approved for one (1) or more of the following reasons or conditions:

PERSONAL ILLINES/ QUARANTINE OF THE HOME/ILLINESS IN THE FAMILY/DEATH IN THE FAMILY

- The parent or guardian must call the school each morning when the student is absent.
- When the student returns to school, there must bring an explanatory note from the parent or guardian.
- The school may require a doctor's confirmation.

Illinois Truancy Code Section 3 – Attendance and Truancy The Illinois School Code requires compulsory school age attendance (105 ILCS 5/26-I.-15). Valid cause for student absence shall be illness, observance of religious holiday, death in immediate family and family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by administration. The Illinois School Code, Article 26-1, requires those who have custody or control of any child between the ages of 7 and 17 to cause such child to attend school the entire time it is in session during the regular school term. Any absence due to illness which lasts for more than three consecutive days must be verified by a medical note, which must be produced within two days of the student’s return for the absence to be considered excused. The student should have a note with them explaining their absence for the morning, whether from a parent/guardian or from a physician should the absence result from a medical appointment. Students are limited to nine days of absence per year. Any absences beyond the allotted amount will be considered an unexcused absence unless a medical statement by a physician is submitted to the school upon returning. Students who have used their allotted nine absences per year will be considered unexcused and therefore truant per class period missed.

Excused Absences

An excused absence can be defined as, but is not limited to:

1. Medical appointment verified by a medical note.
2. Testing and assessment.
3. High school shadow day.

4. Illness confirmed by a medical note (after two days out of school before nine unexcused absences, one day after nine unexcused days).
5. Observance of a religious holiday.
6. Illness confirmed by a note from a parent/guardian (parent/guardian verified absences may not be excused if total absences are in excess of nine unexcused days per year).
7. Court appearance demanded by official summons or subpoena verified by court.
8. Funeral (confirmed with a parent/guardian note).
9. School sponsored activities, i.e. field trips, athletic events or scholastic competitions.
10. Extenuating circumstances that have been approved by administration.

Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence can be defined as, but is not limited to:

1. Any absence that is not confirmed with a parental/guardian, medical staff, or within the two day grace period.
2. Truancy (absence from school without verification from the parent).
3. An illness which lasts for more than three consecutive days that is not verified by a medical note.
4. Vacation days taken with family (credit will be given if student meets the expectation of the building principal and classroom teachers).
5. Personal reasons or business.
6. Failure to attend because of transportation problems, unless transported by school bus.
7. Non-school sponsored sports activities or events.

Parents will be notified by the school after a student's 9th unexcused absence of the year. Parents will be informed by letter, and concerns will be shared about their student's attendance. The letter informs parents that, if the student misses any more school for the remainder of the year, a licensed physician's medical excuse will be required for the absence to be considered excused. Unless there are very unusual circumstances, missing more than nine days of school by the end of the second quarter is excessive. Students need to be in attendance to receive credit. With the exception of excused absences due to medical reasons, bereavement, shadow days, and religious holiday observance, both unexcused and excused absences count towards absence days which can result in loss of credit. Work that was due or completed in class on the day of an unexcused absence may not earn credit. Therefore, a student's grades may be affected by unexcused absences. Teachers are required to extend deadlines for missed work due to an excused absence. Please remember there is a positive relationship between attendance and success in school.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES

- An absence from school, even for several days, does not always excuse the student from responsibilities in the classroom. If it is an excused absence, the student will be given the same number of days that the student was absent to make up missed work.

- It is student's and parent's responsibility to find out what work is required and when the work needs to be completed.
- If the student is absent for school-related reasons or for an anticipated or planned absence, make arrangements with the teacher(s) for assignments prior to the absence. For students with excused absences, make-up tests will be scheduled at a time designated by the teacher. It is the students' responsibility to take the test at that time. If the student fails to do this, the teacher is not obligated to set another time for the make-up. If the student fails to make up a test without making other arrangements, the teacher may decide not to give you the test.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An unexcused absence does become part of a student's school record. You will be marked for an unexcused absence if you:

- fail to bring a written note within two school days following an absence
- are absent from class without permission - including walking out of class
- are absent from school without parental permission
- get a pass to go to a certain place but do not report there
- are absent for reasons not acceptable to the administration

MAKE-UP WORK FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

If you have an unexcused absence, your grade(s) in a class or classes will be affected in one of these ways:

- **Unexcused absences may result in an "F" or "zero" for the day in each class missed if the work is not made up.**
- **Teachers are not obligated to provide make up quizzes or tests.**

TRUANCY

Science Academy of Chicago shall consider any student truant if he/she is inexcusably absent from his/her assigned location without the knowledge of a parent.

- Truancy shows a deliberate disregard for the educational program and is considered a serious matter that will have immediate consequences. If you are truant:
- **No credit will be recorded for work you missed as result of truancy.**
- A record of the truancy will be entered into your record file.
- A conference with your parents will be held.

TARDINESS

Tardiness to school and to class – whether the result of oversleeping, missing the bus, car problems, baby-sitting, athletic workouts, socializing or lingering in the halls – **is not acceptable**. If you have an emergency situation, please report the situation to office. Frequent tardiness will have an impact on the student's learning, therefore the student may receive a grade deduction for being tardy. Below are the established guidelines for being tardy to 1st period:

4th Grade – 8th Grade

- A letter will be sent home after the student is tardy for three times as a warning
- An administrator will conference with the family for excessive tardiness
- *Any student with 12 or more tardies in one quarter will serve a lunch detention

JK – 3rd Grade

- A letter will be sent home after the student is tardy for three times as a warning.
- **After being tardy for twelve times, the child will no longer be allowed to participate in one afterschool club, even if a fee was paid. There will be no refunds.**

If the student arrives after fourth period, the student will be considered absent for half a school day.

COMMUNICATION

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Any communication between parents and teachers or administration should model values of mutual respect and values for each individual. When working through conflicts and concern, it is expected that the parents and teachers be positive role models for the students. Parent's behavior should never undermine respect for teacher.

While there may be differences of opinions, it should be understood that all parties are acting to the best of their ability, and on behalf of the benefit of the child.

Parent behavior constantly contrary to this expectation may result in the family being asked to withdraw from the school.

SCHOOL CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS

Ordinarily, questions and concerns regarding a classroom or a student's progress should be discussed first with the teacher (s) involved. If the questions or concerns are not resolved between the parent/guardian and the teacher(s), the parent may schedule a meeting with our dean of students, assistant principal or principal who will listen to your concerns and work with the administrative team to resolve any and all concerns.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Throughout the course of the school year, Science Academy of Chicago informs its parents through writing or e-mails. Please update your contact information with main office when there is any change.

The Director must approve any and all communications to parents, teachers and/or students sent through the school before being sent out.

DISCIPLINE CONCERNS AND REGULATIONS

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

A sense of responsibility within a person requires self-discipline and is achieved only through a realization of one's own good and the good of his or her companions.

The rules of SAC have been created to insure the common good of all students and maintain individual integrity. In addition to these general rules of good conduct, they are also based on common sense.

A mutual respect is expected among the students, teachers and parents. At all times, courtesy and good manners are expected of all SAC students.

- Loitering in the neighborhood or on private property in the neighborhood will be dealt with severely by school.
- Any gang –related activities, gang membership in such groups will not be tolerated. The student involved will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.
- SAC school community encourages and celebrates respect and tolerance for people of all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Racism or prejudice in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Such behaviors are considered Level II misbehaviors and may face up to 5 days suspension.
- Students are expected to report any knowledge of weapons, drugs or threats to harm to staff, students, the school or its property.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

As educators, it is our task to provide an atmosphere that will ensure the maximum learning and development of every student. Unless there is discipline in a school and certain definite regulations are followed, we cannot expect the type of behavior that is conducive to learning. Students must learn to respect not only the rules and regulations of the school, but the authority that enforces them as well.

- Students who lose, deface, or destroy books or any school material will be asked to make payment to replace it.
- Students are not allowed to bring valuable items to the school. SAC accepts no responsibility in case of losing any valuables in the school.
- **SAC is not responsible for student' belongings. Students are discouraged from bringing unnecessary belongings to school and are urged to keep personal items locked in lockers at all times. SAC prohibits students from bringing toys or personal sports equipment to school.**
- Cell phones, smartwatches, portable music player, handheld video games, tablets, laptops may be used before and after school only, and must be turned off and stored in the locker during the school day. If a student is in possession or uses one of these items during the school day, it will be confiscated and held in the office until the parent comes and picks up the item from the administration.
- Students are not supposed to bring skateboards, roller blades, or scooters to the school.
- Any activity concerning a group of students and organized by the students must be approved by the Director prior to initiation of it.
- Students are not allowed to chew gum in the school at any time.
- Students are not allowed to open any doors to anybody, who wants to come in. No exception.

- It is the responsibility of each student to have all materials and items ready for each school day. In the event the child has forgotten something at home and the parent wishes to deliver it, the item may be brought to the school office. The item will then be sent to the student or the child will be notified to pick it up. Nothing should be brought directly to the child's classroom during the school hours unless the permission has been given in the office.

Failure to follow any of the regulations above will pay for consequences, which may be detention or possible suspension.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

All students at SAC are entitled to the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights, and their rights will not knowingly be denied by the required code of conduct or by any disciplinary actions taken by the school.

Any student who exhibits any of the Unacceptable Student Behaviors listed in this handbook or added to this list at a later date will suffer immediate consequences. These consequences range from notification of parents, detention, and emergency removal from a school activity to suspension, expulsion, and criminal prosecution.

Because our students should govern themselves appropriately off campus as well as on campus, SAC reserves the right to pass judgment on a student's off campus behavior when it is such as to prejudice his/her best interest and/or that of the school.

All students at SAC have the right to feel that they are physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe.

- Therefore, if at any time a student feels they are the subject of harassment, hazing, threats, or other intimidating behavior, the student should immediately speak to an administrator about the problem. The situation will be investigated as soon as possible. All reports such as these will be kept completely confidential.
- Similarly, if a student is concerned about the safety of another student who seems to be the subject of harassment, hazing, or threats, you should immediately speak to an administrator about the problem. The situation will be investigated as soon as possible. All reports of this nature will be kept completely confidential.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

SAC's goal is to help every student fulfill his or her intellectual, social, physical and emotional potential. Everything in and about the SAC has been designed to create an orderly and distraction-free environment in which all students can learn effectively and pleasantly. To foster this kind of learning environment, the SAC administrators and staff shall not allow the following behaviors during school, on school property, or at or during any school-sponsored activities:

Students are considered to be subject to the authority of the school when they are on route to or from school related or school sponsored events even though those activities may not take place on the SAC's physical address. Some examples include competitions, games, field trips, contests, picnics, and concerts. Misbehaviors, which occur at such events, as outlined below, will be subject to the same penalties as misbehaviors that occur in school.

LEVEL I - MISBEHAVIORS

- a) Failing to attend classes on time
- b) Failing to attend all assigned classes. Cutting classes
- c) Plagiarism; Taking and using the writings and ideas of another and deceptively submitting them as one's own work in satisfying a school assignment
- d) Cheating on examinations
- e) Possessing cell phones, MP3 player, laptop, tablets and similar electronic devices during the school day
- f) Wearing non-dress code clothing
- g) Posting or distributing materials on school property that causes a disruption to the educational process
- h) Running in the hallways, chasing each other in the hallways
- i) Failure to follow lunch, and after school procedures
- j) Failure to follow classroom rules and procedures set by individual teachers
- k) Bringing food to class or chewing gum
- l) Backpack in the classroom
- m) Not being in assigned location
- n) Talking back to teachers
- o) Lying
- p) Humming, singing, making strange noises in the class
- q) Leaving the classroom without permission
- r) Leaving trash on the floor
- s) Drawing, writing in the textbooks

Administration may use their judgment for any other misbehavior that is not mentioned here but might be considered Level I misbehavior.

CORRECTIVE ACTION LEVEL I

- When a student gets a referral to the office from any teacher for any of the Level I misbehaviors, her/his parents will be informed in writing and on the phone.
- If a student's demerit points reach ten, he/she is required to serve a lunch detention.
- If a student's demerit points reach twenty, he/she is required to serve a Saturday detention.
- Any student who receives thirty or more points in a quarter will be suspended one day.
- Demerit points of the student will be deleted at the end of each quarter.

LEVEL II - MISBEHAVIORS

- a) Signing the name of another person for purpose of defrauding school personnel.
- b) Possessing or using tobacco or tobacco substitutes (except hallucinogens) at school.
- c) Leaving school without permission, in the absence of an emergency declared by the Director.
- d) Verbally or physically threatening to injure or harm another person or intimidating another person by creating fear for personal safety.
- e) Bringing alcoholic beverages to school or having alcoholic beverages in his/her possession, or coming to school under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- f) Intentionally causing an interruption of education in the classroom.
- g) Profanity

- h) Failing to adhere to school culture and directives of school personnel when subject to the authority of the school.
- i) Intentionally participating in or initiating actions that result in the disruption of the entire school.
- j) Fighting (physical contact between two or more individuals with intent to harm), hitting, or kicking another student
- k) Gambling on school premises
- l) Participating in hazing activities
- m) Engaging in an activity that may create a condition that is unsafe or unhealthy to others.
- n) Misusing computers and failure to follow the Internet use policy.
- o) Disrespecting and/or insubordination towards teachers or staff.
- p) Bullying behaviors- Verbal or nonverbal behavior that occurs repeatedly over time, and causes physical and/or emotional harm to another. Such behavior may include, but is not limited to, teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, stealing, or destroying personal property.
- q) Use of intimidation. (Engaging in behavior that prevents or discourages another student from exercising his/her right to education. Such prohibited behavior includes use of threats, coercions, or force against students, school personnel and school visitors) credible threats of violence, coercion, persistent severe bullying.)

CORRECTIVE ACTION II

- Administration may suspend a student for a period not exceeding five (5) school days, following appropriate due process.

LEVEL III - MISBEHAVIORS

- a) Using or bringing weapons, dangerous instruments, explosives, firearms, or knives to school.
 - A weapon is anything that is commonly used or designed to hurt someone or to put someone in fear
 - (examples: guns, knives, knuckles, clubs, etc.)
 - A dangerous instrument is anything that although not specifically designed to hurt someone, can be used to hurt someone or put someone in fear (examples: belts, combs, compasses, etc.)
 - An explosive is any substance that can potentially generate a release of mechanical or chemical energy (examples: firecrackers, cherry bombs, gun shells, etc.)
 - Any object, which closely resembles a weapon or explosive and could, put persons in fear for their safety is included in this category (examples: starter pistols, pellet guns, toy guns, smoke bombs, etc.)
- b) Verbally or physically threatening to injure or harm a school staff member
- c) Showing disrespectfulness to teachers or staff and/or using inappropriate language and behavior.
- d) Intentionally causing physical injury to a school staff member.
- e) Sexually assaulting another person.
- f) Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such way as could reasonably cause physical harm to another person
- g) Sexual conduct or sexual contact without mutual consent which includes all forms of sexual harassment
- h) Hate crimes
- i) Engaging in drug related activities, including but not limited to:
- j) making, selling, or distributing drugs/counterfeit drugs at school;
- k) bringing readily identifiable drug abuse instruments or paraphernalia to school

- l) or having such items in his/her possession;
- m) Using or possessing drugs/counterfeit drugs at school.
- n) Intentionally burning or attempting to burn property.
- o) Stealing or attempting to steal or possession of stolen property.
- p) Damaging or attempting to damage the school property.
- q) Forcibly entering a school building locker, classroom, or secured enclosure.
- r) Extorting or attempting to extort property.
- s) Falsely sounding a fire alarm, or causing a fire alarm to be sounded
- t) Falsely communicating or causing to be communicated that a bomb is located in or on property
- u) More than one person acting together to intentionally cause harm or injury to alone individual
- v) Bringing pornographic materials to the school.
- w) Excessive referrals of Level II misbehaviors may/will result in expulsion.

CORRECTIVE ACTION III

- The Director may suspend a student for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days.
- Parents will be informed of any Level III misbehavior offense committed by their child immediately by the Director of the school.
- Students who are found to have Violated Rule III-B (staff assault) and Rule III-I (drugs) will be expelled.

DETENTION

If a student's demerit points reach twenty or merit score reaches 80, he/she is required to serve a lunch detention. Detention date will be scheduled by the administration and the parents will be notified. A "No Show" for lunch detention will result in after school detention.

If a student's demerit points reach thirty or merit score reaches 70, he/she is required to serve two more lunch detentions in a week. If a student's demerit points reach forty or merit score reaches 60, he/she is required to serve an after school detention; 3:15-4:00pm and parents are notified. Student will also be excluded from school activities such as field trips and weekend activities/trips. If a student's demerit points reach fifty students will serve a Saturday detention.

Saturday detention period is from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Detention date will be scheduled by the administration and the parents will be notified. Being late to detention more than half an hour or not showing up will result in detention being doubled. Failure to serve Saturday detention more than once will result in suspension.

Detentions earned in the last week of a quarter may be served the following quarter.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is the involuntary removal of a student from class attendance or school attendance for 10 days or less. A student will be considered as trespassing if present on school grounds during the period of suspension.

Notice of Suspension and the reasons for the suspension will be given to the student in writing by the Director after hearing the issues involved in a situation. If a student is suspended, they may not have any opportunity to make up work that you missed during the suspension; it is at the administration's discretion.

Any student who receives forty or more points in a quarter will be suspended one day. Students who are suspended or expelled from school cannot participate in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events during the period of the suspension or expulsion.

EXPULSION

The decision to expel any student will be made in writing and will include the reasons for the expulsion by the Director after hearing about the events involved in a situation.

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important SAC goals. Reports of bullying should be brought directly to the administration's attention. Anonymous Reporting: www.saoc.org click on the contact us link, top right and complete the Google Form. SAC will follow its response to the bullying and intervention plan.

CLUBS/AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The after school clubs are designed to provide students with additional opportunities to explore interests, develop skills, and engage in social activities beyond the standard curriculum. The program aims to enhance student learning, encourage creativity, and promote a sense of community within the school. All students enrolled in the school are eligible to participate in after school clubs. Specific clubs may have additional requirements (e.g., grade level, prior experience). Enrollment: Students must sign up for clubs at the beginning of each semester. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis, and some clubs may have a maximum number of participants.

SAC CLUB RULES

1. Sign-ups will be sent to parents after school begins.
2. All clubs begin in early September. Clubs may change each semester.
3. Second semester clubs begin after winter break.
4. Outsourced clubs' payment and registration are due before the first club session.
5. Clubs may have a maximum capacity and waiting list.
6. All clubs must have an attendance and behavior policy.
7. Some clubs are by invitation only.



Non-discrimination Policy & Procedure

Updated 2026

Science Academy of Chicago (SAC) prohibits discrimination and harassment on any basis protected by law, including but not limited to, an individual's perceived or actual race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, mental or physical disability or perceived disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status, veterans' status, marital status or age, or because of the perceived or actual race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, mental or physical disability or perceived disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status, veterans' status, marital status or age, of any other persons with whom the individual associates. The school does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

SAC prohibits discrimination and harassment, including but not limited to, in employment, assignment and promotion of personnel; in educational opportunities and services offered students; in student assignment to schools and classes; in student discipline; in location and use of facilities; in educational offerings and materials; and in accommodating the public at public meetings. The school board encourages staff to improve human relations within the schools, to respect all individuals and to establish channels through which citizens can communicate their concerns to the administration and the board.

SAC complies with applicable federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination set forth as stated in 105 ILCS 5/22-95(b). This statement is in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued pursuant to these statutes at Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 80, 84, and 91, and 28 CFR Part 35.

Complaints regarding noncompliance with non-discrimination legislation shall be processed through the appropriate school policy and/or regulation. If the School fails to take necessary corrective action to stop harassment based on race, color, or national origin, further relief may be available through the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR) or the U.S. Dept. of Education's Office for Civil Rights. To contact IDHR, go to: <https://dhr.illinois.gov/aboutus/contact-idhr.html> or call (312) 814-6200 (Chicago) or (217) 785-5100 (Springfield)

SAC prohibits retaliation and discrimination against an individual who has opposed any discrimination act or practice; because that person has filed a charge, testified, assisted or participated in an investigation, proceeding or hearing; and further prohibits anyone from coercing, intimidating, threatening or interfering with an individual for exercising any rights guaranteed under state and federal law. Students or staff found to have engaged in acts of discrimination or harassment based on disability will be promptly disciplined and make clear that such discipline may include for students, if circumstances warrant, suspension or expulsion, and for employees,

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termination. We encourage students, parents and staff to work together to prevent acts of harassment of any kind.

Discrimination Complaint Procedure

Complaints regarding discrimination or harassment, on any basis protected by law, shall be processed in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Complaints may be oral or in writing and must be filed with the school director. The school director shall investigate and determine the action to be taken, if any, and reply, in writing, to the complainant within 10 school days of receipt of the complaint. Any staff member that receives a written or oral complaint shall report the complaint to the school director.
2. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the school director, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent or designee within five school days after receipt of the school director's response to the complaint. The superintendent or designee will review the merits of the complaint and the school director's decision and respond, in writing, to the complainant within 10 school days.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent or designee, a written appeal may be filed with the school board within five school days of receipt of the superintendent or designee response in Step 2. The board may decide to hear or deny the request for appeal. The board may meet with the concerned parties and their representative at the next regular or special board meeting. The board's decision will be final and will include the legal basis for the decision, findings of fact and conclusions of law. A copy of the board's final decision shall be sent to the complainant in writing within 10 days of this meeting.

If the school director is the subject of the complaint, the individual may file a complaint with the superintendent or designee. If the superintendent is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be referred to the Board chair. The Board may refer the investigation to a third party.

Complaints against the Board as a whole or against an individual Board member, should be made to the Board chair. Complaints against the Board chair may be made directly to the Board vice chair.

Timelines may be extended based upon mutual consent of both parties.



Faith's Law Code of Conduct

Employee Code of Professional Conduct – Faith's Law Compliance

Applies to: JK–8 Program | All Faculty, Staff, Coaches, Volunteers, Contractors

Purpose

Science Academy of Chicago ("SAC") is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and academically excellent STREAM-focused learning environment for all students in Junior Kindergarten through Grade 8. In alignment with SAC's mission of educating the whole child in a caring environment, all adults serving students must maintain professional relationships and clear boundaries at all times.

Pursuant to Illinois Faith's Law (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5), SAC adopts the following Employee Code of Professional Conduct to prevent sexual misconduct, grooming behaviors, and inappropriate staff-student interactions. Faith's Law requires this policy to be posted on the school website and included in staff, student, and family handbooks. This policy applies to:

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Instructional aides
- Coaches
- Tutors
- Extended care staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Guest instructors
- Any adult acting on behalf of SAC

All employees of Science Academy of Chicago are expected to maintain high standards in their job performance, demonstrate integrity and honesty, be considerate and cooperative, and maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents/guardians, staff members, and others. The school is also legally required to obtain employment history review documents under 105 ILCS 5/22-94(c)(3) and (4) for any new applicant.

In addition, the **Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators**, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated by reference into this policy. Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Professional and Appropriate Conduct

Professional and appropriate employee conduct are important School goals that impact the quality of a safe learning environment and the school community, increasing students' ability to learn and the School's ability to educate. To protect students from sexual misconduct by employees, and employees from the appearance of impropriety, state law also recognizes the importance for employees of Science Academy of Chicago to constantly maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students by following established expectations and guidelines for employee–student boundaries.

The Principal or designee shall identify employee conduct standards that define appropriate employee–student boundaries and communicate them to all employees. These standards shall require that, at a minimum:



- Employees who are governed by the Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), comply with its incorporation by reference into this policy.
- Employees complete required training on educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and employee–student boundary violations as required by law and applicable School policies, including policies related to Title IX, awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors, mandated reporting, and staff development.
- Employees maintain professional relationships with students, including maintaining employee–student boundaries based upon students’ ages, grade levels, and developmental levels, and following School-established guidelines for specific situations, including but not limited to:
 - Transporting a student; Off-campus travel requires parent permission and administrative approval
 - Taking or possessing a photo or video of a student;
 - Meeting with a student or contacting a student outside the employee’s professional role.
- Employees comply with reporting requirements under the **Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.)**, and report prohibited behaviors and/or boundary violations pursuant to applicable School grievance and reporting procedures.
- Employees are subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal, for any violation of employee conduct standards or engagement in any of the following:
 - Violating boundaries for appropriate employee–student conduct or established expectations and guidelines for employee–student relationships;
 - Sexually harassing a student;
 - Willfully or negligently failing to follow reporting requirements under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act or Title IX;
 - Engaging in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25;
 - Engaging in grooming behaviors.

Grooming behaviors are strictly prohibited and include, at a minimum, sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is any act, including but not limited to verbal, nonverbal, written, electronic communication, or physical activity, by an employee with direct contact with a student, that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A sexual or romantic invitation;
- Dating or soliciting a date;
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialogue;
- Making sexually suggestive comments directed toward or with a student;
- Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature;
- Sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student.

4. Reporting Requirement

Any employee, parent/guardian, student, contractor, or volunteer who becomes aware of possible misconduct must immediately report concerns to:

- Principal or Executive Director
- Illinois DCFS Hotline: 1-800-25-ABUSE



- Local law enforcement, if applicable

Reports involving suspected grooming or abuse must be handled in accordance with **Faith's Law, Illinois mandated reporter obligations, and SAC safeguarding procedures.**

5. Parent/Guardian Notification

This notification process shall be coordinated by the Principal or designee. When required by Illinois law, SAC shall promptly notify the parent/guardian of any student involved in an allegation of sexual misconduct by:

- Employees
- Substitute teachers
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agents of the school

6. Handbook Publication and Training

This policy shall be:

- Published in the **SAC Student-Family Handbook**
- Published in the **Employee Handbook**
- Posted on the **SAC website**
- Reviewed annually during staff orientation
- Included in volunteer and coach onboarding
- Revisited before overnight trips, competitions, and extended care programming

LEGAL REFERENCE

- **105 ILCS 5/22-85.5** – Faith's Law
- **325 ILCS 5/** – Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act
- ISBE Faith's Law Guidance

STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received and read my copy of the Science Academy of Chicago Student Handbook.

I know I am responsible for adhering to all of the policies and procedures contained in this student handbook.

I agree to follow all of the policies and procedures contained in the student code of conduct. I

also understand that if I violate the policies and procedures contained in the handbook that I will receive the appropriate consequences.

(Student Print Name) (Student Signature) (Date)

(Parent/Guardian Print Name) (Parent Signature) (Date)