

Spring Branch Academic Institute

Elementary Student/Parent Handbook
Supplement
2018 - 2019



Host Campus: Valley Oaks Elementary
8390 Westview
Houston, Texas 77055
SBAI Phone: 713-251-2219

Spring Branch Academic Institute Mission Statement

The Spring Branch Academic Institute will provide highly, exceptionally, and profoundly gifted children an advanced educational opportunity matched to their individual abilities, strengths, and interests.

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Spring Branch Academic Institute, or SBAI. We take great pride in meeting the academic and affective needs of our students. This handbook is to be used in conjunction with the District's Elementary Student/Parent Handbook. It also aligns to the expectations of our host campus, Valley Oaks Elementary.

If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to call or email. We are looking forward to a great year! Thank you for your commitment to our children and community.

Sincerely,

Lynne Barry
Director

SBAI/VOE Staff

SBAI:

SBAI Director: Lynne Barry

SBAI Assistant Director: Jim Lefeber

SBAI Administrative Assistant: Lynnnda Butorka

Elementary Social Studies: Sally Craddock

Elementary ELA: Kristi Dina, Ashlee Wilson

Elementary Math: Stella Kim, Julie Sirianni, Kristi Dina (K-1)

Elementary Science: (Mon/Tue/Wed): Kayman McIver, **(Thur/Fri):** Rebecca King

Secondary Social Studies: Elizabeth Aubuchon

Secondary Science: Mohammed Haidar

Secondary Math: Linda Alexander, Dillon Sexton

Secondary ELA: Kelly Treleaven

Support Specialist: Lisa Helfer

Please note: SBAI staff hold certifications in all elementary areas. Teaching assignments are occasionally modified based on campus need.

VOE:

VOE Principal: Kim Reynolds

VOE Assistant Principal: Margie Moerbe

VOE Counselor: Karen Doudican

VOE Librarian: Becky Reese

VOE Nurse: Jackie Petrie

VOE Administrative Assistant: Lesley Morrow

VOE Attendance Clerk (ADA): Teresa Weyer

VOE Receptionist: Patti Bailey

Address/Phone Number Changes

Notify Ms. Weyer in VOE's office and Ms. Butorka in SBAI's office if you have a change in address, home phone, work phone or emergency contact information.

Arrival and Dismissal

- **Arrival Times:** Upon arrival, all SBAI students report to the gym. Students may not arrive before 7:00 a.m. since no one will be on duty to supervise them. At 7:20 a.m., students are walked to the classrooms by a teacher or staff member.
- **Students Walking or Biking to School:** Walkers and bikers use the main entrance to the school off of Pech Road, always crossing with the crossing guards. Be sure to respectfully follow directions of the crossing guards. Students biking to school should bring a lock to secure their bicycles while on campus.

- Students Arriving by Car: Students transported to school by car are to be dropped off and picked up on Pech Road through Parent Drive. Faculty and student patrols will be on duty at Parent Drive to assist students, beginning at 7:00 a.m. Students should exit the car from the passenger side only. Please be patient and respectfully follow directions.
- Congestion in Parent Drive: To avoid the congestion in Parent Drive and prevent being tardy, please arrive as close to 7:10 a.m. as possible. Also, to help ease the congestion and traffic, parents are strongly encouraged to form carpools. Information regarding carpooling can be found on the VOE PTA website/SBAI page.
- No Drop Off/Pick Up Zones: To keep the students safe and prevent disruption of traffic, students should not be dropped off on the streets surrounding the school, including Westview, Hillendahl, and Pech Road. Under no circumstances should the handicap parking spaces be used for drop-off or pick-up if you are not in an identified handicapped vehicle. Students may not be dropped off in the staff parking lot. The staff parking lot is reserved for staff only. Please do not park in PTA paid parking spots or mentor reserved parking places.
- Students Arriving Late: There will not be staff members on duty at Parent Drive after 7:30 a.m. Students arriving after 7:30 a.m. must proceed to the office for a tardy slip before going to their classrooms.
- Dismissal: For dismissal, SBAI teachers will group the students into three categories: (1) bus riders/day care/students attending an after school activity (2) walkers (3) students departing through parent drive. Each group shall be escorted by a teacher to the appropriate dismissal area.
- Students Departing Through Parent Drive: Students departing by car will be taken to the foyer of the main entrance for pick-up at Parent Drive off of Pech Road. All cars picking up through parent drive are required to have their yellow identification card displayed on their dashboard. Cones are used to designate pick-up spots. Parents may not pick a child up from the foyer of the main entrance.
- Students Departing as a Walker: Students will exit the black gate. Parents assume responsibility once students exit. Please meet your child near this gate. It is critically important for the safety of all that crosswalks are used. Parents and students should pay close attention to the crossing guard and should stay alert to their surroundings (vehicle traffic, other children, etc.).
- Changes in Dismissal Method: When requesting a change of transportation for your child, please send a written note with your child to give to his/her backpack room teacher on the morning of the requested change. It is helpful to also email Ms. Butorka. In emergency situations, contact Ms. Butorka by telephone, or email Ms. Butorka and a SBAI teacher before 1:30 p.m.
- Early Dismissal Days: Students are dismissed at 11:30 a.m. on district early dismissal days. Be sure to make arrangements for your child on these days. Refer to the district calendar for the specific dates of elementary early dismissal.
- Parking Across the Street: Be aware that the businesses across Westview have proper signage in their parking lots which will enable them to tow vehicles of those individuals not visiting their establishments.

Attendance and Absences

- Absence Notes: When your child is absent, please send an email to Ms. Butorka, if possible. In addition, absence notes must be received within 2 school days of a student's return, or the absence will be considered unexcused. If your child has 3 or more unexcused absences within a 4 week period, a Truancy Warning letter will be sent to the parent. A parent conference and Attendance Improvement Plan will be required. Refer to the SBISD Student/Parent Handbook for more information regarding excused and unexcused absences.
- If a student is absent from school ten or more days **unexcused** in a six-month period, school personnel are required by law to notify the SBISD Police Department TRIAT (Truancy Reduction Increased Attendance Team) Police Officer and to complete an Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP).
- Checking Students Out of School: No student will be released from school except to a parent, guardian or designee, as indicated on Family Access. When taking a child out of school, the parent, guardian or other designee, must first come to the school office and sign the student out, specifying the reason for early dismissal. Anyone taking a child from school will be asked to show proper identification.
- Tardy Policy: The tardy bell rings at 7:30 a.m. Children not in the classroom once the bell has rung, are considered tardy. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused tardies. Please note that children arriving to school on a late bus are permitted to enter class without being considered tardy. SBISD excuses these tardies automatically.

Backpack Class

Rather than having a "homeroom," SBAI students each have a "Backpack Class," where they begin and end their day.

Bell Schedule

7:20 a.m.	Students to classrooms
7:30 a.m.	Class starts/tardy bell rings
9:00 a.m.	Attendance entered by classroom teachers
2:30 p.m.	Dismissal

Block Schedule

7:35 – 8:25 a.m.	5 th grade
8:25 – 9:15 a.m.	4 th grade
9:15 – 10:05 a.m.	2 nd grade
10:05 – 10:55 a.m.	3 rd grade
12:45 – 1:35 p.m.	Kinder
1:35 – 2:25 p.m.	1 st grade

Bus Procedures

SBISD bus transportation is available **ONLY** for SBAI students zoned to VOE. SBAI students follow all VOE guidelines, procedures, and expectations on the bus.

Cafeteria

Student Behavior: The following behaviors are expected to be displayed by all students during their visit to the cafeteria for lunch:

- Use a quiet (6-inch) voice to communicate with peers.
- Raise hand for assistance and all questions.
- Remain in seat unless given permission to move from the table.
- Use appropriate table manners.
- Clean up eating area.
- Sharing of food is prohibited.
- Parents may not bring food for other SBAI/VOE students.

Eating With Child: Lunch visitors at the elementary level may be parents/guardians, non-school-aged siblings, grandparents (with written permission from a parent), and campus mentors. Visits will be limited to the 30-minute lunch period. VOE has a designated guest table for lunch visitors. The authorized lunch visitor and only the student for whom the visitor is approved may sit at the guest table.

Lunch Money: Student lunches can be paid for on a daily basis or in advance. Methods of payment include cash, checks, or on-line transactions. SBISD Child Nutrition Services also has an app for ease of payment. Sending large amounts of cash with a child is highly discouraged. Checks may be written to SBISD, labeled with the child's lunch number, and delivered to the cafeteria manager. Student accounts carry over from your child's home campus.

SBAI Lunch Times:

- 10:55 – 11:25 a.m. Grades 3-5
- 11:25 – 11:55 a.m. Grades K-2

Campus Visits and Deliveries

Parents or visitors must check in at the office when coming on campus. Any items that need to be delivered to students must be brought to the school office. Office staff will deliver these items or notify the child's teacher so that the items can be picked up. Delivery of forgotten homework is not permissible. Middle school students may not visit campus during the day. All visits by former students must take place after school hours.

Cell Phones

A student in grades K-12 may use a telecommunications/electronic device to the extent authorized by a classroom teacher or administrator for instructional purposes.

Telecommunications/electronic devices shall not be used to take pictures or videos at any time during the school day or on school grounds, unless authorized by the classroom teacher for instructional purposes. SBAI students are required to keep their cell phones, turned off, in their backpacks. If a student has his/her phone out during the school day, it may be taken up by school personnel for the remainder of the day. Subsequent occurrences may result in turning the phone into SBAI personnel during the school day or not being allowed to bring personal technology to school. Note: SBISD, school personnel and/or

administrators are not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of any cell phone or device brought on school property.

CIT (Campus Improvement Team)

The SBAI Campus Improvement Team (CIT) is composed of school and non-school personnel. School CIT members are elected by a vote of their peers in February. Non-school CIT members are selected by lottery, in conjunction with the school CIT member elections. The non-school portion of the CIT is made up of parents, a business representative, and a community representative. According to district policy, the role of the Campus Improvement Team is to advise the Director on decisions in the areas of goal setting, curriculum, budgeting, staffing patterns, and school organization.

Clinic

The school nurse is in charge of the clinic. She will assist students if they are sick or injured or if they need to take medication at school. Students are encouraged to go to her with health-related problems or concerns. Students are never permitted to take medication unless they are in the clinic and supervised by the nurse.

- Immunizations: Please refer to the SBISD Student/Parent Handbook for a complete list of immunization requirements.
- Prescription/Medication: Prescription medication can be administered at school only when there is a physician's order to administer it. This request must be signed by the physician and parent. The medication must be in the original container and properly labeled by the pharmacy. The request must give the name of medication, dose, time and dates to be given.
- Non-prescription Medications: These can be administered at school if the medication is provided by a parent with an accompanying written request signed by the parent giving the name of the medication, dose, time and dates to be administered. The medication must be in the original container. No medication will be administered that is not in its original packaging, labeled by the manufacturer. For medications given on an "as needed" basis, the note must state specific dosage instructions. Medication shall not be sent with a child in a lunch or backpack for "self-medicating" at school.
- Sick Child at School: When a child becomes sick or injured at school, the nurse will reference the Clinic Emergency Card for contact information. In a situation where a child needs to go home, the child will remain in the clinic until a parent or designated person comes to the school to address the situation. A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Communication

Communication is valued at SBAI and VOE. Information is given in a variety of ways, including Friday Folders, ItsLearning, emails, the phone call-out system, the school newsletter, the school and PTA websites, and the school marquee.

Differentiated Learning Plans

SBAI students receive a Differentiated Learning Plan, or DLP, each school year. Parents will receive these plans twice during the year (Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences and End-of-Year

Report Cards). These plans indicate the student's academic placement/goals/growth in each subject, as well as which STAAR tests will probably be taken (when applicable). The plans are flexible guidelines and can be adjusted as necessary.

Discipline Management

If a child has demonstrated unacceptable school behavior, consequences shall be based upon a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case. Disciplinary action will follow guidelines set in the Student Code of Conduct section of the Elementary SBISD Student/Parent Handbook. SBAI follows the principles of "Love and Logic." One of the goals of the program is to provide an environment that recognizes specific social emotional needs and fosters leadership, integrity, personal responsibility, conscientious citizenship, understanding and appreciation of individual differences, and respect for others.

Dress Code

In order to maintain an academic focus, the following dress code is in effect for SBAI and Valley Oaks and is required anytime a student is on school property, including the bus.

- Clothing should be neat and free from distasteful slogans.
- Spaghetti strap tops and tank tops are not permitted.
- Caps, visors, and bandanas may not be worn.
- Tennis shoes are required for health fitness.
- Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than mid-thigh.

The district prohibits any clothing or grooming that, in the Director's judgment, may cause disruption of or interference with normal school operations.

Family Fridays

Each Friday, parents are allowed to walk children back to their Backpack Class, beginning at 7:20 a.m. Parents walking children to class are held in the rotunda until 7:20 a.m. each Friday. It is important that parents exit the building at 7:30 a.m. so instruction can begin.

Field Trips (Study Trips)

Forms and Rules: A student must have a permission slip signed by the parent/guardian in order to attend any field trip.

Chaperones on Field Trips: Every chaperone, or parent wishing to attend a field trip, must be an approved district volunteer.

Homework

Homework is an out-of-classroom learning experience assigned by a teacher to enhance student learning. SBAI homework practice is aligned with the SBISD Homework Policy (EIB local). Individual teachers will communicate his/her expectations regarding homework to each student's parent/guardian and to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Identification Badge

- All adults on campus are required to wear identification badges at all times. All Spring Branch Independent School District staff, including teachers, maintenance workers,

substitute teachers, and other district personnel, are required to wear district-issued badges.

- Parents and other visitors are required to report to the office and show proper identification upon arrival at the campus to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge. Any adult who is not properly identified either by a district or visitor's badge will be immediately directed to the office.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills

All SBAI students take the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) mid-year. Test results of this nationally-normed assessment are reported to parents.

ItsLearning

ItsLearning is the learning management system used by SBAI and SBISD. Through this platform, students can access assignments, homework, resources, and more. Each teacher has his/her own page, which can be accessed both at home and school. More information regarding ItsLearning will be communicated via individual teachers.

Library

In addition to the SBAI library within the classrooms, our students have access to the Valley Oaks Library. Daily hours are from 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., and students have a designated time each week with their class. The mission of the library is to promote information literacy, support curriculum-based collaborative teaching, and endorse literature appreciation so that all students become self-directed lifelong learners and effective community citizens. Students come to the library to hear stories and book-talks, conduct research for class projects, learn how to use the library and its myriad of technology, and check out books. The library has an open checkout policy enabling students to check out new books throughout the day aside from their weekly scheduled library time.

Lost and Found

The recommendation to all families is to label all clothing items with the child's name. SBAI, VOE and/or SBISD are not responsible for lost or stolen property. Students are encouraged to keep expensive personal items at home and should carefully guard their possessions while on school grounds. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at mid-year and at the end of the school year. Please look through the lost and found any time you are on campus!

MAP Testing

Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, SBAI students will participate in MAP testing. MAP, or the Measure of Academic Progress, is a computer-adaptive skills assessment that provides metrics to measure a student's academic growth and progress. The MAP test is adaptive, meaning that the computer allows for the test questions to adapt to the individual skill levels of all students. If a student answers a question correctly, the questions will become more difficult; if a student answers a question incorrectly, the questions will become easier. The MAP test is given three times a year to track student progress and achievement over time.

Parental Concerns

Students with academic, behavior, or medical concerns are supported through SSC, 504, or Special Education. Please contact your child's teacher and/or Mr. Lefebber or Mrs. Barry for additional information. Additional information can be found in the SBISD Student/Parent Handbook.

Parent/Teacher Communication

There may be a time during the year when you have questions or concerns about your child, an issue with your child's teacher, or the teaching and learning taking place in your child's classroom. The first step to take, when a situation like this occurs, would be to talk directly with your child's teacher. Hopefully resolution with the issue can be reached at this initial meeting. If this conference setting is not successful, then the next step would be to involve an administrator. In most cases meeting with the teacher can bring about clarification and resolution. If the matter needs to be addressed with administration, a conference with all parties can be scheduled.

PTA

SBAI families are embraced as valuable members of the VOE community. As such, SBAI families are strongly encouraged to join and actively participate in the VOE PTA. As SBAI does not have a PTA of its own, this is one way to support both SBAI and our host campus.

Parking

Parents and visitors may park in the parking lot and along the street on Pech Road. We ask that you respect the parking places reserved for staff. Parking for school events on Pech Road is to be on the side closest to the school without obstructing the entry and exit points on the parent drive. Parking along Hillendahl is discouraged due to the inability to allow for emergency vehicles to pass easily into the neighborhood.

Parties

- Birthday: Children with birthdays are acknowledged on the morning announcements. Students shall not distribute birthday or party invitations at SBAI or VOE. Any food and treat bags are not allowed for birthday celebrations.
- Classroom: District policy allows for two parties per year - Winter and Valentine's Day.
- End of Year: SBAI students participate in a celebration at the end of the school year.

Pets on Campus

For the safety of all persons, especially children, we do not allow pets on campus, even those on a leash.

Program Assembly Guidelines

Parents/guardians and community members are welcome to attend all school programs and assemblies. Every effort will be made to keep parents/guardians informed of coming events. Please read the VOE PTA newsletter for program listings.

- Parent Behavior: Parents are asked to be respectful of others during all programs.

Please refrain from excessive talking and interfering with another's line of vision due to photography purposes.

- Siblings: Siblings in other grade levels are NOT permitted to be taken out of class to view a program, with the exception of 5th grade graduation.

Recess

Recess is a daily activity afforded to all students, K-5. Parents are not allowed on the VOE playground during school hours.

Safety on Campus

- Emergency Procedures: SBAI and Valley Oaks students and staff participate in the following drills: Lock Down, Fire, Shelter In Place, Chemical Drill, and Severe Weather. These drills address the unlikely occurrence of incidents that are potentially dangerous to student safety. All staff members are trained in all procedures associated with these critical issues.
- AED: The 2 Automated External Defibrillators are located in the Nurse's office and entrance to the gym.

Sidewalks and Walkways

No one shall be permitted to ride bicycles, razors, skateboards, or rollerblades on sidewalks or walkways before, during, or after school in order to maintain a safe environment for all staff and others walking on campus.

Teacher Conferences and Dates

SBISD has designated certain days throughout the year for parent/teacher conferences. These dates are posted on the District calendar. Please contact the teacher to schedule an appointment if an additional conference is required.

Technology

Parents are required to review with their child and sign the SBISD Student Acceptable Use Guidelines for Technology Resources form yearly.

Volunteers

In order to serve as a volunteer or serve as a chaperone on a field trip, you must register online to become a volunteer each school year beginning in August. Information can be found on the Spring Branch ISD webpage.

VOE Collaboration

We are proud of the collaborative spirit that exists between SBAI and Valley Oaks. Together, we work to ensure that SBAI students participate in all events and activities, as appropriate. Administration and staff collaborate to ensure that the needs of every child are met, truly resulting in collective greatness.