

SAN JOSE CHARTER ACADEMY



STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Updated August of 2026

Welcome

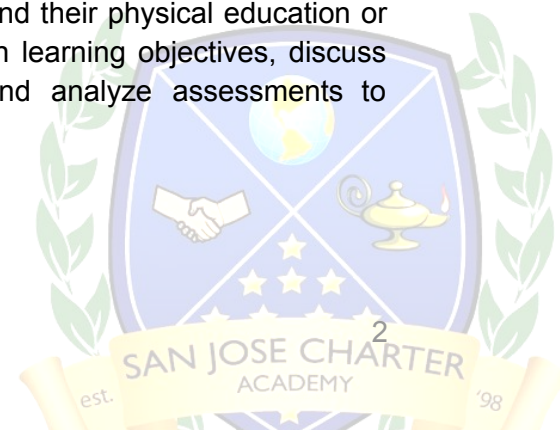
San Jose Charter Academy, a school of choice, the 142nd charter school in California, has long been an advocate for working with families for the healthy development and education of their children. Since our establishment in 1998, we've been dedicated to ensuring our partnership with parents and the community with three hallmark principles: trust, safety, and opportunity.

Unique in school design and organizational structure, our school offers students and parents an educational opportunity where the school day is enhanced with fine arts and physical activity, taught by teachers who are specifically qualified and credentialed. This intentional design, therefore, extends the school day for our students one hour longer than the average American school day. All first through eighth-grade students attend school for 7.5 hours and our Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten students attend 6.5 hours of school daily.

Our 1256 students know themselves as SJCA Sharks and as they progress each year, they take on the identity of a new type of shark. Each grade level is referred to as a "house." Each "house" is named after a specific Shark, creating a strong sense of grade level identity and belonging, broader than their own classroom, yet smaller than one class amongst many others. Grade levels are clustered to address developmental needs, referred to as "academies," Primary (K-2), Elementary (3-5), and Junior Academy (6-8). This design supports students, families, and teachers bringing cohesion and collaboration amongst stakeholders: "a community within a community" approach.

When our students arrive every morning, parents entrust us with their well-being. Our children must feel safe and secure in order to learn. A child's natural state of curiosity only emerges after he/she has established that there is nothing threatening in the environment. SJCA aspires to help all students feel safe while within our learning spaces, and cared for physically, socially, and emotionally.

Our teachers and staff continue to engage our children with sound teaching through proven methods that meet the needs of each student. Teacher collaboration is an essential component at SJCA to meet the diverse needs of our students. Individual teams optimize their strengths and with the steering of the teams' leadership, articulate and collaborate across grade levels, including academies. This is achieved through the intentional, structural design to the teachers' professional day. All teams meet daily (while their students attend their physical education or fine arts classes) to study and plan student outcomes based on learning objectives, discuss behaviors that promote or detract from student outcomes and analyze assessments to determine appropriate supports for intervention and enrichment.



Purposeful and intentional instruction is inclusive of addressing our students socio-emotional, leadership and executive functioning skills. As our teams collaborate, we maintain the following learning goals that were established at our school's inception in 1998:

- Behold a spirit for pursuing learning
- Be highly literate and intellectually curious
- Communicate effectively
- Think critically and consider an opposing argument
- Solve conflict constructively
- Maintain a core set of values including wisdom, justice, courage, compassion, hope, respect, responsibility, and integrity
- Exercise perseverance, leadership, and compassion in caring for yourself and others and the world we share
- Be economically self-sufficient in the 21st century's global marketplace

While our goals are still current, the strategies we have incorporated over time have evolved. There have been significant pivotal practices, increased expectations and transformational events in the last five years. Some initiatives that have had a significant impact include Franklin Covey's *Leader In Me* program, California's statewide MTSS initiative, and educational equity, involving all TK-8th grade students. With the support of additional COVID-19 recovery funds, we have been able to expand our student support services by incorporating a team of Utility Teachers who support students who are returning to school, those who may have been learning remotely from home, and to provide intervention and enrichment support to all classrooms. We have also been able to increase access to school-based counselors and for those who benefit from more intensive support, have created community partnerships with mental health organizations to support our students and staff with individualized methods.

SJCA takes pride in being twice selected as a 2009 and 2016 National Blue Ribbon School, and as a California Distinguished School for 2004, 2008, 2012, 2018 and 2025. In addition, we have been awarded the Title 1 Achieving school award for many years. While we are truly honored by these recognitions, SJCA continues to have a growth mindset of a school in continuous improvement. This sense of pride has continued to radiate.

SJCA has made strong connections and partnerships within our community. Parents are very supportive of our efforts and continue to show their appreciation through their volunteerism and participation in a variety of school activities. We have formed strong partnerships with the city of West Covina and local service clubs. Our dedicated and knowledgeable staff, supportive parents, and involved community members all work collaboratively for the sole purpose of providing a world-class education to all San Jose Charter Academy students.



Superintendent/Principal Letter

August 1, 2026

Dear SJCA Students, Families, and Community Members,

Welcome to San Jose Charter Academy's 29th year! As your Superintendent-Principal, I'm honored to lead this community alongside such dedicated students, families, and staff, and to carry forward the values that have sustained us for nearly three decades.

This Handbook covers what you need to know for the year ahead — academic programs, behavioral expectations, safety protocols, and communication procedures. Please take time to review it with your family and keep it as a reference throughout the year.

We remain committed to a safe, inclusive environment where every student is supported, challenged, and known, not just academically, but in character, leadership, and social-emotional growth. That commitment only works with your partnership. I encourage you to volunteer, attend events, engage with other families, and stay connected with your child's teachers.

My door is always open. Thank you for trusting us with your child's education — I can't wait to see what we accomplish together this year.

One Shark, All Sharks. Rising Together.

Warmly,



Erin Shiroma
Superintendent-Principal
San Jose Charter Academy

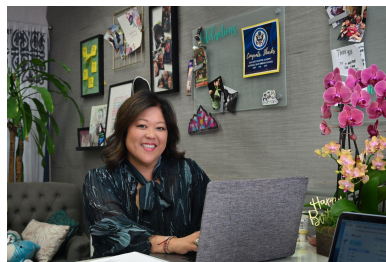


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The Student and Family Handbook (we use the term family to include parents, caregivers and guardians) is a resource for all SJCA stakeholders. As a district, we believe that our work educating students is best accomplished when we work in partnership with families and students. This handbook is one tool for how we can work together.

This handbook is a way to understand the rights that you have in the district. It is a place where the district also outlines our expectations for students and families. The content of the handbook is updated on an annual basis; however the handbook may not be reprinted in its entirety to save resources. In that case, A Family Handbook addendum will be printed and the electronic version of the handbook will be updated and can be found here at www.sanjosecharteracademy.com/handbook.

The handbook is also a way that the district fulfills legal requirements. Some of the sections in this book may be a direct quote of legal code and not written in everyday language. If you need partnership in understanding the details, please reach out to the appropriate SJCA department in the directory.

The policies outlined in this Handbook are subject to change throughout the school year due to ongoing legislative updates and amendments to Board Policy.

Handbook Acknowledgment: Parents/Guardians are required to acknowledge receipt of this handbook through ParentSquare annually.



1. INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

The mission of San Jose Charter Academy, in partnership with parents and the community, is to prepare our students with the skills necessary to thrive and positively impact the global community through the 21st century. San Jose Charter Academy is a school that prepares children to thrive not only in the world as it is today, but prepare to create the world that can be. The details of the plan that will ensure positive results for San Jose Charter Academy students are set forth below. Among other things, we intend to reach our ambitious standards in the following ways:

- To increase our effectiveness in moving all students academically to proficiency through the implementation of the California State Standards.
- To increase our effectiveness in moving all students academically to proficiency level through effective data driven instruction.
- To provide professional development for all instructional staff that will maximize the effectiveness of instruction.
- To improve intervention strategies.

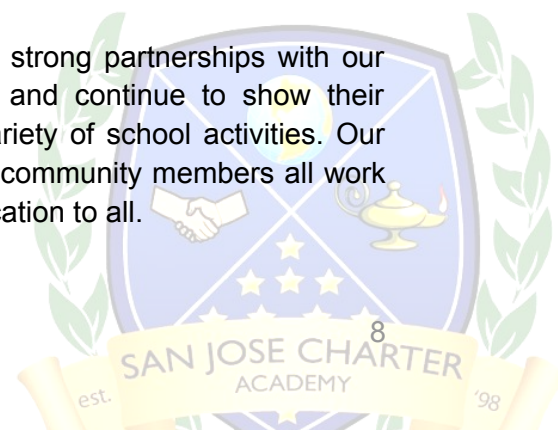
Vision Statement

The San Jose Charter Academy vision is to inspire students to create, innovate, and imagine limitless possibilities:

TO DREAM ★ TO DO ★ TO CHANGE

Unique in school design and organizational structure, we offer a rigorous instructional program designed to build the foundation that will ensure our students' success in the future. To better meet the needs of our students, our school is divided into smaller academies – Primary TK-2, Elementary 3-5, and Junior Academy 6-8. “Houses” of teachers and students are grouped within the structure and move together through the academies. Our “communities within a community” concept allows for exceptional bonding and communication between our staff, students, and parents.

The Charter School takes pride in the fact that we have forged strong partnerships with our parent community. Parents are very supportive of our efforts and continue to show their appreciation through their volunteerism and participation in a variety of school activities. Our dedicated, knowledgeable staff, supportive parents, and involved community members all work collaboratively for the sole purpose of providing a world-class education to all.



The continuity of program design enables each student to learn with a tenacious spirit, allowing them each to best meet or exceed core learning standards. The continuity is not only maintained throughout the school's academy structure, but within grade level professional learning communities. As our teams collaborate, we maintain the following learning goals:

- Behold a spirit for pursuing learning
- Be highly literate and intellectually curious
- Communicate effectively
- Think critically and consider an opposing argument
- Solve conflict constructively
- Maintain a core set of values including wisdom, justice, courage, compassion, respect, responsibility, and integrity
- Exercise perseverance, leadership, and compassion in caring for themselves and others and the world we share
- Be economically self-sufficient in the 21st century global marketplace

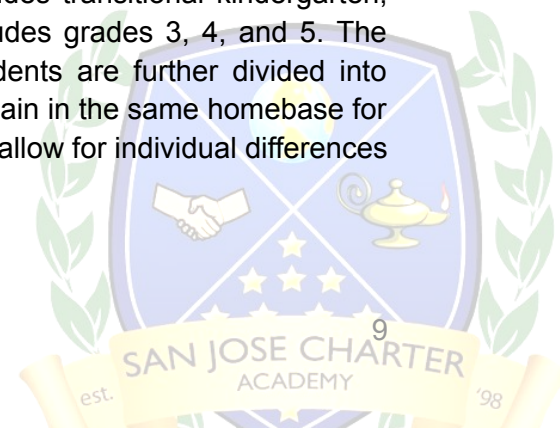
Core Values

SJCA embraces eight core values that shape our school culture and guide our students and staff:

- ❖ Wisdom
- ❖ Justice
- ❖ Courage
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Hope
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Responsibility
- ❖ Integrity

School Design

SJCA is organized into academies. The Primary Academy includes transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 & 2. The Elementary Academy includes grades 3, 4, and 5. The Junior Academy includes grades 6, 7, and 8. In addition, students are further divided into Houses. Once a student enters into our Junior Academy, they remain in the same homebase for all three years of their academy experience. Multi-age academies allow for individual differences in learning pace & style.



Our houses are organized by grade level as follows:

TK-K: Redtail House

1st: Zebra House

2nd: Mako House

3rd: Crocodile House

4th: Whiptail House

5th: Hammerhead House

6th: Tiger House

7th: Sharpnose House

8th: Spinner House

The Board of Education

The Board of Education is composed of five members. It is subject to local, state, and federal laws. The board determines policy for SJCA, from TK through eighth grade (TK–8).

The Board of Education is responsible for establishing educational goals and standards; approving curriculum and setting the SJCA budget ; confirming the appointment of personnel; approving purchases of equipment, supplies, and services; approving leases, renovation, and new construction..

Board of Directors

Tony Song

Dave Wallach

Matt Smith

Nicole Valdovinos

Monica Farias

Executive Cabinet

Erin Shiroma, Superintendent/Principal

Andrea Luna, Chief Business Officer

Jason Cabrera, Chief Technology Officer

Mary Spickler, Chief Academic Officer

Arleen Lemus, Administrator, Student Services

Maricsa Gomez, Administrator, Educational Services



Student Pledge

As a student at San Jose Charter Academy,

I pledge to be courteous to everyone.

I will help others in any way I can and

I will be honest in all I do and say.

I will do nothing to keep the teacher from teaching or keep anyone, including myself, from learning.

I will always show respect for myself and for others.

I will report any dangerous behaviors I see and will care for our school and everything to the best of my ability!

I am an important member of our school.

Leadership Statement

As part of the SJCA family, we will model the core values, live the 7 Habits, and use our voices to advocate for our community as we realize our leadership potential by dreaming big and being bold in all we say and do.

Student Lighthouse & Leader in Me

The Student Lighthouse Team is a schoolwide leadership group composed of students from all grades. These students promote our leadership culture, contribute ideas for school improvement, and help model The Leader in Me paradigms:

1. Everyone Can Be a Leader
2. Everyone Has Genius
3. Change Starts With Me
4. Educators Empower Students to Lead Their Own Learning
5. Develop the Whole Child



Students set personal goals (WIGs: Wildly Important Goals), create mission statements, and engage in service-minded, student-led activities throughout the year.

School & Office Hours

School hours are from:

7:45 AM to 3:15 PM daily for grades 1 – 8

8:45 AM to 3:15 PM daily for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Office hours are from:

7:15 AM to 3:45 PM.

Always check Parent Square or our school calendar for holidays, teacher in-service days and special events.

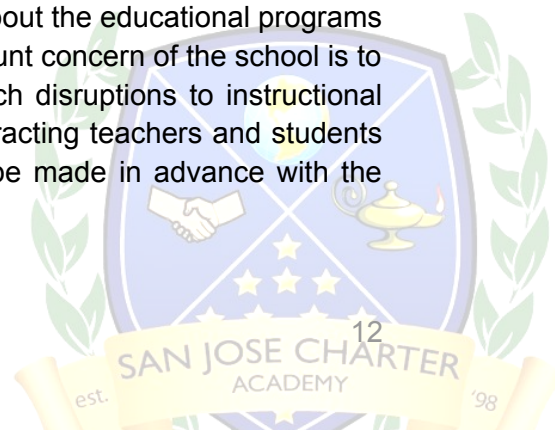
No students or unauthorized visitors may remain on the school campus before or after regular school hours without supervision. Students are not permitted in the school building after dismissal unless they are required or are registered in the SJCA Daycare Program or if the student is staying after for tutoring with a specific teacher. School personnel have the authority to warn persons trespassing to leave the facilities or properties.

Students who arrive before 7:25 a.m. must wait outside of the main school gates. We do not recommend student drop off prior to 7:25 as there is no supervision. Your child's safety is our first priority and we are unable to provide them adequate supervision prior to 7:25 a.m.

Families that need before and/or after school child care should consider enrolling their child in the Daycare program offered here on our campus. Students may enter the campus at 7:25. 1st-8th grade students arriving after 7:45 a.m. must report to the office for a tardy slip. TK & Kinder students arriving after 8:45 a.m. must report to the office for a tardy slip. Students who are participating in the breakfast program may enter campus at 7:15 and proceed to the school cafeteria.

Visitors

Parents of enrolled students are welcome to observe and learn about the educational programs in their child's classroom. While parents are welcome, the paramount concern of the school is to provide a safe, orderly and inviting learning environment in which disruptions to instructional time are minimized. Unexpected visitors disrupt the class by distracting teachers and students from their work. Arrangements for classroom visitations should be made in advance with the



teacher. Please know that any individual who disrupts the educational environment may be asked to leave.

As part of our commitment to keep every child, parent, teacher, and staff member safe, SJCA will be using the Raptor Visitor Management System. Part of keeping students and faculty safe is knowing who is in our building at all times. The Raptor system will better allow us to track visitors and volunteers throughout the school day. Upon entering the front office, visitors will be asked to present a valid state-issued ID, which will be scanned into the system. Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. Please help us by making sure you have your ID with you when you plan to visit our school.

Due to Fire Safety Code younger siblings are not permitted to eat in the cafeteria. Due to liabilities, siblings are not permitted in school while in session.



Annual Calendar

SJCA CALENDAR

2026-2027

JULY				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31
T: 21		S: 20		

OCTOBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30
T: 21		S: 20		

JANUARY				
M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
T: 18		S: 18		

APRIL				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30
T: 20		S: 20		

AUGUST				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				
T: 19		S: 14		

NOVEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				
T: 15		S: 15		

FEBRUARY				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
T: 18		S: 18		

MAY				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				
T: 20		S: 20		

SEPTEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		
T: 21		S: 21		

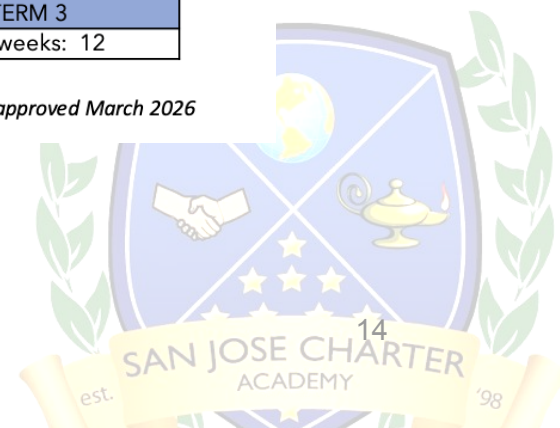
DECEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	
T: 14		S: 14		

MARCH				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		
T: 20		S: 20		

JUNE				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		
T: 4		S: 4		

MINIMUM DAYS	LOCAL/NATIONAL HOLIDAYS	SCHOOL SESSION BREAKS
8/12 - 8/14 3/15 - 3/19 9/4 3/26 11/6 5/10 - 5/14 11/16 - 11/20 5/28 12/18 6/3 - 6/4 3/5	Labor Day - 9/7 Local Holiday - 10/5, 10/12 (students) Veteran's Day - 11/11 MLK, Jr. Birthday - 1/18 Lincoln's Birthday - 2/8 Presidents' - 2/15 Memorial Day - 5/25 Juneteenth - 6/18	Fall Break 11/23 - 11/27 Winter Break 12/21 - 1/4 Spring Break 3/29 - 4/2
		Teacher Work Day Student Instructional Day
		190 184
TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3
# of weeks: 13	# of weeks: 14	# of weeks: 12

board approved March 2026



2. LEGAL NOTICES & FAMILY RIGHTS

Annual Notification of Rights (EC §48980)

Each year, SJCA is required to inform families of their legal rights and responsibilities under the California Education Code. This notification includes summaries of laws related to attendance, student records, discipline, health services, and educational options. Parents must acknowledge receipt of this notice at the beginning of each school year.

Parent Rights (EC §51101) & FERPA

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- Observe classroom instruction
- Meet with teachers and principals
- Volunteer under specified policies
- Be informed of student progress and attendance
- Review and challenge student records
- Participate in school advisory committees
- File complaints for violations of rights

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), families have:

- The right to inspect and review student records
- The right to request amendment of inaccurate records
- The right to consent to disclosures (with limited exceptions)
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education

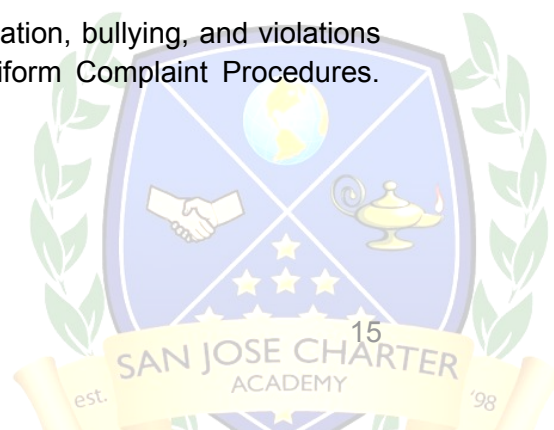
Non-Discrimination Policy & Title IX (EC §221.5)

SJCA prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation and bullying based on all actual or perceived characteristics protected under Education Code sections 200, 220 and 234.1, Penal Code section 422.55 and applicable federal law, or association with a person or group with one or more protected characteristics.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities. SJCA has a designated Title IX Coordinator to address related complaints.

Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP)

Complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and violations of state or federal laws may be addressed through SJCA's Uniform Complaint Procedures. Forms are available in the main office and online.



Section 504, ADA & IDEA Rights

Students with disabilities are entitled to appropriate accommodations and services under:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)
- IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

Requests for evaluations or Section 504 Plans may be submitted through school administration.

Williams Complaint Procedure

Parents may file a Williams complaint if SJCA:

- Lacks sufficient textbooks or instructional materials
- Has unsafe or unhealthy facilities
- Assigns teachers lacking proper certification in core subjects

Forms are available at the front office and must be processed in a timely manner.

Rights of Pregnant & Parenting Students (Education Code sections 221.51–221.56)

Pregnant and parenting students have the right to:

- Remain enrolled and participate in school activities
- Receive parental leave
- Access academic and support services without discrimination
- File a complaint if their rights are violated

SJCA ensures these students are supported in their educational and parenting goals.



3. ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE

Enrollment Procedures & Required Documents

SJCA enrolls students in grades TK–8. Enrollment is open to all students regardless of background, academic standing, or ability. Enrollment preference is given as outlined in our Charter, including siblings of currently enrolled students and students residing in the district.

To enroll, families must submit:

- Completed enrollment application
- Proof of age (birth certificate, hospital record, or passport)
- Proof of residency (utility bill, lease agreement, etc.)
- Immunization record (in compliance with state law)
- Any applicable custody documents

Enrollment packets are available online and in the front office.

Instructional Time & Learning Goals

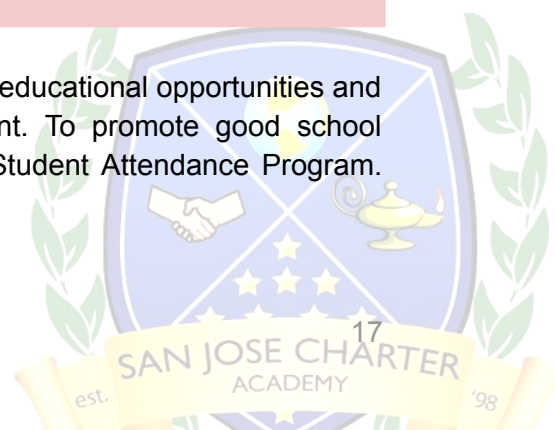
Regular school attendance is vital for academic success. Students must attend school daily and arrive on time. Absences must be reported to the school office each day a student is absent. A written or digital excuse must be submitted within three days of return.

Excused absences include the reasons authorized under Education Code section 48205, as amended. These may include illness, mental or behavioral health needs, medical appointments, quarantine, funeral services, court appearances, religious observances, certain civic or political events and other reasons permitted or approved under law.

Unexcused absences and excessive tardies are monitored. Families may receive attendance letters and be required to meet with school administration.

Attendance Expectations (EC §48205)

Absence from school, regardless of the reason, limits your child's educational opportunities and can negatively affect his/her grades and academic achievement. To promote good school attendance, SJCA staff has worked diligently to implement its Student Attendance Program.



This program involves a number of components that positively impact the attendance of students. The following are examples:

1. Individual recognition of students
2. Classroom recognition during monthly assemblies
3. Incentives for students and classrooms

In addition to the positive incentives, the school also has a system in place where parents are kept informed of their child's attendance. We highly encourage parents to monitor their child's attendance on a continuous basis. Corrections can only be made within a short period of time after the absence. This includes:

1. Daily autodialer call that lets parents know their child is absent.
2. Letters sent home informing parents of excessive absences. At least three different types of letters are sent home.
3. Phone calls and meetings with the School Counselor and/or Principal.
4. Student attendance appears on the Illuminate system and on all SLCs.

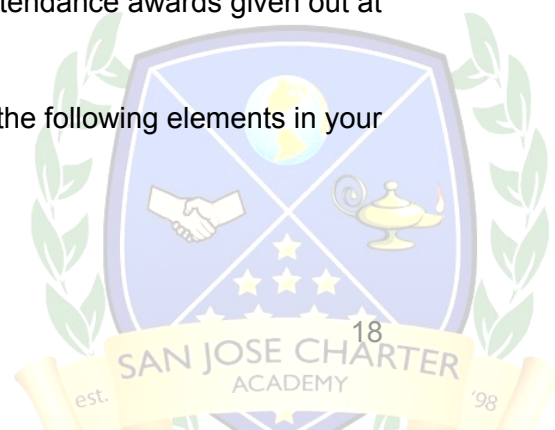
For students demonstrating negative attendance patterns, there is a policy in place to address excessive absenteeism. Seven (7) absences are considered as a maximum number of absences students miss over the course of a school year.

- SJCA will send out a letter when a student has acquired 5 absences.
- A second letter is sent out at 10 absences. Your student will be put on probation at this time.

Please know that San Jose Charter Academy does not receive state funding for students who are absent, regardless of the reason. If your child is well & can attend school, please encourage regular attendance.

San Jose Charter Academy firmly believes that success in school is directly related to good attendance and punctuality. When a student comes late to school it may create an embarrassing situation and is disruptive to the class and the educational program. All students are expected to be in class on time. The bell to go to class rings promptly at 7:40 am to inform students its time to be in class. School and class begin promptly at 7:45 am for students in grades 1st – 8th and 8:45 for Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten. Gates are closed at 7:45 for 1st through 8th. Any student entering the campus after 7:45 must go to the front office for a tardy slip. The same is expected of TK and Kindergarten students if they arrive after 8:45. Additionally, any student with more than 10 tardies will not be eligible for perfect attendance awards given out at the end of each year.

In the event that your child is absent from school, please include the following elements in your note within 3 days of the pupils return to school:



- Student's name
- Name, signature and relationship to student of the person who wrote the note
- Date note was written
- Date/dates of absences
- Reason for the absence

Independent Study

For planned absences of two or more days, families may request an Independent Study Contract. Requests must be made at least two weeks in advance. Completed assignments must be submitted upon return to receive attendance credit.

While Independent Study preserves instructional continuity, extended vacations are discouraged. Parents must commit to overseeing their child's work and ensuring it is completed.

Child Custody & Emergency Information

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any legal custody arrangements. Court documents must be submitted for the school to limit release of a student to one parent.

Emergency contacts must be up to date. This ensures timely and appropriate communication in emergencies. Emergency cards must be completed at the start of each school year and updated as needed.



4. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & EXPECTATIONS

Grading, Retention, and Promotion

SJCA reports academic progress through trimester report cards and progress reports. Grading is standards-based and reflects students' mastery of skills and concepts.

Promotion and retention decisions are made in partnership with parents and teachers. Students who do not meet grade-level expectations may be retained if academic support does not result in sufficient progress.

Student Learning Conference(SLC)/ Academic Success Plan (ASP)

Student planners are required for Grades TK-8 as part of our school-wide personal planning curriculum and are used for organizing homework, planning for projects, parent/teacher communication and to keep track of special events. Teacher, parent and student must each be present during the SLC. Parent/teacher conferences are an essential part of your child's education. Just looking at a report card may not give you the full picture of how well your child is doing in school. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled, so that you and the teacher can discuss your child's progress in the classroom on a private, one-on-one basis. It's your chance to ask questions about subjects being taught and to understand our expectations.

Conferences also give you the opportunity to exchange information about your child that might assist the teacher. Finally, the conference is the place to express any concerns you might have regarding your child's progress. During the conferences, the teacher will provide information about your child's strengths, areas of growth, and social, physical, and emotional behaviors at school. Use these conferences as a way to get to know your child's teacher, your child's classroom, and to help your child progress. Please see the school calendar for SLC dates.

Tips for Parent/Teacher Conferences

1. Be on time. Teachers are on a tight schedule so they can see every parent.
2. Be prepared. Organize a list of questions you might want to ask.
3. Come to the conference with an open mind. Open communication facilitates solutions.
4. Be willing to discuss your concerns. Be open to suggestions of things you and your child can do at home.
5. If you don't understand a teacher's comment, ask for clarification.



6. Feel free to take notes. By working together, your child's performance at school will improve.
7. Deal with the facts. This is a good time to validate rumors by asking the teacher about what you have heard. Near the end of the school year, those students who are not meeting academic/behavioral expectations meet with their teacher and parent to establish an academic success plan (ASP) for the summer vacation.

Homework, Testing & Assessments

Homework is assigned to reinforce classroom learning, foster independence, and develop time management skills. The amount of homework varies by grade level and subject area.

Students participate in:

- Classroom formative and summative assessments
- District benchmark assessments
- State-mandated tests, including CAASPP (grades 3–8), CAST (grade 5 and 8), and ELPAC for English learners

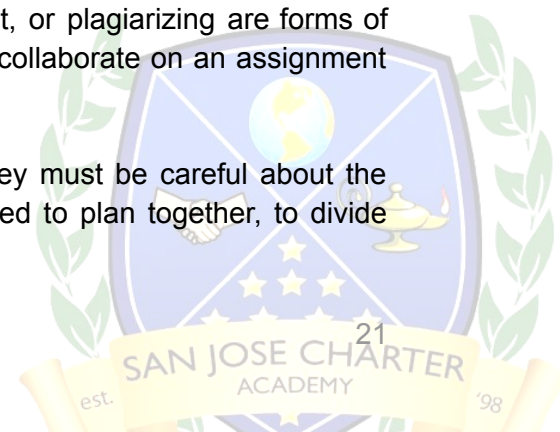
Parents may submit a written request to excuse their child from specific assessments (EC §60615).

Academic Honesty Policy

San Jose Charter Academy students are expected to take pride in their achievements. Students must rely on their own talents and abilities to complete academic work at a level in which they take pride. Any attempt to shortcut this process undermines the learning process, this process undermines the learning process, destroys student integrity, and weakens the trust essential to a positive student/teacher relationship.

We at SJCA want to help students understand their responsibility for the integrity of their work at school. We want to emphasize that all clarification of cheating centers on the important concept that students must be responsible for their own work. Students know that directly copying answers during a test, keeping a cheat sheet or visible notes, telling about questions on a test when they have already seen it, or plagiarizing are forms of cheating. The biggest concern is understanding when they can collaborate on an assignment and when they must do their own work.

There are times when students are assigned to groups, and they must be careful about the expectations for each assignment. Students are often encouraged to plan together, to divide



topics, and to assist each other in understanding the assignment; however most often each individual student is expected to do his/her own part in writing or illustrating a project. When in doubt, ask a teacher.

Students must be careful when working with tutors and parents that products are their own. While students may discuss a concept or idea with a peer or adult, students must write the assignment in their own words to demonstrate understanding.

Students must accept responsibility for the integrity of their work. They should not let their own work leave their possession because they cannot then be responsible for what happens to it. When work is copied, both the person who copied and the person who gave the work will be held responsible. Consequences for Violation(s) of the Academic Honesty Policy at SJCA:

Category One:

Cheating Offenses

1. Stealing a test or other related material
2. Altering a teacher's gradebook or other records
3. Repeated offense in category two will be considered a category one offense

Consequences for Category One

1. Revised credit on any stolen test
2. Offense recorded in the student's discipline file
3. Appropriate legal action

Category Two:

Cheating Offenses may include but not limited to the following:

1. Copying someone else's work
2. Allowing someone else to copy your work
3. Submitting work on which the students has received substantial assistance from another person (including parents, tutors, siblings, or other students)
4. Cheating on a quiz, test, exam, or assignment
5. Plagiarizing
6. Giving or receiving information regarding a test, quiz, or exam.
7. Forgery

Consequences for Category Two

1. Revised credit for the assignment
2. Offense recorded in student's discipline file
3. Lunch detention up to 5 days



Special Education, IEPs, and 504 Plans

SJCA is committed to serving all students, including those with disabilities. Students with identified needs may qualify for:

- Individualized Education Program (IEP) under IDEA
- 504 Plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Requests for evaluations may be made through the school administration or special education team. Services are delivered in the least restrictive environment in collaboration with families.

Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA, and who has violated the district's disciplinary procedures, may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

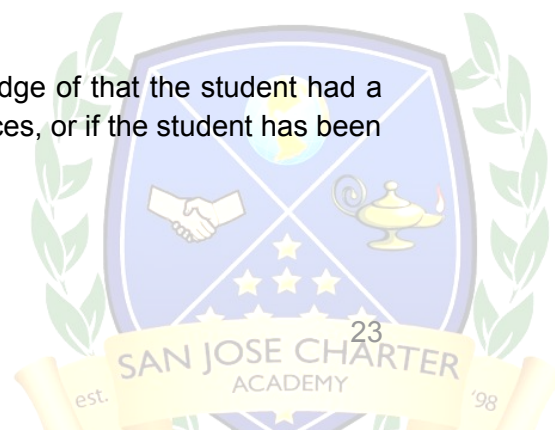
The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a suspected disability if one of the following conditions exists:

- The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the coordinator of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If San Jose Charter Academy knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If San Jose Charter Academy had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. SJCA shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however, the student shall remain in the education placement determined by SJCA pending the results of the evaluation.

San Jose Charter Academy shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined not eligible.



If a parent chooses to appeal the decisions made, they may do so under the Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards for Special Education.

SJCA shall provide all special education and related services to eligible students pursuant to its membership in the East San Gabriel Valley SELPA. Compliance with Applicable Laws.

All children will have access to the Charter School and no student shall be denied admission due to disability. The Charter School shall be solely responsible for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") (29 U.S.C. §§ 794 et seq.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.). Such services shall be provided in a manner that complies with all applicable laws and applicable rules and regulations. The Charter School shall be solely responsible for the cost of any accommodations, devices, or services necessary to ensure such compliance.

Technology Use & Digital Citizenship

Students use technology to enhance learning and develop 21st-century skills. SJCA provides access to digital devices, internet-based learning tools, and secure platforms for communication and collaboration.

All students and families must review and sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Violations may result in disciplinary action or restricted access. Digital citizenship is taught to ensure responsible, respectful, and ethical use of technology.



5. STUDENT SUPPORTS & WELLNESS

Health & Emergency Care

SJCA provides a Health Office staffed by trained personnel certified in First Aid and CPR. The office assists students who become ill or injured during the school day and contacts families as needed. In emergencies, SJCA may call 911 and arrange transportation to a hospital.

Parents are responsible for updating emergency contact information annually. Students must be kept home if they have a fever (100°F or higher), vomiting, or any contagious condition.

Immunizations (HSC §120325)

California law requires all students to be immunized against specified communicable diseases prior to school entry. SJCA must have a copy of each student's up-to-date immunization record. Exemptions are only granted for documented medical reasons as per current state guidelines.

Required vaccines include:

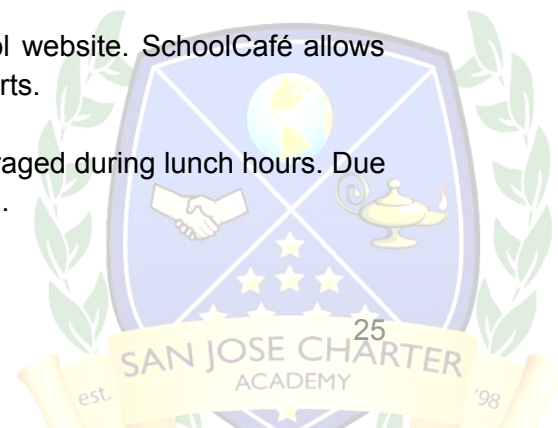
- DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- Polio
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Tdap booster (7th grade entry)

Nutrition & Free/Reduced Meals

SJCA participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. Meals meet federal nutrition standards and are available to all students. Families may apply for free or reduced-price meals at any time during the year.

Menus, pricing, and payment options are available on the school website. SchoolCafé allows parents to manage student meal accounts and set low-balance alerts.

Outside food, including fast food and sugary beverages, is discouraged during lunch hours. Due to allergy and health safety concerns, students may not share food.



Mental Health & Suicide Prevention (EC §215)

According to the National Association of School Psychologists, "Mentally healthy children are more successful in school and life. Good mental health is critical to children's success in school and life. Research demonstrates that students who receive social-emotional and mental health support achieve better academically. School climate, classroom behavior, on-task learning, and students' sense of connectedness and well-being all improve as well. Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness but also encompasses social, emotional, and behavioral health and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Left unmet, mental health problems are linked to costly negative outcomes such as academic and behavior problems, dropping out, and delinquency."

In accordance with AB 2022, Pupil mental health services: school notification, San Jose Charter Academy wants to ensure that parents, guardians, and students are informed about resources available for anyone who believes they are in a mental health crisis. We encourage parents/guardians and students to talk with an adult in the school, including our school counselors or a school psychologist, if they are concerned about another student and possible mental health needs.

Youth suicide is a preventable public health problem. Suicide prevention involves school-wide activities and programs that enhance connectedness, contribute to a safe and nurturing environment, and strengthen protective factors that reduce risk for students. Take all threats of suicide seriously.

Suicide prevention includes:

- Promoting a positive school-climate.
- Increase staff, student, and parent/guardian knowledge of warning signs and risk factors for suicide and what to do when a student is expressing suicidal ideation/behavior.
- Engaging students by providing structure, guidance, and fair discipline.
- Monitoring students' emotional state and well being by making referrals for support, as needed.
- Promoting access to school and community resources.

SJCA maintains a Board-approved pupil suicide prevention policy addressing prevention, intervention and postvention for students in kindergarten through grade eight. The policy is age appropriate, addresses the needs of high-risk groups and is reviewed and updated in accordance with Education Code section 215.

A complete copy of our Suicide Prevention Policy can be found on our website.

Primary national crisis contact: **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**
Crisis Textline: **text HOME to 741741**.



Defibrillator

Effective July 1, 2019 in accordance with AB2009 a Defibrillator is now available in our health office in the event there is a medical need. Key personnel have received training on the administration of the AED. Assembly Bill 2009 Requires AEDs at Interscholastic Athletic Programs California now requires school districts' public and charter schools that offer interscholastic athletic programs to:

- Put an emergency action plan in place addressing, among other things, sudden cardiac arrest emergencies.
- Acquire at least one AED for each public or charter school in the district (effective July 1, 2019) to be available on campus.
- Encourage that AEDs be made available for use within 3-5 minutes of sudden cardiac arrest.
- Ensure AEDs are made available to athletic trainers and coaches and other authorized individuals at athletic programs, on-campus activities, and events.
- Ensure AEDs are properly inspected and maintained.

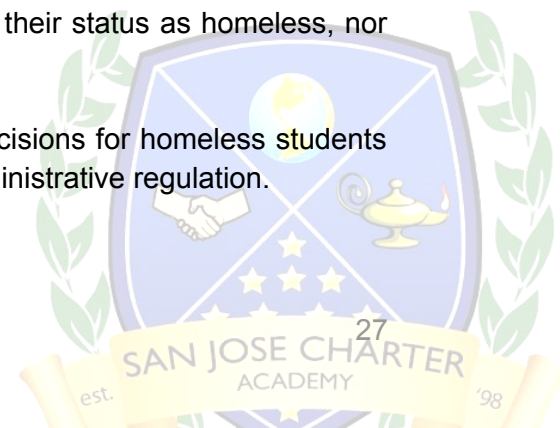
Sexual Education/HIV Prevention

In accordance with the California Healthy Youth Act 2016, our 8th grade students will partake in a Positive Prevention online course. Parents or guardians must provide a written request to school officials if they wish to excuse their child from any or all parts of this curriculum.. If you have any questions regarding your child's participation, please contact the office at ext. 4000

Homeless/Foster Youth Services (EC §11432)

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, the governing charter school board recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless children have access to the same free and appropriate public education provided to other children within charter school. The charter school shall provide homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for these students to meet the same challenging performance standards as other students. Homeless students shall not be segregated into separate schools or programs based on their status as homeless, nor shall homeless students be stigmatized in any way.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that placement decisions for homeless students are based on the student's best interest as defined in law and administrative regulation.



The charter school shall provide transportation for a homeless student to and from a district school of origin when the student is residing within the district and the parent/guardian requests that such transportation be provided. If the student moves outside of the charter school boundaries but continues to attend this district's school of origin, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with the Superintendent of the district in which the student is now residing to agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

Homeless means students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes: (42 USC 11435) Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals

- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in conditions described in items above.
- Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

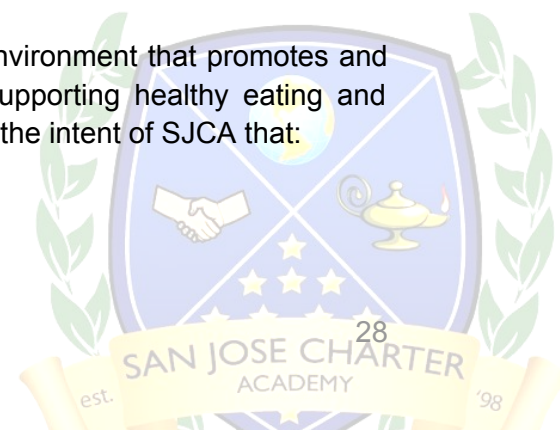
The SJCA Homeless Policy is posted in its entirety on our SJCA website.

Human Trafficking Prevention (EC §49381)

SJCA provides age-appropriate instruction to raise awareness of human trafficking and help students recognize, avoid, and report exploitative situations. These lessons are delivered as part of the health and wellness curriculum and align with state requirements. Resources and support are available through the school counselor and community partners.

Wellness Policy

San Jose Charter Academy is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity under a Coordinated School Health Program. It is the intent of SJCA that:



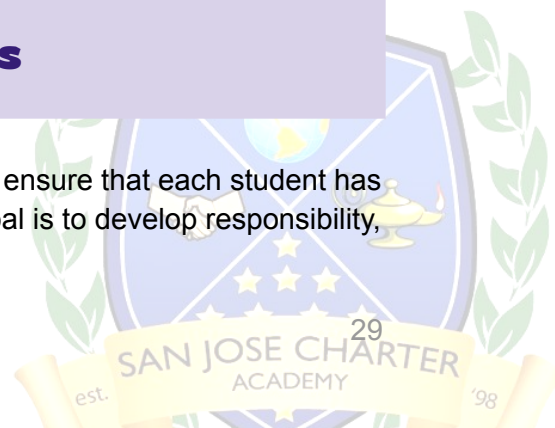
- SJCA will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing nutrition, health, wellness and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades TK-8 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- SJCA will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy programs, and related community services.
- SJCA will provide a safe and healthy school environment that ensures that students and adults are physically and emotionally safe.
- The wellness policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to measure the implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

The SJCA Wellness Policy is posted in its entirety on our SJCA website.

6. STUDENT CONDUCT & SAFETY

Behavior Expectation & Core Values

The behavior policy of San Jose Charter Academy is designed to ensure that each student has the opportunity to learn in a safe and secure environment. The goal is to develop responsibility,



citizenship, and respect for others. Each teacher will have standards for classroom behavior and an appropriate reinforcement system. These standards are communicated to parents at the beginning of the year at Back to School Night.

The school-wide behavior policy emphasizes positive campus behaviors and eliminates those behaviors that are unsafe and/or disruptive. There are clear expectations set for all students as laid out in our behavior policy and San Jose Charter Academy Code of Conduct and discipline chain of command allows for consistency across all grade levels. The redirection of behavior at any point of the discipline chain of command is rooted back to the Core Values. Student misbehaviors are kept to a minimum because of our proactive use of the Core Values - discussing potential conflict, as well as positive discipline strategies used by staff. To achieve these goals, the following Code of Conduct has been established:

Be Safe.

Be Honest.

Be Aware.

Be Responsible.

Be Kind.

Be A S.H.A.R.K

Anti-Bullying, Hate-Motivated Behavior

SJCA is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated, whether physical, verbal, or cyberbullying. We believe that every student deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued at all times.

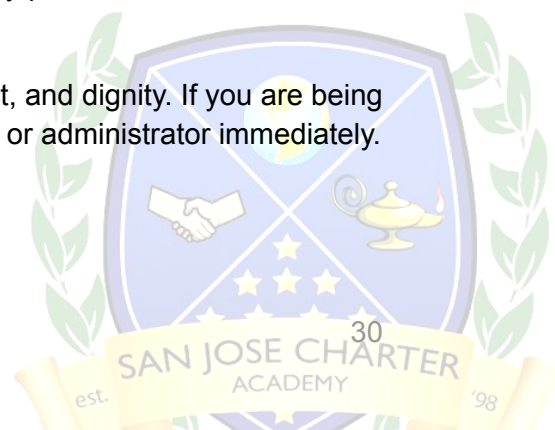
Definition of Bullying:

Bullying includes a severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can reasonably be predicted to have the effect identified in Education Code section 48900(r), including placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm, substantially interfering with academic performance or substantially interfering with the pupil's ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities or privileges.

Not every conflict or unkind interaction meets the legal definition of bullying, but all reported behavior may still be addressed through SJCA's behavior and safety procedures.

Student Expectations:

All students are expected to treat each other with kindness, respect, and dignity. If you are being bullied or witness bullying, please report it to a teacher, counselor, or administrator immediately. Reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.



Consequences for Bullying:

Any student found engaging in bullying behavior will face consequences based on the severity of the behavior. Consequences may include counseling, detention, suspension, or expulsion, depending on the situation. The school will also provide support for both the victim and the perpetrator to address the issue and prevent further incidents.

Support for Victims:

We are committed to ensuring that students who are victims of bullying receive the support and resources they need to feel safe and secure. Support may include counseling, peer mediation, or other appropriate interventions.

Reporting Bullying:

Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to report any bullying incidents. Reports can be made anonymously if preferred. All reports will be investigated promptly, and confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

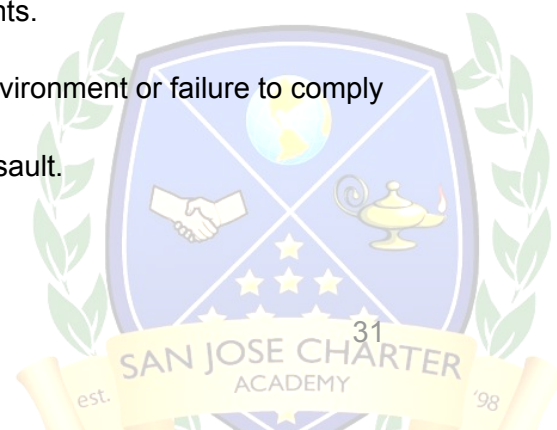
Together, we can create a school community where everyone is treated with kindness, respect, and fairness.

Suspension & Expulsion (EC §48900–48916)

Suspension Policy: At SJCA, we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students. While we encourage positive behavior and conflict resolution, there are times when suspension may be necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the school community.

Grounds for Suspension: A student may be suspended only for conduct that constitutes a legally authorized ground for suspension under Education Code section 48900 et seq., applicable federal law and SJCA's approved charter and Board policies. Suspension will not be imposed solely for disruption or willful defiance when prohibited by law. SJCA will use other means of correction when required and when appropriate to address the student's behavior.

- **Physical Injury:** causing, attempting to cause and threatening to cause physical injury
 - **Bullying and Harassment:** Engaging in bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including cyberbullying.
 - **Substance Abuse:** Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.
 - **Vandalism or Theft:** Destruction of property or stealing.
 - **Disruptive Behavior:** Chronic disruption of the learning environment or failure to comply with school staff directions.
- Violence:** Fighting or engaging in violent acts, including assault.



- **Weapons:** Possessing or using a weapon or dangerous object on school property or at school-sponsored events.

This list is not exhaustive, and other disruptive behaviors may result in suspension.

Suspension Types

1. **In-School Suspension (ISS):** In-School Suspension is a temporary removal from the student's regular classes while still providing access to educational materials and work. The student will complete assigned work in a supervised setting. This is generally used to minimize disruption while maintaining the student's engagement in school.
2. **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):** Out-of-School Suspension involves the removal of the student from school for a specific period. During this time, the student is not permitted to attend school, participate in extracurricular activities, or be on school grounds.

The exact length of the suspension will depend on the severity of the infraction and the student's disciplinary history.

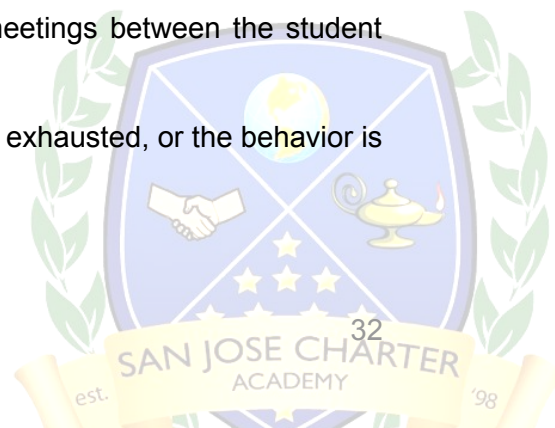
Due Process and Notification

- **Parental Notification:** When a student is suspended, the school will notify the parents or guardians within one school day. The notification will include the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and instructions on how to appeal the decision.
- **Appeal Process:** If a parent or guardian disagrees with the suspension, they may request a meeting with the school administration to discuss the incident. If the issue is not resolved at the school level, the parent may request a hearing with the school board.

Restorative Practices: SJCA recognizes the importance of **restorative practices** in promoting positive behavior and accountability. Before suspension is considered, the school will attempt to implement strategies such as:

- **Behavioral Interventions:** Targeted strategies to address the underlying causes of disruptive behavior.
- **Counseling and Support Services:** Providing emotional or psychological support to students who may be struggling with personal issues.
- **Peer Mediation:** Conflict resolution through structured meetings between the student and those involved in the conflict.

Suspension will be used only when other interventions have been exhausted, or the behavior is so severe that immediate action is required.



Alternatives to Suspension: The school strives to minimize suspensions, particularly for younger students, by providing alternatives such as:

- **Restorative Circles:** A structured process where students involved in conflict can openly discuss the issue and work towards a resolution.
- **Behavioral Contracts:** Written agreements that outline expectations for student behavior and the consequences of not meeting those expectations.
- **Time-Out or Reflection Rooms:** Spaces where students can temporarily leave the classroom to reflect on their behavior in a calm environment.

Special Considerations

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities may not be suspended for behavior that is directly related to their disability. In such cases, the school will work with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team to address the behavior through appropriate accommodations or interventions.

Foster Youth:

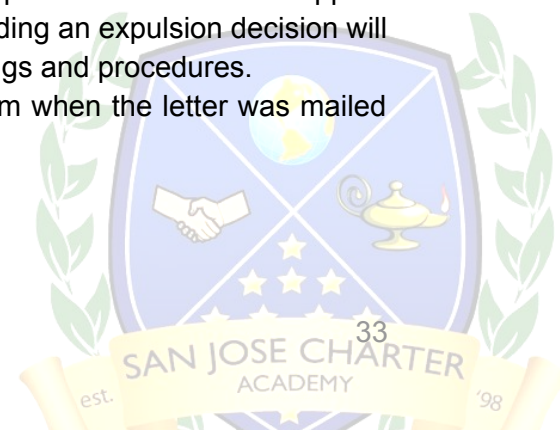
Students in foster care have additional protections, including notifications to their social worker or caregiver if they are suspended, expelled, or facing other disciplinary action.

Re-entry after Suspension

Upon return from suspension, the student may be required to meet with a school counselor or administrator to discuss the incident, reflect on their actions, and set goals for improved behavior moving forward. The student may also be required to complete a **restorative process** or community service as part of the re-entry process.

EXCLUSIONS: If a student is recommended for expulsion, the following procedures are to be conducted:

1. The day of the incident: the student and the parents are to be notified of the suspension. (The suspension may not exceed 5 days)
2. Expulsion recommendations and hearings will be conducted in accordance with SJCA's charter, Board-approved discipline policy and applicable law. Parents/guardians will receive written notice of the allegations, hearing rights, applicable timelines and appeal or review procedures. Any extension of a suspension pending an expulsion decision will occur only when legally authorized and after required findings and procedures.
3. The Administrative Panel Hearing will be held 30 days from when the letter was mailed out to the parents.



4. The Administrative Panel will make a recommendation. A letter will be sent to the family regarding the recommendation along with the date that the recommendation will be reviewed by the Board of Directors.
5. The family may attend the Board Meeting and the recommendation will be reviewed. The Board of Directors will make the final decision.
6. The Superintendent will send out a letter stating the decision of the Board of Directors.

Per AB 982, a parent or legal guardian can request that the teacher(s) provide to the pupil who is suspended from school for 2 or more days the homework the pupil would otherwise be assigned. If a homework assignment that is requested pursuant to the bill and turned into the teacher(s) by the student either upon the pupil's return to school from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before end of the academic term, that the assignment not be included in the calculation of the pupil's overall grade in the class.

Discipline Procedures & Due Process

SJCA employs a progressive discipline approach emphasizing reflection, accountability, and reparation. Consequences are matched to the behavior and consider student age, intent, and history.

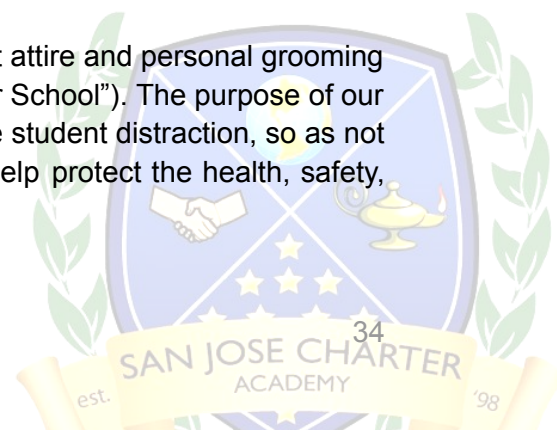
Steps may include:

- Conference with student
- Parent contact
- Restorative circles or contracts
- Detention or loss of privileges
- In-school or out-of-school suspension

All students have the right to a fair process before any disciplinary action is taken. This includes the right to explain their side and to be informed of specific charges.

Dress Code

The following guidelines are intended to define appropriate student attire and personal grooming for students at San Jose Charter Academy ("SJCA" or the "Charter School"). The purpose of our dress code is to enhance the classroom atmosphere and minimize student distraction, so as not to interfere with the educational process. It is also intended to help protect the health, safety, and welfare of the individual student.



All students shall be required to show proper attention to personal cleanliness, health, neatness, safety, appearance and suitability of clothing for school activities. This dress code shall be in effect on campus during school and school-sponsored activities. The SJCA staff and administration reserve the right to determine clothing which disrupts or detracts from the educational environment.

SJCA is committed to supporting our families. If you need assistance with obtaining uniform items, please contact our school office.

School Attire

1. **Tops** (i.e.: shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, dresses, etc.)
 - a. Official School Colors: navy blue, forest green, burgundy, white
 - b. Full length shirts with sleeves (short- or long-sleeved);
 - c. All tops should cover shoulders, midriffs and undergarments;
 - d. All tops should be solid, uniform-approved colors;
 - e. SJCA sponsored t-shirts or plain, solid color tops;
 - f. Scouting uniforms may be worn on meeting days only
2. **Bottoms** (i.e.: pants, skirts, shorts, cotton elastic waist pants, dresses, etc.)
 - a. Official School Colors: tan, navy blue
 - b. All bottoms must be fingertip length (or longer) or four (4) inches above the knee;
 - c. All bottoms should be free of holes or rips;
 - d. Athleisure apparel (leggings, athletic shorts) is not a recognized uniform bottom
 - e. Denim bottoms (of any color/wash) are reserved for dress down days only
 - f. Scouting uniforms may be worn on meeting days only
3. **Hats/Hoods:** Per Ed Code 35183.5, hats may only be worn outside as sun protection. Head coverings worn for religious reasons will be allowed.
 - a. Hats and beanies should be plain, solid (free of team/sports/logo) in uniform colors (navy blue, forest green, burgundy, white) or SJCA-affiliated.
4. **Shoes:** Appropriate shoes must be worn which include:
 - a. Closed toe shoes to include: tennis shoes, shoes with laces, and slip on shoes that fit securely on their feet.
 - b. The following shoes are not permitted: high heel or platform shoes, shoes with grind plates, shoes with wheels, slippers, or flip-flop sandals.
5. **Accessories:** (jewelry, piercings, hair accessories, etc.)
 - a. Accessories that are simple and sensible (maintaining safe and distraction free learning) may be worn;
 - i. Piercings of ears are allowed;
 - ii. Facial and other body piercings are not permitted



- iii. Large, sharp or dangling jewelry and/or piercings that present a safety concern are not permitted

6. **Grooming:** Hair, sideburns, mustaches, and beards may be worn at any length or style.

- a. Hair color should be natural (black, brown, red or blonde)
- b. Faux-hawks or spiked hair styles may be no more than 1"

No clothing, jewelry, accessories, or hairstyles which are, or include, a picture, writing, or insignia which is: (1) gang related; (2) presents a safety hazard to the wearer or others; (3) advertises or symbolizes any type of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or gambling; (4) includes weapons or acts which are illegal, violent, obscene, or hazardous to one's health; (5) sexually suggestive, crude, vulgar, profane; discriminatory, obscene, contain threats, libelous; or (6) offensive or degrading to students or staff on the basis of gender, cultural, religious or ethnic values.

Notification of the Student Dress Code

Parents and students will be provided notice of the Charter School's dress code at the beginning or the school year and/or upon enrollment. This information will also be located within the Charter School's Parent/Student Handbook.

Dress Code Violations

If a Charter School staff member determines that a student's attire does not meet the SJCA Uniform Policy, the following may occur:

- 1. The student may be asked to briefly leave class to change clothing to align with this dress code.
- 2. The Charter School may confiscate items that violate the dress code.
- 3. The Charter School may notify the student's parents/guardians of the dress code violation(s).
- 4. The Charter School may schedule a conference with the student's parents/guardians to discuss the dress code violation(s).

Students may not be disciplined, penalized academically, or removed from class as a consequence for wearing "inappropriate" attire.



FREE DRESS POLICY AND SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES:

Parents/guardians and students will be notified about scheduled dress down days. Students shall come to school looking clean and neat, and exhibiting grooming that will not be a health and/or safety hazard to the student or others. SJCA prohibits any dress or grooming that in the Administration's judgment may interfere with normal school operations.

STUDENTS' STREET CLOTHES MUST FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

Not permitted are clothing items with inappropriate or derogatory logos or slogans, pictures, emblems, or writing that is lewd, offensive, vulgar, obscene, or imply profanity; or that depict or advertises alcohol/tobacco substances.

BACKPACKS:

- Backpacks should remain with the students at all times
- No inappropriate writing or graphics
- Personal property & grooming items must be kept in students backpack

Electronic Device Policy

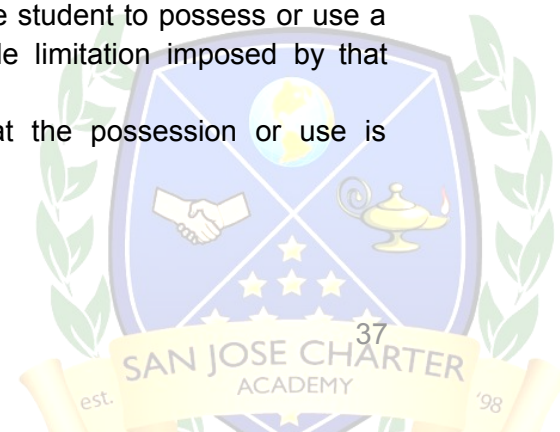
In accordance with Education Code section 48901.7, SJCA has adopted a Board-approved policy limiting student smartphone use while students are at school or under the supervision and control of school employees. The policy includes legally required exceptions for emergencies, instructional authorization, health-related needs and individualized education programs.

SJCA recognizes the importance of communication and collaboration, and provides devices for students to be productive in the classroom. SJCA permits limited use of mobile communication devices on campus as long as the device is utilized in accordance with law, the following policy:

Students in TK-8 may not use cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, or other mobile communication devices once they have entered campus for the instructional day. Devices must be turned off and placed out of sight during the school day. Students who need to call a parent/guardian may use phones located in the administrative offices or classrooms with permission. Students may resume use of their mobile devices after the last period of the day.

Mobile communication devices shall be turned off during the school day. However, a student shall not be prohibited from possessing or using a mobile communication device under any of the following circumstances: (Education Code 48901.5, 48901.7)

1. In the case of an emergency, or in response to a perceived threat of danger
2. When a teacher or administrator grants permission to the student to possess or use a mobile communication device, subject to any reasonable limitation imposed by that teacher or administrator
3. When a licensed physician or surgeon determines that the possession or use is necessary for the student's health and well-being



4. When the possession or use is required by the student's individualized education program

Smartphones and other mobile communication devices shall not be used in any manner which infringes on the privacy rights of any other person. The use of any cell phones, smartphones, smartwatches, or other mobile communication devices may NOT be used at any time in the gym locker rooms and restrooms.

A student's personal electronic device shall not be searched without the consent of the student's parent/guardian, except pursuant to a lawfully issued warrant, when a school official, in good faith, believes that an emergency involving danger of death or serious physical injury to the student or others requires access to the electronic device information, or when the search is otherwise permitted pursuant to Penal Code 1546.1.

When a student uses a mobile communication device in an unauthorized manner, the student may be disciplined and a district employee may confiscate the device. The employee shall store the device securely until it is returned to the student or turned over to the principal or designee, as appropriate. If turned over to the principal or designee, a parent/guardian may be notified and may be required to pick up the device from the school.

A student may also be subject to discipline, in accordance with law, or administrative regulation, for on-campus use of a mobile communication device which poses a threat or danger to the safety of students, state, or district property or substantially disrupts school activities.

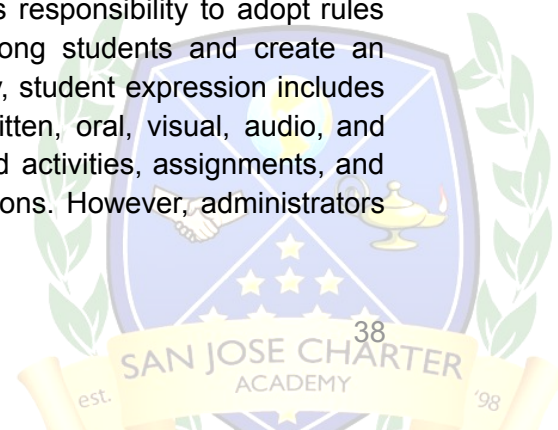
The Superintendent or designee shall inform students that SJCA will not be responsible for a student's mobile communication device which is brought on campus or to a school activity and is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Though public school students do possess First Amendment freedoms, courts allow school officials to regulate certain types of student expression.

Student Expression Policy

SJCA has adopted the following policy:

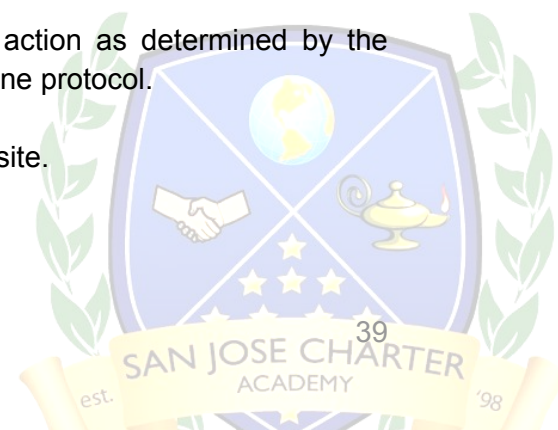
- A. While students do not shed their constitutional rights when they enter the school or engage in school-related activities, it is the SJCA Board's responsibility to adopt rules reasonably necessary to maintain proper discipline among students and create an effective learning environment. For purposes of this policy, student expression includes expression in any media, including but not limited to written, oral, visual, audio, and electronic media in all classroom and other school-related activities, assignments, and projects. Students shall be entitled to express their opinions. However, administrators



may impose reasonable restraints upon the exercise of both speech and movement to protect the vital public interest in the efficient operation of the school.

- B. The right of an individual to express himself/herself shall extend to his/her presence in the school as long as his/her conduct does not materially disrupt class work, involve substantial disorder, invade the rights of others or undermine constituted authority. Conduct in class or out of class, which materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others is prohibited. Rioting, property seizures, destruction of property, break in's, sit-ins, walk-outs, violence between students or toward faculty members, disruptive picketing or other forms of disruptive behavior shall not be permitted. Organizing, planning or participating in such activities may result in suspension, expulsion or filing of charges in accordance with law.
- C. Students shall have the freedom to wear buttons, arm bands and similar insignias to express a point of view unless there is a clear and direct interference with the school program or such items contain drawings or language deemed to be obscene, libelous, slanderous, defamatory, or profane; or content that is derogatory or discriminatory to any person because of race, color, sex, age, religion, national background, disability or handicap.
- D. Students shall not turn in, present, publish or distribute expression that is disruptive to the classroom environment or to the maintenance of a safe and orderly school as follows:
 - 1. Obscene,
 - 2. Libelous, slanderous, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful under state law,
 - 3. Profane or vulgar,
 - 4. False as to any person who is not a public figure or involved in a matter of public concern,
 - 5. Creates a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts, the violation of lawful school regulations, or the material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school,
 - 6. Violates the rights of others to privacy,
 - 7. Threatens violence to property or persons,
 - 8. Attacks any person because of race, color, sex, age, religion, national background, disability or handicap,
 - 9. Tends to create hostility or otherwise disrupt the orderly operation of the educational process,
 - 10. Advocates illegal acts of any kind, including the use of illegal drugs, tobacco or alcohol.
 - 11. Violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action as determined by the Principal and in compliance with our student discipline protocol.

Our complete Student Expression Policy can be found on our website.



Gun-Free Schools (PC §626.9)

Firearms, ammunition, and dangerous weapons are strictly prohibited on or within 1,000 feet of school grounds. Violations of the Gun-Free School Zone Act may result in arrest and expulsion.

Students and families are encouraged to report any knowledge of weapons on campus. SJCA partners with local law enforcement to maintain campus safety.



7. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Parent Involvement Policy

SJCA values family-school partnerships and encourages parents and guardians to take an active role in their child's education. Families are invited to participate in school events, classroom volunteering, leadership committees, and academic conferences.

Each year, families are asked to review and sign a Three-Way Partnership Agreement outlining the responsibilities of students, families, and school staff to support student success.

Volunteer Policy & TB Clearance

Volunteers must check in at the office, wear a badge, and follow staff instructions. Volunteers working regularly on campus or chaperoning field trips must:

- Submit TB clearance (valid for 4 years)
- Complete a volunteer application
- Undergo fingerprint clearance if unsupervised by school staff

Younger siblings may not accompany volunteers on campus during instructional time. Volunteers must maintain student confidentiality and adhere to professional conduct expectations.

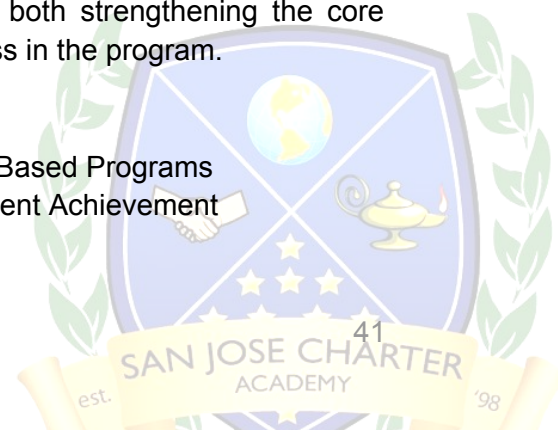
School Site Council (SSC), DELAC, & PTO

SJCA has several leadership and engagement groups open to families:

The SJCA School Site Council meets approx. six times during the school year. It is composed of the school's administration, teachers, support personnel, and equal number of parents. The primary task of the SSC is to ensure that the school is continually engaged in identifying & implementing curriculum & instructional practices that result in both strengthening the core academic program & ensuring that students have access & success in the program.

This is accomplished by the SSC through:

- Deciding to participate in the School Improvement, School Based Programs
- Participating in the development of the Single Plan for Student Achievement



- Determining the organizational structure, operations and by-laws
- Monitoring of school effectiveness
- Reviewing and updating school plans
- Establishing and approving the annual budget
- Establishing continuous communication links
- Participating in the school decision making process

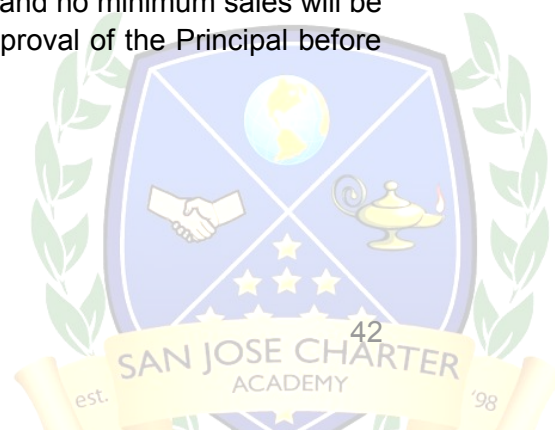
The SJCA English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC); comprised of parents, staff, and community members - designated to advise district officials on English learner programs and services. The DELAC shall advise the school district governing board on at least the following tasks:

1. Development of a district master plan for education programs and services for English learners. The district master plan will take into consideration the school site master plans.
2. Conducting a district wide needs assessment on a school-by-school basis.
3. Establishment of district program, goals, and objectives for programs and services for English learners.
4. Development of a plan to ensure compliance with any applicable teacher and/or teacher aide requirements.
5. Review and comment on the school district reclassification procedures.
6. Review and comment on the written notifications required to be sent to parents and guardians.
7. If the DELAC acts as the English learner parent advisory committee under California Education Code Sections 52063(b)(1) and 52062(a)(2), the DELAC shall also review and comment on the development or annual update of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

All parents and friends of SJCA are encouraged to demonstrate the value they place on their child's education by becoming a member of the SJCA Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Our PTO promotes activities that benefit the education and character development of our students. Additional information will be provided to all families on an annual basis.

Questions, please contact PTO at PTO@ [sanjosecharteracademy.com](mailto:PTO@sanjosecharteracademy.com)

Fundraising: SJCA PTO will hold fundraising campaign(s) each year. The fundraising will be used to meet the operating budget and required expenses of the PTO. Other funds will be used to provide educational opportunities to students and staff. The PTO is committed to providing teachers and students with many of the materials and funds that are not otherwise available to enhance the learning experiences at SJCA. All selling is voluntary and no minimum sales will be required. Classroom or other school groups will have to have approval of the Principal before conducting any type of fundraiser.



Cultural Celebration & Inclusive Practices

SJCA honors diverse cultures and encourages schoolwide celebrations that reflect the community's heritage and values. Events may include heritage months, multicultural assemblies, language appreciation days, and service-learning projects.

Teachers are supported with inclusive curriculum resources, and students are encouraged to explore their own identities and respect others'.

Parent Square, Language Access Services

SJCA uses ParentSquare as its primary tool for communication. Families can:

- Receive announcements and reminders
- Message teachers and administrators
- Sign forms and RSVP to events

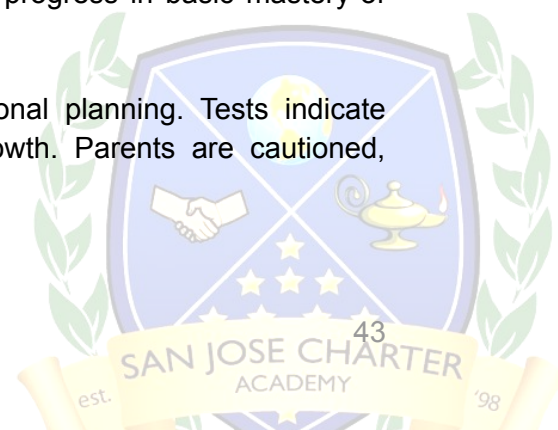
ParentSquare offers translation in over 100 languages. Families may also request interpreters for meetings and school events by contacting the front office.

Important school information is distributed in English and Spanish. Additional translation services are available upon request to ensure access for all families.

Standardized Testing

This year, students in grades three through eight will take part in the CAASPP Assessments. In addition, all fifth & eighth grade students take the CAST Pilot science test but not results will be available for this. Our testing window is late spring, usually in April or early May. It is very important that your student not be absent for these assessments. Please make every effort to have your student not be absent during the testing window. All students, third – eighth, are tested in Language Arts and Math, as well as, completing a performance task in both subjects. These achievement tests are important indicators of a student's progress in basic mastery of grade level skills.

The teachers use the results of these tests in their instructional planning. Tests indicate academic strengths and are good measures of academic growth. Parents are cautioned,



however, to understand that test results are only one indication of the child's learning potential. These results must be placed in the context of the child's day-to-day output in the classroom.

If you would like more information about the CAASPP System, please visit the Parent/Student tab of the CDE's CAASPP Web. Pursuant to California Education Code 60615, parents or guardians must provide a written request to school officials if they wish to excuse his or her child from any or all parts of the assessments. If you have any questions regarding your child's participation, please contact Mrs. Spickler at ext. 4006 or email at mary.spickler@sjcharter.com.



8. FORM & RESOURCES

Media Consent & Technology Use Agreement

Parents/guardians must annually complete a Media Release Form indicating whether their child may be photographed or recorded for school publications, social media, or news outlets.

Additionally, all students and families must review and sign the SJCA Technology Use Agreement. This outlines expectations for appropriate use of school devices, networks, and online platforms.

Emergency Contact Forms

At the start of each school year, families must complete or update their child's Emergency Contact Information Form. This includes:

- Parent/guardian phone numbers
- Authorized emergency contacts
- Medical conditions and medication needs
- Preferred hospitals and physician contacts

Accurate and current information ensures timely response in emergencies.

Uniform Complaint Form Templates

Families may request a Uniform Complaint Form to address concerns related to:

- Discrimination, harassment, or bullying
- Violation of state or federal law or regulations
- Special education or Section 504 implementation
- Instructional materials, school facilities, or teacher qualifications

Forms are available in the main office and on the school website. Complaints are handled confidentially and resolved according to legal timelines.

SJCA reserves the right to revise policies and procedures in this handbook based on updated guidance from the California Department of Education or changes in law. Families will be notified of substantive changes during the school year through ParentSquare.

