

**Sam Houston State
University
Charter School
Teacher/Staff
Handbook**

2023-2024

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SHSU CHARTER SCHOOL STAFF

Administration Staff

Superintendent: Mr. Craig Toney
Principal: Alicia Hernandez
Office Manager: Lisa Box
PEIMS: Rebecca Carruthers
Business Manager: Richard Ray

Charter School Advisory Board

Chair: Dr. Kristina Vargo
Vice-Chair: TBD
Member: Dr. Baburhan Uzum
Member: Dr. William Blackwell
Member: Dr. Jaime Coyne
Parent Member: Ashlee Marshall
Community Member: Susie Kamman

Teaching Staff

***Denotes Site Lead Teacher**

Brighton Academy (The Woodlands), 101-11

Kindergarten: TBD, Elizabeth Smith
1st Grade ELA: **Mary Elizabeth Mueller***
1st Grade Math/Science: Kendle Samuel
2nd Grade: Miranda Cloud and Chelsey Harmon
3rd ELA: Stacy Guthrie
3rd Math/Science: Katie Statlander
4th ELA: Brittany Love-Wiley
4th Math/Science: Maribel Cummings
5th ELA: Vicki Armacost
5th Math/ Science: Zaina Al Kayyali
6th ELA: Amy Stewart
6th Math/ Science: Stephanie Galle
Paraprofessionals: Megan Emery, Shelby Wright, Ilyssa Gonzalez

Cypress Trails Preschool and Childcare Center (Spring), 101-13

Kindergarten ELA: **Crystal Pflughaupt***

Kindergarten Math/ Science: Xochiltl Arrowood

1st Grade Math/ Science: Tasha Johnson

1st Grade ELA: Carolyn Thompson

2nd Grade: Mallori Franck

3rd Grade: Kathleen Francis

4th Grade: Dr. Omobolaji David-Ojumu

5th Grade: Nacol Hicks

Paraprofessionals: Dezora Paul, Melissa Moon, Charrie Sanders

Spring Woods UMC and Childcare Center (Spring), 101-14

Kindergarten: **Kendra O'Neal***

1st Grade: Ely Vanegas Vasquez

2nd Grade: Marisol Avalos

3rd: Gesselle Alvarado

4th: Dulcie Morath

5th : Jayci Ray

Bearkat Den: Amy Williams

Paraprofessionals: Shea Downey, Sheneria Taylor, Jazzmin Coffey

All campuses:

PE/Special Education Support:
Educational Technology Specialist
School Psychologist/ ARD Facilitator

Emily Batelaan
Karla O'Keeffe
Leslie Gay

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

Attendance and Leave

Teacher hours are Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. School begins at 8:00 a.m. District support staff that rotate between campuses must sign in and sign out with the campus lead teacher every day. Lead teachers are responsible for maintaining a sign-in and sign-out sheet for support staff, as provided by the Principal. Please note that at least two staff members must be on duty to unload and direct students each morning. Each site may rotate this responsibility among its staff. Paraprofessional hours are 7:30-4:00 or 7:15-3:45.

Classroom teachers are expected to stay on campus throughout the day. Should an emergency occur, and the staff member finds it necessary to leave campus, notification to the lead teacher at the site needs to happen immediately. Next, a text or email (preferably text) needs to be sent by either the staff member leaving or the lead teacher to Mrs. Hernandez, notifying her that the staff member is leaving for the day. **Mrs. Hernandez's cell number is 352-231-2813.** Should you need to leave campus early and take your child/ student with you, you **MUST** sign your student out using the campus Student Sign-Out sheet prior to leaving with your child.

If an absence is planned, the lead teacher and the Principal must be notified at least five days prior to the absence. This should be done through email, and the subject line must read "Personal Day." If you are sick and need to miss work, send a text to the lead teacher and Principal or email with the subject line "Out Sick." A text message is preferred. (This same procedure applies if you are staying home with a sick child). Sub instructions for staff absences must be shared with the staff member covering your class (and CC'd with the Principal and the campus lead teacher) by 8am the following day. **All staff are expected to be present on the day before and after a scheduled school holiday. Staff must receive prior written approval from campus administration if they plan to miss the day before or after a scheduled school holiday.**

It is University policy that if you miss more than three days consecutively you must apply for a leave of absence. **Failure to do so may result in the staff member losing compensation for that day.** It is your responsibility to enter absences into the MySam employee system at www.shsu.edu.

Substitute Teacher

Substitutes will be arranged through the lead teacher. You must notify the lead teacher **and the Principal** if you are going to be absent. Paraprofessionals are the first response to class coverage when a staff member must be absent. If paraprofessionals are unavailable, district support staff will be reassigned to either cover a class or specials for the campus.

Communication

Your first line of communication should always be your lead teacher, if necessary, the lead teacher will call the Principal. Emails regarding daily operations, student issues, parent concerns, curriculum, campus concerns, and grading should be directed to the Principal.

We are setting the example and creating an image for ourselves. Always be professional. The best way for us to recruit new students and families is to consistently be our best in every situation. Remember that email never goes away. Be careful what you say in haste or frustration, and always maintain strict confidentiality of your students.

You are expected to share weekly correspondence with your families (either via SeeSaw, email, or print materials), updating them with the latest classroom happenings, objectives that will be taught during the upcoming week, and how the parent can help the child at home. **This is non-negotiable.** The Principal checks class SeeSaw accounts for activity and communication bi-weekly.

District Newsletters are created each month and will be shared through SeeSaw, district social media, and print. Teachers must ensure newsletters are sent home the week they are distributed by the Principal.

All staff should have Mr. Toney and Mrs. Hernandez's phone numbers programmed into their cell phone. Mrs. Hernandez/352-231-2813, Mr. Toney/903-285-2256.

Conference/Planning Time

Teachers will have a designated conference time every day. Conference times should be utilized for parent conferences, team/site meetings, lesson planning, and/or preparation for instruction. **All teachers must have at least one conference with each parent every semester, regardless of how the student is performing academically.** All team members are expected to attend PLC/planning meetings, staff meetings, professional development and contribute to the discussions. Grade-level PLC meetings will occur virtually at least one day a month and will be scheduled during conference times on Tuesdays.

Staff Meetings and Socials

Monthly staff meetings will no longer be held once a month for professional development. Monthly staff meetings will occur virtually during Tuesday PLC conference periods, and as needed after school from 3:45-4:15. Lead teacher meetings will be scheduled with the Principal as needed.

Dress Code

Professional attire is required at all times unless lessons for the day include outside projects or activities that last the entire class day. In this instance modest shorts are acceptable. For July and August, when it will be very warm, you can wear school-appropriate shorts. Additional dress code requirements and restrictions are as follows:

- Jeans are allowed on Friday with an SHSU (Sam Houston State University) Spirit shirt unless the site has a special event.
- Wednesdays are designated to wear the SHSU polo shirt and jeans if you choose to do so.
- No sweatpants, warm-ups, work out pants, or leggings worn as pants.
- School appropriate sandals are acceptable.

*If you look in the mirror and must ask “is this school appropriate?” then it probably isn’t.

*Due to the heat, we have in our area, school-appropriate shorts are allowed through Labor Day.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Lunch and Recess Duty

The lead teacher at each site will develop a schedule for lunch and recess duty. Arrival and dismissal of students should be on a rotating schedule.

Pledges and Minute of Silence

It is required by the state of Texas that each morning students recite the American pledge, the Texas pledge, and conduct a minute of silence. Since we do not have intercom systems at our sites, this will be the responsibility of the teacher.

Special Ed., 504 and Speech students

You will be given a hard copy of the IEP goals and accommodations for each of your students that fall under any of these categories. You will be asked to sign a form acknowledging receipt. In signing this form, you are stating that you will follow all modifications and accommodations for that student and if any changes need to be made you will notify the Special Education Support staff member (if a special ed. student), the Superintendent, and the Principal. If student learning plans change during the academic year, or if a new student qualifies for Special Education services, the Special Education Support staff member is responsible for sharing updated IEPs with classroom teachers digitally. The Special Education Support staff member will also update the Confidential classroom binders to include the new IEP, conference with teachers and paraprofessionals that work with the SPED student on what additional supports the student receives and ensure campus lead teachers add any new SPED students to the weekly paraprofessional SPED support schedule.

Students Quarantining Due to COVID-19 Exposure

If a student tests positive for COVID or has close contact with someone that tested positive, the following procedures should occur within 24 hours:

- 1.) Parent notifies classroom teacher and Central Office if child has tested positive or is in close contact with a positive case (must present positive test result to teacher and Central Office)
- 2.) Teachers email Mr. Toney, Mrs. Hernandez, Ms. Carruthers, and campus lead teachers with last date student was on campus, what symptoms he/she exhibited, and dates for quarantine.
- 3.) Teachers ensure students have all student login information for digital learning (Example: iReady, Lexia, IXL, etc.)

Student Restraint Procedures

All SHSU Charter School staff must complete Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) Training annually. If a staff member restrains a student, they must document the restraint on a restraint form maintained by the campus lead teacher. Students that receive Special Education services must have an additional restraint form filled out by the restraining staff member. This form will be maintained by the campus lead teacher with general restraint documentation and collected at the end of the year.

TEKS Resource, Lesson Plans

Lesson plans are due each week by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, or Tuesday if Monday is a holiday. This is non-negotiable. Lesson plans should be submitted to the Superintendent and Principal weekly. The format for lesson plans is the teacher's choice, but it must include the TEKS being taught, instruction and assessment activities, and a **weekly STEM lesson**. You should include all TEKS for each nine weeks as identified on TEKS Resource within the designated nine weeks.

Parent Conferences

A minimum of one face-to-face conference with each parent per semester is required. Notes of the conferences should be kept and stored in the classroom. If you request an administrator sit in on the conference with you, please give at least three days' notice for the Superintendent and/or Principal to arrange to attend. The lead teacher at each site can also sit in on parent conferences if needed. Due to current COVID-19 concerns, you are allowed to have parent conferences in person or through zoom.

Homework

Reading nightly is expected. Do not send home worksheets and busy work. Homework expectations should be established at each site and approved by the Principal before being sent home to parents/families. STAAR grade levels should provide homework that expose students to the testing format. A homework grade is included on the report card.

Textbooks

Textbooks and instructional materials are expensive. It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to secure the textbooks in their classroom. If you have concerns about materials being used or disturbed after Charter School hours, notify the Superintendent and Principal immediately.

Supplies

A supply list for \$200 should be submitted to the Central Office Administrative Assistant at the start of the school year. If additional supplies are needed, see your lead teacher for guidance. Teachers may request additional supplies from students by sending a letter, See Saw message, or email to parents/guardians. When a student withdraws, any remaining personal supplies should be sent with the student.

If furniture requests are necessary, send the request to your lead teacher and the request will be routed to the Superintendent and Principal. Please keep social distancing guidelines in mind when considering adding furniture to your classroom.

Building, Site, and Classroom Needs

If you have a "work order" need for your classroom or site, submit the necessary information to the lead teacher and the request will be routed to the Superintendent and Principal.

Field Trips

The expectation is to coordinate at least one field trip for the school year. Field trips should not impede STAAR testing for grades 3-6. Date, time, and location needs to be approved by the principal.

Birthdays

Student birthdays may be celebrated at the end of the instructional day. This **MUST** take place **AFTER** the scheduled lunchtime. Individually wrapped treats may be shared. You may allow store bought cupcakes if they are in the original, sealed

packaging from the grocery store. **This is not a party with snacks, a meal, or games.** You will need to make this noticeably clear at your parents' information nights.

TECHNOLOGY

Teacher Laptops

The laptops issued to teachers by SHSU are for work purposes only. However, it should be with you after school hours. Do not leave it in the classroom overnight or on the weekends as the classroom could potentially be occupied by the before- and after-school childcare programs. Do not leave your laptop in a hot vehicle.

View Sonics

This item will be on rollers. Make sure it is moved out of the way and turned towards the wall at the end of the day to discourage the before- and after-school programs from using it if your room is used after school.

iPads and Chromebook and Carts

iPad and Chromebook carts need to be stored and locked away each day. Make sure all iPads and Chromebooks are accounted for and in the cart before leaving for the day.

Wifi

Wi-Fi will be available at all locations. Contact the site director for network information. If the Wifi is not working properly, please make your lead teacher, the Principal, the Ed Tech Specialist, and the site manager aware.

SKYWARD STUDENT DATABASE

Grading, Attendance, Absences, Tardies, Withdrawals, Cumulative Folders

All student folders, including, but not limited to, cumulative, special education, and 504, will be housed in the Charter School offices in Huntsville.

Instruction guides for attendance, gradebook, etcetera, will be given to teachers to keep in the classroom.

Any questions regarding Skyward or student records should be directed to Rebecca.

HEALTH AND SECURITY

Medication

All medication will be administered and recorded by the classroom teacher at each site. Medication will be kept in a locked storage cabinet. There is also a designated area in the refrigerator for medication that must be kept cold. Under no circumstances will medication be given without a doctor's note. Children should never carry medication in their backpacks or lunch kits. Medication should always be checked-in by the classroom teacher from the parent. Students should not bring medication in themselves and hand it to the teacher.

Child Protective Services (CPS) and Counseling

If you suspect abuse, it is your legal responsibility to report it. It is not your responsibility to investigate. You are not required to notify administrators, but it is helpful if we are aware of the situation, especially if we receive parent phone calls. Anytime a CPS worker comes in to visit with a child, you must allow that visit. It is not your responsibility to notify the parents of the CPS visit.

In the event you have a student that you think needs counseling services, contact your lead teacher and she will speak with the Superintendent and Principal.

If a CPS caseworker shows up to interview a student, we must provide a private place for that to occur. The lead teacher needs to make a copy of the CPS worker's ID and driver's license. Have the caseworker sign in with time and date. The principal needs to be notified immediately of any CPS visits.

Campus Security, Release of Students, and Custody Issues

It is your responsibility to know your student's emergency information. It will be available to you through Skyward, and you will also have a hard copy. Lead teachers will coordinate a local Emergency Contact binder for all students enrolled at each campus. It is imperative that you are aware of custody issues and who is and is not allowed to pick up a student. If you have questions or concerns, **ALWAYS CALL** Mr. Toney, Mrs. Hernandez, or Mrs. Carruthers. It is crucial that you are confident in knowing who is picking up each student. Simply tell the parent or visitor you are protecting the student's safety and to be patient while you verify the student's account information. Pay special attention to holidays, as custody typically alternates between parents during these times.

If a student is being picked up late regularly, please notify the principal.

Fire and Weather Alerts (Active Threat Drills)

Lead teachers should work with the childcare director/owner to establish a fire route exit and an alternate exit. Fire drills should be conducted once a month and recorded on the official Fire Marshal record sheet. It is best to coordinate the drills with the site. Students should be prepared and know the procedures to follow when tornado or weather alerts occur. The students should be away from windows and secure from flying objects.

COVID Guidelines

STUDENTS: Students that come in close contact with confirmed-positive COVID-19 cases are strongly encouraged to obtain a lab-confirmed PCR test, but Charter School staff will also accept a reliable Home Test positive result. Parents will be required to submit documentation of positive test status for confirmed and close-contact cases.

If Students Test Positive for COVID-19:

Report your positive case to the school by contacting

- 1.) your child's teacher and,
- 2.) the school office at 936-294-3347 or emailing rcc036@shsu.edu

Choose a return to campus option regardless of vaccine status:

Option 1 – *Standard Return:* Students may return to school after all of the below are met:

- at least 10 days (about 1 and a half weeks) have passed since the onset of symptoms or asymptomatic test date,
- at least 24 hours fever free has passed without the use of fever-reducing medications, and
- symptoms are improving.

Option 2 – *Early Return:* Stay home for 5 days after the date your symptoms began or the date of your test if asymptomatic.

- no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, and
- student has been fever free for at least the last 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications

If you have a close contact (in your household) positive for COVID-19:

Report the positive household case to classroom teachers and the school office.

Choose a return to campus option:

Option 1 – Standard Return: You may return to school/work after at least ten days have passed since exposure.

Option 2 – Early Return: Stay home for 5 days following exposure, return on Day 6 with negative test on day 5.

Option 3 – Early Return Vaccinated: You may choose not to quarantine.

EMPLOYEES: The SHSU Charter School will require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. The self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must report to the SHSU Charter School administration if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted above.

****As Essential Employees, Charter School Staff do not have to quarantine due to close contact with a positive case unless they begin exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. Charter School Staff that do test positive for COVID-19 may follow Option 2 above; quarantine for 5 days then wear a mask upon return to school for 5 days. ****

VOLUNTEERS: Before volunteers and visitors are allowed onto campuses, the SHSU Charter School will screen all volunteers and visitors to determine if they have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted above.

REFERENCE GUIDE

Please use the following list as a reference guide when seeking the right person for help:

Mr. Craig Toney, Superintendent

- District Level Administration
- Human Resources
- School Safety
- Emergency Operations and Management
- District Accountability and School Performance
- Homeless/Foster Care Liaison

Alicia Hernandez, Principal

- Campus Level Administration
- Building and Classroom Needs
- Student Discipline/Code-of-Conduct
- Leave Requests
- Assessment & Testing
- ESL & Bilingual
- Professional Development
- Master Schedule
- PLC and Staff Meetings
- Staff Handbook
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Lesson Plans
- TEKS Resource

Rebecca Carruthers-Charter School Office

- PEIMS Coding
- Attendance/Withdrawals
- Gradebook and Report Cards
- Skyward
- Student Records
- Enrollment

Lisa Box-Charter School Office

- Purchasing and Ordering
- Travel
- Student rosters and Wait Lists

Leslie Gay – School Psychologist

- Special Education Services Coordinator
- ARD Facilitator
- District SPED Scheduling & Support
- 504 Coordinator
- Special Education and Dyslexia Testing
- Counseling Services

Emily Batelaan, Special Education Support and PE

- Special Education ARD Documentation
- K-6 push-in SPED support for all campuses
- Facilitate IEP updates, documentation, and scheduled services for new and current SPED students with teachers, paras, and lead teachers at all campuses
- Coordinate Fitnessgram assessments of all 3-6 students in spring

Karla O’Keeffe, Educational Technology Specialist

- Campus technology support for all students and staff
- Rostering students and Reporting for digital licenses
- Competition robotics teams at Brighton, Cypress Trails, and Spring Woods
- Oversee Specials Implementation and Grading at all campuses
- Assist implementation of secure online state assessment
- Manage district website and district social media accounts
- Assist Fitnessgram assessments of all 3-6 students in spring