

# Somerset College Preparatory Academy

An “A rated” Charter High School



## **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024**

**725 NW California Blvd.**

**Port Saint Lucie, Florida 34986**

**Phone: 772-343-7028 Fax: 772-343-7029**

## **What is a Charter School?**

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools created through an agreement or "charter" between the school and the local school board or a state university. This agreement gives the charter school a measure of expanded freedom relative to traditional public schools in return for a commitment to higher standards of accountability. Since 1996, Florida charter schools have played a key role in increasing parental options in public education and providing innovative learning opportunities for students.

“Since 1996, the number of **charter schools in Florida** has grown to over 687 in 2020-21. **Charter school** student enrollment now tops 341,900 students (FLDOE)”.

Based on student membership and facilities, Florida has the third highest number of charter schools in the nation. Many charter schools in Florida have innovative missions. Some charter schools include themed learning approaches focusing on areas such as arts, sciences, and technologies. Other charter schools provide services to special populations such as students at risk of academic failure or students with disabilities.

Like traditional public schools, charter schools are assigned a performance grade if they meet the eligibility criteria and are not an alternative school. The percentage of charter schools receiving an “A” has increased from 42% in 2002-03 to 47% in 2017-18. Conversely, the percentage of “F” charter schools has decreased to 1% in 2017-18 from 16% in 2002-03. Studies have shown that charter schools make great strides in closing the achievement gap for students who are struggling academically.

Excerpted from Florida Statute 1002.33 and fldoe.org

## **Somerset Academy Inc. Mission & Beliefs**

### **Mission**

Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a transformational culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters high-quality education.

### **Beliefs**

S - Set high expectations

O - Objective

M - Meaningful Curriculum

E - Effective

R - Resourceful and Responsible life-long learners

S - Scholars who achieve proficiency and beyond

E - Evaluate continuously and use data to drive curriculum

T - Instructors who are highly qualified

### **Somerset Academy, Inc.**

Principal / Corporate Address: 20801 Johnson Street, Pembroke Pines, Florida 33029

Alternate Mailing Address: 6340 Sunset Drive, South Miami, Florida 33143

Board Member Office Phone: 786.393.4455

Alternate Phone 305.669.2906

#### **Board of Directors**

Todd German (Board Chair / Treasurer)

Ana Diaz (Vice-Chair / Secretary / Parent)

David Concepcion

Matthew Cox (Texas)

#### **Other Non-Voting Officers**

Bernardo Montero, President

Suzette Ruiz, Vice-President

## **School Based Administration**

Principal: Erika Rains

Interim Assistant Principal:

Ovidio Rivera, Jr.

Dean of Discipline

David Horne

### **Bell Schedule**

8:30-8:40 Homeroom  
8:40-10:10 Period 1/5  
10:10-10:15 Transition  
10:15-11:45 Period 2/6  
11:45-12:35 Lunch  
12:35-2:05 Period 3/7  
2:05-2:10 Transition  
2:10-3:40 Period 4/8  
3:40-3:45 Announcements  
3:45 Dismissal

### **Early Release Schedule**

8:30-8:35 Homeroom  
8:35-9:35 Period 1  
9:35-9:40 Transition  
9:40-10:40 Period 2  
10:40-11:30 Lunch  
11:30-12:30 Period 3  
12:30-12:35 Transition  
12:35-1:35 Period 4  
1:35-1:45 Somerset Spartan Seminar

#### **School calendar year:**

Somerset College Prep  
Academy will adhere to the  
Saint Lucie County School  
District's calendar. (*Calendar  
subject to change according  
to Saint Lucie County School  
Board.*)

**\*Scholars are considered tardy after 8:30am and must report directly to the front office for a tardy slip.**

**Meals:** The Saint Lucie County School District will provide school meals.

### **A Message from Your Principal**

Each family is part of something very special at Somerset College Preparatory Academy. Parental involvement is a key component to any child's academic, social and emotional success. At SCPA, we believe it is a fundamental component for each child's wellbeing. Our top caliber faculty and staff have been chosen because they share in the belief of raising and educating children to their highest potential. Together we can achieve these goals.

We hope our eleventh year will be as successful as our first ten. With hard work by scholars, teachers and parents, we have been an A rated school for 9 of our 10 years open. We appreciate the commitment by our clientele. Thank you to all of our parents, faculty and staff who work so very hard to help our children achieve. Parent/Instructor conferences will be held as needed during the year, and all parents should feel free to call and schedule a conference at any time. Our parents are always welcome. Progress reports and report cards detailing achievement will be issued periodically. A schedule of those issuances will be sent home during the first few weeks of school.

Challenge is important for all children, but not to be made so difficult that they feel lost or so easy they become bored. We will work with the scholars and parents to attain a balance for each child.

The twenty hours of requested volunteer time can be reached by helping with the lunchroom, classroom, field trips, front office work, donations, bus duty and fund-raisers. The time spent as a classroom volunteer is especially appreciated. This is not a drop-in affair. We schedule our parents to assist with meaningful academic intervention strategies. It is fairly prescriptive and a welcome help to the learning environment.

The Curriculum Bulletin is designed to assist parents and scholars select the appropriate courses for the next school year. As you read the bulletin carefully, you will find a comprehensive selection of both required and elective courses to choose from. Hence, the subject selection process enables us to offer a diverse curriculum while meeting graduation requirements. Although we will do our best to place your child in their preferred courses of interest, it is critical that your child chooses a fourth and fifth alternative in order to guarantee their needs are met to the best of our ability.

As your principal, I am committed and determined to provide our scholars with a safe and challenging environment. Our administration and staff will continue to hold high expectations to be met by our scholars. It is in the spirit of meeting this challenge, that I invite all of our parents to partner with our scholars, their instructors, coaches, guidance counselors and administrators in collaborating to help pave the path to the endless new horizons of greater scholar achievement. I personally look forward to seeing all of you at our school functions throughout the year.

Thank you for sharing your children with our family of faculty and staff at SCPA. If you have any questions or needs, please contact us. We are here to serve you.

Erika Rains, Principal  
Somerset College Preparatory Academy

**Somerset College Preparatory Academy**  
**Mission & Vision**

**Mission**

The mission of the Somerset College Preparatory Academy begins with providing aspiring young minds with the opportunity and skills to become competitively successful individuals in a global society. This opportunity facilitates the collaborative effort of parents, school and community stakeholders, creating a partnership that fosters an equitable environment. The goal of this partnership is to produce literate, self-directed and responsible citizens, while developing critical thinkers and active learners. Scholars are exposed to a rigorous academic program that will culminate in the increase of academic achievement and prepare them for the challenges of the post-secondary level of education.

**Vision**

It is the vision of the Academy to become an educational environment where academic excellence is the norm and cultural diversity is respected; to create a plan that enhances learning through information, communication, education and technology. We will strive to prepare all scholars to be lifelong learners in an ever-changing world. Learning will take place within and beyond school walls by sharing community resources and providing equitable access to information and communication technologies for all members of our community.

# Handbook 2023-2024

## DRESS CODE

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individuals, scholars and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress during normal school days. SCPA reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Scholars are expected to follow these guidelines. Every scholar in attendance shall wear the school uniform. Dress code applies the schoolbus, as it is an extension of the school.

**Lanyards and IDs are a mandatory part of your uniform.**

Uniform policy Monday through Thursday:

### **Tops**

All school shirts will have the **school logo in school colors: High School = (burgundy or white)**

**Midde School = (grey or gold)**

- School Oxford style shirts
- Club Shirts on club days only
- Game Day (In-season sports only on game days)
- School hoodies/jackets/outerwear (students must have a school shirt underneath hoodie and jackets)  
\* *Shirts can be purchased from Ibiley*

### **Bottoms**

- Docker-style pants/slacks
- Jeans (any color solid shade with no logos, markings, or prints)
- Pants worn at the waist
- Shorts (finger-tip length) worn at the waist (no athletic style shorts)
- Capris is worn at the waist.
- Skirts (finger-tip length) worn at the waist
- No sagging pants.

Items purchased from your choice of vendors:

Shoes: Dress shoes or tennis shoes **with backs & closed toe only**. Shoes must always be tied

Hair: Hair must be neat and clean.

***Uniform policy for Dress Down Days:***

- Any of the above uniform pieces
- Items not permitted on regular school day applies to Dress Down days.
- SCPA T-Shirts, Class Tee, Senior Hoodies, club shirts, and any other purchased fundraising item of clothing.

### ***Game Days***

- Some sports may require scholars to be professionally dressed on game days.

### ***PE Dress Code***

- ***PE uniform only (Uniform must be purchased from the PE Department. Students who have purchased the old PE uniform shirts from Aztec can wear those. This will be the last year of the phased out PE uniforms that were purchased from Aztec.***
- Natural gold tee shirts that say "Somerset Spartans" for high school
- Grey tee shirts that say "Somerset Spartans" for middle school
- Friday tee shirts Middle School (gold) High School (burgundy)
- Bottoms: black shorts

### ***Clothing Items not permitted:***

Wearing any of these items will result in a dress code violation (Repeated dress code violations will result in referrals/detention. (Please see our detention Matrix).

- Any non-school polo
- Any non-school button down shirt
- Any jacket, sweater, hoodie, vest, outerwear that is not school issued
- Any bottoms with frays, rips, or tears (regardless of whether skin can be seen or not)
- Tank tops, or tops with spaghetti straps
- No Crocks of any kind, open toed shoes, shoes without backs, flip flops, sandals, no house slippers of any kind.
- Hats, hoods, or headgear of any kind while **in** the building/classrooms.
- Gang-related bandanas
- No spandex, leggings/jeggings/unless covered by in-dress-code shorts or skirt

A scholar in violation of the dress code will be given a warning and asked to correct on site or may choose to call home for appropriate attire and wait in the office until such attire has arrived and scholar has changed. The scholar will be given a detention if unable to correct on site or for repeated offenses. The scholar will be marked absent and unexcused. We all desire scholars to be in class, but we cannot have a policy that some follow and others do not.

Parents select to have their children attend Somerset College Preparatory Academy with full acknowledgement and understanding of the expectations and policies. Purchasing uniform shirts from SCPA designated and approved vendors is a policy requirement. Parents may **not** purchase an article of clothing and have it embroidered with the SCPA logo. **THIS IS A COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT.**



## **EMERGENCIES**

**Illness:** The importance of regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized, but scholars should not be sent to school when they are ill. If a scholar becomes ill during the school day, and it appears they would be best cared for at home, the parent will be contacted. There are very limited facilities in the school, making it impossible to keep sick scholars for long periods of time. School personnel must be notified of any scholar's chronic illness (i.e. asthma, diabetes, heart conditions or seizures). This notification heightens awareness in case of an emergency.

**Injury:** The procedures listed below will be followed for an injured scholar:

1. Instructors will send the scholar to the office if the injury is minor.
2. Instructors will notify the office if the scholar is unable to be moved.
3. Trained personnel will administer first aid.
4. The parent(s) will be called and the injury described. Emergency services will be called in if the injury warrants such.

For a minor injury the parent will make the decision about removing the scholar from the school. Emergency contact persons will be called if the parent cannot be reached. For this reason it is imperative that emergency contacts be up to date. An accident report will be completed and filed for most accidents.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

We encourage the SCPA community to follow recommended best practices

- Staying home if you are sick or are experiencing fever.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Applying hand sanitizer frequently throughout the day.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue.

## **Field Trips**

As a learning experience, instructors may plan field trips. Parents may be asked to assist the instructor as chaperone. Parents serving in this capacity may not have other children accompany them. Parents who are officially selected to be chaperones may count their hours on the field trip as volunteer hours. The Guidelines for Chaperones Form must be signed prior to any parent chaperoning a field trip. Parent chaperones are required to adhere to these guidelines.

Participating in field trips is a privilege. Scholars serve as representatives of the school; therefore, they may be excluded from participation in any trip for reasons relating to behavior, conduct or grades. To participate in field trips, scholars must have a GPA of 2.0 or higher. The GPA used is the cumulative GPA, which includes all subjects/courses. Participation will be determined by the grades from the most recently published report card or progress report. Any School Suspension can negate attending a field trip.

Parent permission must be given for scholars to participate in field trips and Learning Experience Elsewhere (LEE) forms must be completed. The instructor will send permission slips and information about each field trip 2-4 weeks prior to each field trip.

Money, LEE forms and permission slips must be turned in according to the instructor's instructions, prior to the field trip or the scholar will not be permitted to take part in the field trip.

The scholars must wear the instructor-designated uniform on all field trips.

**\*THE SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY DOES NOT CHANGE FOR FIELD TRIPS.\***

Once fees are paid for a field trip the fees are non-refundable. Field trip costs are predetermined based upon a certain number of participants who will share the total expense. The only consideration for a refund would be based upon a verifiable death in the family or an injury to the scholar that precludes them from field trip participation. Most fees are pre-paid and thus non-refundable. The field trip environment is still considered a classroom and class rules are still in force. Children may not be checked out of any off-campus field trip without prior approval from the administration. This is not recommended due to instructor responsibility, instruction, confusion and liability.

## **Ineligibility for extracurricular activities and athletics**

In order to foster its scholars' academic success, Somerset College Preparatory Academy maintains a number of provisions for assisting those scholars who are deficient in their academic performance. Among these is the policy of limiting scholar participation in **all** school sponsored extracurricular and interscholastic activities until such time as s/he demonstrates sufficient improvement in his/her studies.

In order for scholars to participate in Extracurricular Activities they must have a LEE form signed by their teachers that includes their current grade and a comment section. This permission slip must be signed for each activity. (Example: If the volleyball team has 3 matches in 1 month, scholars on the volleyball team would need to get the permission slip signed by every teacher, every time, in order to participate.)

**NORMS:** Scholars are ineligible who, at the distribution of grade reports, are failing ONE or more subjects (grade of 59% or lower) and/or are on Academic Probation.

Scholars may also be declared ineligible indefinitely due to disciplinary reasons as determined by the Administration, in the judgment of the Principal and/or Assistant Principal for Academics, if their academic welfare is in jeopardy.

Scholars failing ONE or more subjects as indicated by mid semester grade postings may also be declared ineligible.

Students on behavioral probation are ineligible.

**Length of ineligibility:**

The ineligibility period will last a minimum of a 10-school day period. Scholars who are ineligible may **not** participate in team/club functions involving any extracurricular activity. Ineligible scholars will be required to attend tutoring during or after school in order to help them with the classes in question. Should appropriate academic progress be shown to the Assistant Principal for Academics following that 10 school-day period, a scholar will be re-instated. The scholar will not be declared eligible until he has demonstrated the appropriate academic progress. The ineligibility period does not allow for practice and/or participation with a sport on weekends or vacations. Scholars declared ineligible due to mid-marking period reports remain so at the discretion of administration.

**Academic Honesty:**

Somerset College Preparatory Academy encourages each of its scholars to actively participate in the learning process. It is the school's expectation that scholars, over time, will be increasingly able to learn on their own and produce work that shows their integrity and their efforts. This development requires special care in maintaining an attitude of academic honesty through the scholar's four years at SCPA.

The academically honest scholar:

- Prepares thoroughly for all academic assignments
- Tries their best at all assigned tasks
- Takes ownership of their talents and abilities
- Seeks appropriate help when they fail to understand
- Makes proper use of the efforts and thoughts of others
- Takes pride in each assignment as an example of their own skill and effort

To recognize the talents and efforts of each scholar and to promote the fundamental principles of mutual trust and respect, SCPA encourages scholar effort and insists on academic honesty. Among the types of academic dishonesty not tolerated at SCPA are the following:

**Cheating** - Scholar use, or attempted use, of unauthorized materials in any academic situation or solicitation of someone else to do work for which he is responsible. Examples of cheating or violation of testing protocol include but are not limited to:

- Using open notebooks, texts, or other course materials without permission
- Exchanging answers with another scholar on any graded assignment
- Copying another's test answers with or without his permission
- Possessing "cheat notes"
- Demonstrating an intent to cheat
- Providing answers for any assignment

Scholars must comply with the testing procedures specified by the teacher. Violations of testing procedures will be considered under the cheating policy but may not be given the same consequence.

**Fabrication** - Inventing or falsifying information. Examples include:

- Inventing lab data
- Citing sources not used

**Copying** - Examples include:

- Copying homework or papers from another person or allowing someone to copy homework or papers
- Acquiring answers from the internet or other electronic sources and purporting them as one's own
- Using teacher edition texts or teacher answer keys or test copies

**Deception/Misrepresentation** - Lying about scholar work or academic records. Examples include:

- Forging a teacher's or parent's signature on any document
- Taking credit for group work without having contributed as required

**Electronic Dishonesty** - Using network access inappropriately. Examples include:

- Using another's computer account
- Invading another's files
- Using material from another's stored files (e.g. network storage, flash drive)
- Damaging or deleting another's computer files

**Plagiarism** - Plagiarism is the use, intentional or not, of the writing or ideas of others and representing them as one's own. Text manipulation is plagiarism. Paraphrasing the ideas of someone else is plagiarism. Credit **must** be given to all outside sources, including, but not limited to: research materials, online databases, internet sources, encyclopedias, charts, graphs, pictures, quotations and paraphrasing and summaries of another's written or spoken words.

Plagiarism, regardless of intent or degree or amount, is theft and violates academic integrity. Scholars uncertain about what material to cite should consult teachers for guidance and advice.

**The use of artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT is considered academic dishonesty will be treated as such.**

**Penalties for Violations of Academic Integrity** - Because academic honesty serves as a measure of personal integrity and provides a foundation for the academic strength of Somerset College Preparatory Academy, any violation of it is considered a serious offense. Such offenses are cumulative. A scholar remains responsible for all violations of academic honesty committed at any time during their SCPA career.

First time violators:

- 0% on the work in question with make up
- Automatic three (3) Saturday Detentions from 9:30-12:30 PM
- Automatic behavioral probation
- Parent Notification

Second time violators:

- A three day suspension (minimum) or possible dismissal from SCPA

## **Technology policies**

Each teacher at SCPA has a different technology policy, and scholars are made aware of each teacher's policy on the first day of the school year. This policy will also be in the teacher's class syllabus. In the event that a teacher feels a scholar's electronic device is causing a disruption or distraction to the scholar or the class, the following results will occur:

**First Offense:** Teacher will take the electronic device from the scholar. The device is returned at the end of the class, with a detention.

**Second Offense:** Teacher will take the electronic device from the scholar. The device is given to the main office, and the scholar can get the device Ms. Rains at the end of the school day, along with a detention, and parent notification.

**Third Offense:** Teacher will take the electronic device from the scholar. This offense will result in a referral, and the electronic device must be picked up by a legal guardian from the main office.

\*A scholar who repeatedly abuses the technology policy may eventually earn a suspension or dismissal.

## **Computer Policies**

- Students are responsible for logging off the computer when they are done using it.
- If you do not logout and someone else misuses the computer, **you** will be the one facing consequences, not that other person.
- Computer Use Rules are on the desktop background. Not knowing is not an excuse.
- Misuse of computers will result in a consequence.

## **Bathroom policies**

To deal with an increase in loitering, scholar disappearance, and damage to school property, a number of institutionalized bathroom policies are being enacted. All scholars are required to buy a planner for the school year, and a number of these policies will be used in conjunction with the scholar planner. As the planner only has a limited number of bathroom "slots" in it, the goal is to discourage scholars from using the bathroom every period, and to make better use of passing time between classes. Scholars must have their scholar planner in order to leave class to use the bathroom.

- The scholar planner must have the scholar's name written in sharpie on the planner in order to use it as a bathroom pass.
- Scholars must fill out time and destination in their planner, and have a teacher sign off on it before they can leave the classroom.
- Scholars are not allowed to use the bathroom in the first or last 10 minutes of a class period.
- During the last period of the school day scholars may not use the restroom after 3:00PM.
- If a scholar has completely used all of their bathroom passes in the first or second nine weeks it will result in a parent teacher conference to address any possible issues.
- If a scholar has filled all of their bathroom slots they will be required to purchase a new scholar planner.
- If a scholar has a medical issue that affects his or her bathroom usage, this issue should be made known to administration and teachers via a doctor's note.

### **Communication**

Communication is absolutely essential for success in any human endeavor. The administration and staff recognize this and will strive to facilitate open and frequent communications with parents at all times. Also, an annual survey will be conducted and your participation is crucial in aiding the school to identify areas of success and determining areas that are in need of improvement.

In addition to the report cards and conferences, instructors have information on their websites regarding class assignments, projects and homework. If a parent has no internet access, a hard copy of the newsletter will be available upon request. Progress reports will be sent home twice quarterly, and report cards will be sent home once each quarter, based on the district calendar.

An interactive, online tool for monitoring scholar grades, SKYWARD Parent Portal, will be available for all scholars and parents. This tool will be updated in alignment with the above dates. Scholar access is their 562 number for the user name and their date of birth, using two digits for the month and two digits for the date (with no year) as the password.

Please feel free to consult with the office regarding any problems or questions that concern your child. It is the desire of the administrators and the faculty to be of service to both parent and scholar, and every instructor welcomes a conference with any parent.

We do urge, however, that such visits be made by making an appointment with the main office at a convenient before or after-school hour. Parents are asked not to meet with an instructor before or after class unless a conference has been scheduled in advance. If there is a concern, it is SCPA policy to have the parent email the instructor first, and then speak to administration if the issue is unresolved.

It is extremely important that any change of physical or email address, telephone number or other vital method of communication, or pick-up authority, be completed by the legal parent/guardian in person in the front office. BY STATE LAW, two new proofs of address must be provided for a change of address.

### **“Home-learning” policy**

The purpose of homework is to develop effective study habits. It is also used to reinforce concepts that have been taught or to work on projects that have been assigned. If a child does not understand his/her assignment after trying to do it at home, please send a note to the instructor indicating the problem.

The school requires scholars to purchase an assignment planner. It can assist your child in keeping track of the homework. Assignments must be completed on time and be properly written. The only acceptable excuse for incomplete homework is the scholar's illness or a written note stating an emergency, which prevented homework from being done. If a scholar fails to bring in homework, he/she should complete it for the following day. Instructors keep daily records of homework assignments, which are used in determining quarterly grades. Always complete work, even if it is late.

Parents may help in the following ways:

- Show an interest in your child's work
- Provide a place and time for quiet study
- Encourage home reading and listen to your child read
- Review the homework for neatness and completeness
- Refrain from doing the work for your child
- Discuss problems related to home study with your child's instructor

**\*\*It is important to note that “home learning” is the responsibility of the scholar.\*\***

### **Books, equipment, supplies and materials**

Books and materials are expensive and should be cared for properly. Books must not be written in or on, unless it is a consumable workbook. Charges will be assessed for damaged or lost books/materials, based upon replacement costs.

Scholars will be expected to provide all basic supplies such as paper, pencils, etc. as required by the classroom instructor. Any additional supply needs will be requested in writing by the classroom instructor.

### **Lost and found**

Throughout the school year, lost items should be turned in to the school office. Anytime a scholar loses an item, he/she may come to the office to claim it. Items unclaimed at the end of each semester will be donated on a regular basis to various charitable institutions.

**\*\*THEREFORE, PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME ON ALL PERSONAL PROPERTY. \*\***

### **Medication**

The administering or dispensing of any medication (including non-prescription medication) to scholars by employees of SCPA without specific written authorization by the parents and physician is forbidden. If it is absolutely necessary that the child take any medication while he/she is in school, the parent must sign an authorization form and have the form completed by their physician. Please obtain this form in the school office. The medication will be kept under lock and key in the office and will be administered by trained personnel. A parent may also choose to come to school and administer medication.



### **Parent teacher scholar organization (PTSO)**

A great portion of each child's day is spent at school; therefore, his/her growth and development become a joint responsibility between the home and school. Everyone is urged to become active in helping further the goals and growth of the PTSO.

The faculty, staff and administration hope that all of the parents will become active members supporting the school and the organization. Officers will be elected yearly according to the organization's bylaws and district/state guidelines.

The PTSO will sponsor fundraisers throughout the school year. Monies generated by fundraising events will be used to purchase materials and equipment for the scholars, faculty, staff and general school purposes.

PTSO board meetings are held regularly and are open to anyone who wishes to attend. All members are eligible to vote on issues brought before them for consideration during the general PTSO meetings.

### **Attendance Policy**

Anytime a scholar returns to school after an absence, a note MUST be brought from home. DOCUMENTATION FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES MUST BE FILED WITH THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS OF THE ABSENCE OR THE ABSENCE IS UNEXCUSED. It is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardian to submit the reason for each absence that has not been pre-approved by school administration. Parents or legal guardians shall be required to justify the scholar's absence. Justification will be evaluated based on the policy below regarding excused or unexcused absences. The final decision for approval will rest with the school principal. Acceptable excuses for scholars' absences are illness (physician's note required), a death in the family, a dental or doctor appointment (statement from doctor's office required), court appearance, a school-sponsored event or activity that has been previously approved or religious holiday. Scholars may be released from school in order to participate in a religious observance upon prior written request of his/her parent or legal guardian.

Unexcused absences are those absences that are not justified according to the rules of this policy by the parent or legal guardian. In addition, truancy, out of school suspension, expulsion and/or skipping are considered unexcused absences.

If you need to take your child out of school before the end of the school day, you must come to the school office and sign him/her out. A school employee will send for your child. Three unexcused early dismissals will constitute one unexcused day. You may not check your scholar out after 3:00.

Skipping class is defined by one or more of the following criteria:

1. Failure to sign/check out when leaving school before the end of the official school day.
2. Absent from class without parent or legal guardian's knowledge and/or permission.
3. Absent from class without instructor knowledge and/or permission.

Although the school does not support scholars missing school for vacation purposes, any scholar missing school for vacation must notify the administration. Notification must be made in writing at least two weeks in advance so instructors can have the appropriate work ready for

each scholar. This will be considered part of our Family Leave Policy. Scholars with a 2.0 or lower G.P.A. in core subjects are encouraged not to miss school. Your child(ren) must be in attendance **170 out of 180** days or they may be considered for retention or dismissed from the program.

### **Make Up Work – Excused Absences**

Scholars are expected to make up all work missed during excused absences. The scholar must contact the instructor on the first day back in school in order to make arrangements to make up the work. Scholars are permitted one day per day absent to make up work. The instructor and/or the principal may grant additional time for making up work if warranted by the individual situation. All assignments, including tests and exams announced in advance of the scholar's absence, must be made up on the day the scholar returns to school. Instructors have the prerogative to require a scholar on school or administrative leave to complete work assigned in advance of the leave.

### **Make Up Work – Unexcused Absences**

It is up to individual instructors as to whether or not they will accept missing work due to unexcused absences. If an instructor chooses to accept make-up work, the scholar is permitted one day per day absent to make up the work. The individual instructor will determine how much credit to assign for make-up work as a result of an unexcused absence.

**\*\*To avoid having the school become involved in personal family conflicts, parents or guardians should submit to school authority's copies of any legal documents which indicate who has legal access to the child and his/her records during school hours. In the absence of legal documentation school officials will provide access only to those individuals whose names appear on the pupil identification form. Friends and strangers will be denied access to a scholar in the absence of verified parental consent. Even if we know you are a parent, but you do not have court specified rights to pick a child up at a time different from that specified, we will need to secure permission prior to release. \*Pupil identification forms must be redone every school year.\***

### **Code of Conduct**

Somerset College Preparatory Academy is a college preparatory school. The Academy holds its scholars accountable for the highest level of scholar conduct. We expect our scholars to treat others with respect and courtesy. The goal of the Code of Conduct is to assist scholars in developing self-discipline, character and responsibility for our school, the larger community, family and fellow scholars. The primary objective of this code is to develop each scholar's potential for learning and to foster positive interpersonal relationships.

If this is to be accomplished, it is necessary that the school environment be free of disruptions which interfere with teaching and learning activities. The scholar's conduct determines to a great extent the full development of his/her potential for learning and the development of positive relationships.

### **Lunch hour conduct**

Scholars will proceed through the lunch line in an orderly fashion, "first come, first served." Scholars may not hold a place in line for other scholars. Scholars are responsible for cleaning up after themselves by placing their trash in the proper receptacles and helping to maintain a clean eating environment. Scholars are to report promptly to their lunch period and are not permitted

to leave the designated lunch-time areas without the permission of the supervising faculty. Misconduct during lunch will result in disciplinary sanctions including lunch detention/picking up trash during lunch.

### **Use of portable electronic devices**

Cellular telephones and other electronic equipment may only be used under the direction and by the instruction of classroom educators. Cell phones and other electronic equipment should be used for educational purposes only, and any other use may result in confiscation. If an electronic device is confiscated, it will be returned at the end of the day. An electronic device that is confiscated a third time will be returned only to the scholar's parents or legal guardian. If a scholar is caught texting or Face Booking, Snap chatting, Tweeting, TikTocking or engaged in any social media activities in class, the device will be confiscated and scholar will receive a detention. A scholar's personal laptop computer may be used in class only with the instructor's permission.

### **Discipline Matrix**

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Rules</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>By whom</b>
SPCA scholars will contribute to keeping the campus safe for everyone.	No scholar shall possess, sell, use, or furnish any type of weapon, or dangerous object, including, but not limited to firecrackers, matches, lighters, stink bombs, etc.	Up to and including immediate dismissal	Admin

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Rules</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>By whom</b>
SPCA scholars are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully, which means reporting potential problems to instructors, counselors, staff, or administration.	No scholar is permitted to threaten to cause or actually cause physical injury to another. Spectators and instigators will be treated the same as fighters. Bullying is not allowed and will be dealt with strongly.	Up to and including immediate dismissal	Admin
SPCA scholars respect themselves, other scholars, and all staff at all times.	<b>THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ALLOWED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disobedience/Disrespect</li> <li>• Defiance/Lying</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Profanity/Vulgarity</li> <li>• Obscenity</li> <li>• Racially inciting statements</li> <li>• Sexual harassment</li> <li>• Hate crimes</li> </ul>	Up to and including immediate dismissal	Admin

SPCA is a drug, alcohol and tobacco free learning environment.	No scholar shall possess, sell, furnish, use, or be under the influence of any alcohol, tobacco, narcotic, or controlled substances. Possession of drug paraphernalia, including vape pens, is not allowed. Prescriptions should be kept in the main office with required documentation.	Up to and including immediate dismissal- Contact Law Enforcement	Admin
SPCA scholars are responsible citizens who respect their fellow scholars and their school.	<b>THEFT, ROBBERY, EXTORTION, GRAFFITI, VANDALISM, AND PROPERTY DAMAGE ARE NOT ALLOWED:</b> Scholars are not allowed to steal, attempt to steal, take or damage property of another or any SCPA property or equipment.	Up to and including immediate dismissal- Contact Law Enforcement	Admin
SPCA scholars will come to school dressed according to the SCPA uniform policy in all aspects.	Scholars will wear approved SCPA uniforms purchased from the designated SCPA vendor, with SCPA logo.	Parent Phone Call and Unexcused absence until issue is rectified: 10 per year can result in retention	Admin
SPCA scholars will attend all their classes.	Scholars may not leave campus without written permission and proper identification from person picking up the scholar	Unexcused absence: 10 per year can result in retention or dismissal	Admin
SPCA scholars are expected to be in class on time.	All scholars are expected to be in class on time. Entering the classroom late disrupts the educational process as per SCPA tardy policy.	3 morning tardies for non-bus riders= 1 detention. 1 transitional tardy or morning tardy for bus-riders= 1 detention. 3 detentions= 1 Saturday detention.	Admin

Leaving campus without permission is considered skipping and will result in a referral, behavioral probation and 2 Saturday detentions.

\*\* “Up to” can include the following:

OSS Out of school suspension  
ASD After school detention

ISS In school suspension  
SS Saturday school

### **Detentions/Suspensions**

1. Detentions are held after school for one hour. Scholars will be given notice of detention. Detention must be served when scheduled. Scholars present for any part of a school day will be expected to serve a detention if it is scheduled for that day. Acceptable reasons for missing a detention include scholar illness or a doctor's appointment. Written proof of a doctor's appointment will be required upon the scholars return to school. If such proof is not provided upon the scholars' return, they will be considered to have skipped the detention. Detention takes precedence over any other after school activity or sport.
2. Scholars who fail to attend detention as scheduled, arrive late to detention, or who are asked to leave detention for misbehavior will be assigned one Saturday School. A skipped Saturday detention will result in a 2 day suspension.
3. Detentions not served in one school year may be carried over to the next school year at the discretion of Administration.
4. Scholars will be notified of receipt of detentions.
5. An excessive amount of detentions may cause a scholar to be liable for dismissal from SCPA or probation upon recommendation of the Administrative Team. Only the Principal may ask a scholar to withdraw from the Academy (mandatory withdrawal). Once a scholar is withdrawn, their re-admittance in the future will be at the discretion of the Principal.

\*Under ordinary circumstances, one or more sanctions may be appropriate. However, a scholar may be placed on probation for all or part of one school year due to a previous school year's infractions. Scholars who have been suspended two or more times in a school year may be placed on probation for the first quarter of the following year. Suspensions will be recorded in the scholar's permanent record, and are maintained on file from year to year.

#### LEVEL ONE- CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Any parent/guardian who has a problem with the school procedures must follow the Conflict Resolution Process to address his/her concerns:

1. Meet with the instructor or team of instructors
2. Meet with the other staff personnel: discipline committee member, guidance counselor, ESE coordinator, etc.
3. Meet with the Principal

#### LEVEL TWO- CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

For an infraction which may lead to a suspension or recommendation for dismissal, the following steps listed below may be followed:

1. Meet with the instructor or team of instructors
2. Meet with the other staff personnel: discipline committee member, guidance counselor, ESE coordinator, etc.
3. Meet with the Principal
4. Meet with Board's designated Parent Liaison for conflict resolution:
5. Appear before the Board of Directors for a final appeal.

### **Parent volunteer hours and rules**

In order to maintain harmony and a positive atmosphere, all volunteers must abide by the following rule: Under NO circumstances may any volunteer contact other parents or individuals for non-supportive, negative or derogatory communication as a representative of the school. If there is a concern, it must be addressed with the instructor(s) first at the appropriate time. If not satisfied after this communication the parent shall contact the principal. Failure to follow these procedures can constitute loss of privilege to volunteer in classes. Parents have many opportunities to volunteer their time both at school and at home. Volunteer sign-ups are available through the main office. Other opportunities are announced throughout the school year.

Parents are requested to log the volunteer hours with the front office staff. Parents are requested to volunteer 20 hours per family per year or prorated to two hours a month if their children are accepted after school has begun. If there are extenuating good cause circumstances that prohibit a parent or parent stand-in from completing the requested volunteer service hours, the parent will be instructed to meet with administration to explore an alternative means of involvement.

We appreciate the additional hours beyond the required 20 that many of you will contribute. This helps the school, your child and all children at SPCA.

Section 1002.33(10)(e)5.,F.S., states that a “charter school may limit the enrollment process only to target the following scholar populations: ...scholars who meet reasonable academic, artistic, or other eligibility standards established by the charter school and included in the charter school application and charter or, in the case of existing charter schools, standards that are consistent with the school’s mission and purpose.”

Consequently, if a new charter school includes the parent volunteer requirement in its application and charter, or if the requirement is consistent with the mission and purpose in an existing charter school, the parent volunteer contract is enforceable under Florida law. Failure of a parent or parents to uphold or fulfill their responsibilities under that contract would be sufficient grounds for that charter school to deny admission to the child the following year.

What counts toward volunteer hours? The following are examples, but not a comprehensive list.

- School Advisory Committee (SAC) duties
- General meetings, Board meetings, Booster meetings, Choir meetings, Band meetings
- Board member
- Helping with classroom items at home (decodable books, book orders, etc.)
- Making copies
- Room parent duties
- Orientation
- Donations
- Media Center help
- Lunchroom help
- Working the drop off/pick up line, opening doors for children
- Campus maintenance
- School approved tutoring
- Working sporting events
- Chaperoning trips

### Annual Notice Regarding Disclosure of Scholar Directory Information

Federal and State laws require that SCPA, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a scholar's education records. However, SCPA may disclose appropriately designated directory information without written consent UNLESS you advise SCPA to the contrary.

Parent(s) or former scholars shall have 30 days from the date of this notice to inform the scholar's school principal, in writing, that any or all of the directory information should not be released without their consent. Such directory information includes SCPA has designated the following information as directory information:

- A scholar's name, address and telephone number (if there is a listed number)
- Image or likeness in photographs, videotape, film or other medium
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Current grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of athletic team members
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution (school or center) attended by the scholar.

Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. Directory information relating to scholars shall be released only to the following:

- In-school use of scholar directory information for official school business
- Scholar directory information, without addresses or telephone numbers, for school annuals, school newspapers, honors lists, and printed materials or programs for extracurricular activities.

### **Right of SCPA Scholar DISMISSAL**

FS 228.056 10(a) 7 identifies the charter school's authority to develop and implement admission procedures and dismissal procedures. The charter contract between Saint Lucie School District and Somerset Academy, Inc.; affords the charter school the right of dismissal.

#### *Rationale for dismissal:*

Families and scholars who fail to meet the SCPA Board established policies for continued enrollment include:

- Wearing Board approved uniform as designated by time and location and manner as per SCPA policy.
- Attendance requirements as per FS 1001.41 requiring a minimum of 170 days of attendance.
- Behavior as per SCPA policy.
- GPA Minimum of 2.0 policy
- Parent volunteer hours not being adequately met as per SCPA policy.

Steps taken prior to dismissal

A. Documentation

1. Document uniform violations and notify parent.
2. Document discipline violations and notify parent.
3. Document parent volunteer hours and notify parent.
4. Document attendance and notify parent.

B. Conferences

1. Refer for Discipline Committee as appropriate.
2. Hold conferences with parents and scholar regarding violations.

Dismissal Procedures

1. Letter to parent regarding intent to dismiss.
2. Final declaration of dismissal or option of withdrawal.
3. Transfer records to home-zoned school.

**Severe Weather information**

Somerset College Preparatory Academy will follow the same instructions as Saint Lucie County Public Schools in case of severe weather emergencies. Parents should watch the local news for information about school closings. Site based decisions will only differ from that of the district in cases of extreme emergencies and will be communicated to parents via email and text blast.

**Safety System**

If you visit the school, you MUST enter through the front door of the main office and check in with the front office staff. You MUST have your picture identification with you so that the front office staff can verify your identity. A visitor's badge will be issued to you and you MUST wear the badge at all times while on campus.

**Scholar Gifts**

Please DO NOT send or bring gifts such as balloons, flowers, etc., to scholars. Office space is very limited and we do not have the staff to deliver these. If you send these, they will be held in the front office for pick up at the end of the day.

**Deliveries**

Scholars/parents may not order food to be delivered to the office for the student. If food is delivered to the school for students (with the exception of preapproved vendors), the student may be issued a detention and the delivery will be held in the office until the end of the day.

**Scholar Rights**

Scholars have the right to feel safe from threats and bodily harm. Disruptive behaviors are never acceptable, and when they occur, they will result in time out, exclusion from participation in class activities, suspension or dismissal.

Parents who have a conflict with a scholar other than their own child are requested to speak to the Administration. At no time may parents approach the scholar directly.

All scholars and employees will be treated with respect. Slurs, innuendoes, hostile treatment, violence or other verbal or physical conduct against a scholar or employee will NOT be tolerated.



Prior to suspension or dismissal, the scholar has the right to a fair hearing as outlined by the Code of Conduct. Dismissal offenses include but are not limited to the following:

1. Fighting or other dangerous and/or disruptive behavior.
2. Smoking/vaping on school grounds or possession of tobacco products.
3. Being under the influence or possession of alcoholic beverages on school grounds.
4. Defacing or vandalism of school property.
5. Igniting any flammable substance or possession of products such as lighters.
6. Harassment of scholars, faculty, staff, parents, substitutes or visitors.
7. Repetitive disruptive behavior.
8. Rude or vulgar language, gestures, pictures or actions.
9. Actions deemed to be unsafe or containing the potential to disrupt the educational setting at SCPA.

### **Visitors**

Visitors, INCLUDING PARENTS, are NOT permitted to go to their child's class unannounced during school hours because this disrupts normal routine and instruction. For the safety and protection of all scholars, visitors (including parents) must sign in and out with the office, state whom they are visiting, state the purpose of the visit, and obtain a pass before proceeding to a classroom. This is Florida State Law. Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all scholars.

Additionally, all visitors to campus will be limited during the pandemic. All visitors will be subjected to a series of screening questions and a temperature check. The school reserves the right to deny admission to any visitor that the school deems may be a health risk.

### **High School Curriculum**

Instruction shall be based upon the Florida State Standards in the subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages.

### **Graduation Requirements and Diploma Options**

Florida law provides incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade scholars the right to choose a diploma option:

- 4-year (24 credit) standard high school diploma—**SPCA require 27 credits.**
- 4-year (18 credit) acceleration diploma – used when student is not meeting standard requirements.

The appropriate graduation program for a particular scholar is one that best fits the abilities, interests, and goals of the individual scholar. Families should consider the educational benefits of each program and choose the program that will best prepare the scholar for his or her postsecondary education or career plan. Families and scholars should work with their school counselor/advisor on a regular basis to get more information about graduation programs, financial aid opportunities, acceleration programs, and college or career plans to help make this important decision.

### **Scholar Volunteer Service Program**

All scholars are required to complete a minimum of 100 documented hours of volunteer service over the course of 4 high school years in order to graduate. All Volunteer hours must be documented on the appropriate log and turned into the guidance department. Scholars are required to keep records of their log sheets. Please contact the Guidance department for further information.

## **Scholar Services**

### **Guidance Department-**

The Somerset College Preparatory Academy Guidance Department works with scholars, parents, and the community to foster a positive and supportive learning environment. The guidance department office is located in the middle/high administration building. The essential role of the academic advisor is to be a scholar advocate. Advisors assist with personal, academic, social, and post-secondary concerns that can aid the scholar in order to reach their full potential. Support systems such as individual/group counseling are an integral part of the counseling program at Somerset Academy. When a scholar is upset, a counselor is always available for them for support. Classroom activities and presentations are developed throughout the year to assist scholars with their personal, social, career, and educational development.

### **Multi-tiered System of Scholar Support**

<b>Level</b>	<b>General Ed</b>	<b>ESE</b>
1	Teachers	Teachers
2	Academic Advisor	ESE Dept
3	Dean	Academic Advisor
4	Vice Principal	Dean
5	Principal	Vice Principal
6		Principal

### **Skyward System**

Parents are encouraged to use the electronic grade book software (SKYWARD) to monitor their child's academic performance and progression. SKYWARD is accessible via the internet and through a link on the Academy website: [www.somersetcollegeprep.org](http://www.somersetcollegeprep.org). Parents and scholars can view grades, class schedules, attendance records, discipline reports, activity announcements and notes from instructors. SKYWARD is an excellent tool to keep the parent aware of their child's day to day progress. However, for email correspondence, please email directly from your email or use the link on [www.somersetcollegeprep.org](http://www.somersetcollegeprep.org). If you are experiencing any issues with your skyward login email [messina.nerissa@somersetcollegeprep.org](mailto:messina.nerissa@somersetcollegeprep.org).

### **Exceptional Scholar Education**

The Exceptional Scholar Education Program (ESE) is implemented in accordance with Saint Lucie County District Procedures for Exceptional Education. Scholar exceptionalities will be addressed on an individual basis as needed. Parents and instructors work closely with the ESE Specialist to provide proper placement and to develop an individualized educational plan (IEP).

Contact person: Ms. Paloma Hernandez, ESE Coordinator

[hernandez.paloma@somersetcollegeprep.org](mailto:hernandez.paloma@somersetcollegeprep.org)

### **English Language Learners Program**

The screening and placement of Limited English Proficient (LEP) scholars will be met in accordance with district procedures.

Contact person: Ms. Paloma Hernandez, ESOL Coordinator

[hernandez.paloma@somersetcollegeprep.org](mailto:hernandez.paloma@somersetcollegeprep.org)

### **High School Grading Scale**

Grading system in the high schools and the interpretations of the letter grades, which represent the equivalent numerical grades, are as follows:

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	0 – 59

### **Quarter Grades Calculation**

At the high school level, because we are using the Copernican Block Schedule, credit is granted on a semester basis for one credit courses. One-half credit is given for passing a quarter's work in a course. One quarter is equivalent to a nine-week period of time. One semester, which equates to a full credit, is 18 weeks.

The weight of the semester examination is 20% of the final semester grade, except where the State dictates a 30% as related to the EOC. Any scholar with a GPA below 2.0 shall have their parent or guardian notified that good work is necessary to ensure that high school graduation requirements are met. Scholars will be assisted in meeting these requirements through a variety of options, which may include, but are not limited to:

- forgiveness policy,
- extended learning,
- special counseling,
- volunteer and/or peer tutors,
- school-sponsored help sessions,
- homework hotlines,
- study skills classes, and/or
- co-enrollment.

### **Forgiveness Rule**

A scholar may elect to repeat a course for credit and/or in order to improve his/her record. A scholar may repeat a course in which a "D" or "F" was earned. When the same or comparable course is repeated and a "C" or better is subsequently earned, the failing grade of the first attempt will then be "forgiven" or excluded from the grade point average. The record will show all courses taken.

### **Pre-AP/Advanced Placement Classes**

Pre-AP courses are offered for academically proficient scholars. Course content and course requirements are rigorous. Placement in pre-AP classes is based on standardized achievement tests, instructor recommendation, and previous academic history.

### **Pre AP Courses to Earn Quality Points**

- All courses that are clearly labeled as “Pre AP,” and “advanced placement,” are consistent with State Frameworks and/or district guidelines and coded as, shall carry one quality point.
- Academic foreign languages above the second year are included in this category, (classes labeled “conversational” are not included in this category.)
- Dual Enrollment: Scholars enrolled in college courses at the 2000 level and above shall earn two quality points for courses completed with a grade of “C” or above. Dual Enrollment courses below the 2000 level can only earn one quality point.
- An additional point may not be earned in Pre AP class if the grade received is below a “C.”

### **Advanced Placement Courses to Earn Quality Points**

- All classes that are clearly labeled “Advanced Placement” shall receive two quality points if the grade received is “C” or above.
- Scholars will be required to take the Advanced Placement examination in order to receive two quality points. If a scholar elects not to take the Advanced Placement examination, he/she will receive one quality point for a grade of “C” or higher.

## **College Credit Programs for High School Scholars**

### **Advanced Placement Courses**

The Advance placement courses consist of over 30 college level courses and exam that are offered at high schools. Courses are available in several subject areas. Participation in AP courses gives scholars an excellent preparation for college and university studies. Successful completion of the course and receipt of a qualifying score on the National AP exam will result in college credit or even advance course at many colleges and universities.

### **Dual Enrollment**

High school scholars who meet program requirements may concurrently enroll in courses that are creditable toward a post-secondary certificate, Associates degree, or Bachelor’s degree at Indian River State College, Doral College and state universities that have entered into an articulation agreement with Saint Lucie County and/or Somerset College Preparatory Academy.

Scholars must meet the following requirements:

- Academic courses-Earn a minimum 3.0 unweighted grade point average prior to enrollment
- Obtain at least 4 high school credits
- Obtain minimum ACT, PERT, or SAT placement scores prior to enrollment  
May substitute the appropriate scores from a state-approved standardized test (ex. Enhanced ACT or SAT Reentered) to qualify for specific college credit dual enrollment courses.
- Obtain approval from the high school principal, guidance counselor and parent
- Select courses from the approved list
- Satisfy any required prerequisites
- Maintain a 3.0 GPA in high school coursework in order to continue in the program.
- Maintains A’s & B’s on **both** sides of campus
- Conform to all School Board and post-secondary institution policies and procedures

NOTE: Most three credit hour dual enrollment courses equate to one-half (.5) high school credit, but some three and four credit hour dual enrollment courses equate to one (1.0) high school credit. See your counselor for a listing.

### **Early Admissions Program**

Early admission is another form of dual enrollment through which eligible scholars enroll in a college on a full-time basis during the last year of high school. Both high school and college credit will be awarded when attending colleges where an articulation agreement is in force. Early admission may take place at an accredited post-secondary institution where no agreement exists.

Scholars must meet the following requirements:

- Must be entering the last year of high school based upon declared graduation date prior to enrollment
- Must complete all graduation requirements with the exception of those requirements that can be met in the last year of high school prior to enrollment in early admission
- Earn a minimum 3.0 unweighted grade point average prior to enrollment
- Must be accepted by a post-secondary institution authorized by Florida law or accredited
- Obtain approval from the high school principal, guidance counselor and parent
- Select appropriate courses to satisfy graduation requirements.
- Conform to all School Board and post-secondary institution policies and procedures

### **Florida Virtual School**

Scholars are eligible to enroll in Florida Virtual School. The courses offered are instructor-facilitated and available throughout the state. Courses are based upon the same criteria as those taught in the standard high school program and, therefore, generate the same credit for scholars. Scholars may obtain more information about any of these opportunities for acceleration and recovery from their school counselors. Additional information on Florida Virtual School can be found at <http://www.flvs.net>

### **Somerset Virtual Academy**

The mission of Somerset Virtual Academy (SVA) is to provide virtual learning content and services to Academica schools. SVA is committed to fostering the development of self-directed and responsible 21st century life-long learners through the thoughtful use of interactive, media-rich educational opportunities in flexible, scholar-centered, virtual learning environments. For registration information please contact your child's guidance counselor.

## **Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program**

Florida Statutes 1009.53 - 1009.538

State Board of Education Rules 6A-20.028

### **Program Description**

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program establishes three lottery-funded scholarships to reward Florida high school graduates for high academic achievement. The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is comprised of the following three awards:

- Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award including Academic Top Scholars (ATS) award
- Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award

### **Academic Requirements for Initial Eligibility**

**NOTE: These requirements are subject to change with each legislative session.**

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program consists of three award levels:

- Florida Academic Scholars (FAS)
- Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS)
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV)

Each award level has its own academic requirements, award amounts and funding length. A scholar may receive funding for only one award; the highest award earned will be selected. In addition to meeting academic requirements, scholars must also meet the general eligibility requirements for receipt of state aid.

The basic academic requirements for each Bright Futures award level include:

\*16 credits in specific core courses:

- Math
- English
- Natural Sciences
- Social Science
- World Language (FAS/FMS only)
- Physical Education (GSV only)
- Fine and Performing Arts (GSV only)
- Achieving the required Grade Point Average (GPA) for the desired award level
- **NEW** - Achieving the required SAT, ACT or PERT test scores for the desired award level

As the academic requirements vary somewhat between award levels, be sure to read the page that provides specific information regarding the award level you wish to earn. Scholarship criteria are subject to annual legislative review; this website is updated as program changes are implemented. Meet with your high school guidance counselor to discuss your progress toward meeting the initial eligibility requirements.

For detailed description of individual awards refer to Complete Bright Futures Eligibility at:

Refer to Complete Bright Futures Eligibility Criteria at  
<http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/>

### Initial Eligibility Requirements to Receive Funding

- Be a Florida resident and a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen. A scholar's residency and citizenship status are determined by the postsecondary institution. Questions regarding such status should be directed to the financial aid office or admissions office of the institution the scholar plans to attend.
- Not owe a repayment or be in default under any state or federal grant, loan, or scholarship program unless satisfactory arrangements to repay have been made.
- Meet specific coursework and minimum grade point average (GPA) and test score requirements which are outlined on the Office of Scholar Financial Assistance (OSFA) website [www.FloridaScholarFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/acadrequire.htm](http://www.FloridaScholarFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/acadrequire.htm).
- ATS - The Academic Top Scholars award, announced by the Florida Department of Education before the end of the fall term after all term one disbursements are reported, is awarded to the Florida Academic Scholar with the highest academic ranking in each county (based on the product of multiplying the Bright Futures GPA and the highest qualifying SAT/ACT test score). The recipient receives a cost per credit hour award established by the Florida Legislature in the General Appropriations Act in addition to the Florida Academic Scholars award. For current year award amounts visit: [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm).
- **NEW** - **Annually** complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Scholar Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA does not have to indicate financial need; however, must be complete and processed error free prior to a scholar's first disbursement of the academic year. Visit the website at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) for online processing.

### Applying for an Award

For Initial Eligibility the scholar will:

- Submit a fully completed error free [Initial Scholar Florida Financial Aid Application](#) during the last year in high school (after December 1 and prior to graduation) available online at [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org) (select **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**, then **Apply Here**). The application gives the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) permission to evaluate the scholar's high school transcript and standardized test scores for eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship and other state scholarships and grants.
- **NEW** - **Mid-year graduates may submit a fully completed error free Initial Scholar Florida Financial Aid Application by August 31 prior to high school graduation.**
- **Apply during the last year in high school, before graduation, or forfeit all future eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship.**

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERED

Below is a list of State of Florida Grant and Scholarship Programs administered by the Office of Scholar Financial Assistance. Each program name will link you to a program description that includes eligibility requirements, application procedures, award amounts, and renewal requirements.

[Access to Better Learning and Education Grant Program](#)

[Cost of Attendance and Adult Norm-Referenced Disability Testing](#)

[First Generation Matching Grant Program](#)

[Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program](#)

[Florida Fund for Minority Instructors Program](#)

[Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program](#)

[Florida Resident Access Grant Program](#)

[Florida Scholar Assistance Grant Program](#)

[Florida Work Experience Program](#)

[José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant Fund](#)

[Mary McLeod Bethune Scholarship Program](#)

[Rosewood Family Scholarship Program](#)

[Scholarships for Children & Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans & Servicemembers](#)

### **College Admissions Tests**

Most colleges and universities require a college admissions test score as a part of the application process. The ACT and the SAT tests are administered several times each school year.

Registration may be done by applying online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

The SAT II subject area tests are required by many private universities and highly selective colleges although many do accept the ACT sub- scores in lieu of SAT II tests. It is recommended that the appropriate SAT II test be taken immediately upon completion of the 2nd year of a foreign language or other rigorous course.

That is the ideal time to demonstrate your knowledge in that particular subject area. Some universities, including some within the Florida state university system, may use an eligible SAT II foreign language test score to replace a required college course. Check the college web-site or college catalog for further information.

#### Florida State University System Course Requirements for Admission

English	4
Mathematics	4
Natural Science	3
Social Science	3
Foreign Language	2
Electives	2
TOTAL	18 Credits

Fee waivers are available to students who receive Free or Reduced Lunch (see guidance)



## **Graduation**

\*\*\*\*\*SEE SENIOR HANDBOOK AT THE END OF THE STUDENT HANDBOOK\*\*\*\*\*

## **Honors for graduates**

*\*To be considered for these Honors, a student must have attended SCPA since the first day of 9<sup>th</sup> grade*

### **Valedictorian**

- The scholar with the highest cumulative weighted G.P.A. from the graduating class. \*

### **Salutatorian**

- The scholar with the 2nd highest cumulative weighted G.P.A. of the graduating class.\*

\* If a tie were to occur for either graduating distinction, the tie breaker will be the sum of volunteer hours.

## **SCPA Cords**

Description: Maroon/ Gold

Requirements:

- 4 Science Credits
- 4 Math Credits
- 4 English Credits
- 1 World History Credit
- 1 US History Credit
- .5 Economic/ .5 Government Credit
- 2 Foreign Language Credits
- 1 Online Course
- 8 Elective Credits
- 1 Physical Education Credit
- 1 Performing Art Credit

## **Scholar Designation Cord**

Description: Teal

Requirements:

- Earn 1 credit in Algebra II
- Pass the Geometry EOC
- Earn 1 credit in statistics or an equally rigorous mathematics course
- Pass the Biology I EOC
- Earn 1 credit in chemistry or physics
- Earn 1 credit in a course equally rigorous to chemistry or physics
- Pass the U.S. History EOC
- Earn 2 credits in the same world language
- Earn at least 1 credit in AP, IB, AICE or a dual enrollment course

**National Honor Society**

Description: Blue & Gold, Requirements: Must be a current member

**Science National Honor Society**

Description: Green/Purple/Gold, Requirements: Must be a current member

**Talented 20 Cord**

Description: Teal and white, Requirements: Be the top 20% of your class

**High Honors Cord**

Description: Gold, Requirements: Weighted GPA of 4.0+

**Honors Cord**

Description: Silver, Requirements: Weighted GPA of 3.5- 3.9

**Volunteer Cord**

Description: White, Requirements: 250 volunteer hours or more

**SGA Cord**

Description: Maroon, Requirements: Serve as elected official for one school year

**Volleyball Cord**

Description: Purple, Requirements: Play one full season

**Soccer Cord**

Description: Green, Requirements: Play one full season

**Cheer Cord**

Description: Red/ Black, Requirements: Play one full season

**Basketball Cord**

Description: Red, Requirements: Play one full season

## **Somerset College Preparatory Academy House System**

To create a more uniform school culture, Somerset College Preparatory Academy has decided to move to the House System. This system is based on the house system commonly employed by many British Schools, but it has been popularized due to its use in the *Harry Potter* series. Students in grades 6-12 will be assigned a house, meaning that students of each grade level at SCPA will be in the same group. The hope is that grouping students across grade levels, will foster a broader sense of community and emphasize an idea of collective success, as opposed to individuality.

Students are capable of earning points or losing points based on their grades, behavior, house-based events, and other activities. A complete list will be provided below.

The school finds itself, much like other middle-high campuses, in the endless struggle or “grade warfare,” where upperclassmen blame underclassmen or middle school students and vice versa. A solution is to introduce the house system. If students were a part of a group that included all grades, then these divisions should cease because it is no longer “that stupid 6th grader,” but “Hey, leave MY 6th grader alone.”

**Sorting into the House System**

All students will be randomly sorted into a house as an incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grader, or when they enter the school. In the event that a student leaves the school and returns his/her house will remain.

**House Sponsors**

There will be two House Sponsors of each individual house. The Head Sponsor will be an employee at the school for 3 or more years (AT LEAST going into the third year). The Head Sponsor is a perennial position; he/she is not changed on a yearly basis unless there is an extenuating circumstance or he/she resign his/her spot in the house system.

The Assistant Sponsor will be selected for the first year of implementation; then, this position is filled based on a yearly election from teachers within the house. First year teachers are not allowed to hold an office.

### House Meetings

House meetings will be scheduled intermittently throughout the school year. These meetings can/should be a reflection of house and school concerns, reminders, etc. The goal is that these meetings will help foster a sense of community, not only within the house, but within the school as a whole.

### House Games

Multiple times a year, students will compete in House Games. Each house game should entail a number of events that represent the number of qualifying characteristics of the school. These events will entail things like athletic house competitions, academic competitions, spirit competitions, etc. Houses will be awarded points for finishing first, second, or third in each event's standings.

### House Points System

*\*Additional points can be awarded/removed per admin discretion.*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Points:</i>
Detentions per student per detention	-2
Saturday Detentions per student	-5
Suspensions per student per suspension	-10
Unexcused Tardy(s) per tardy per student	-1
Perfect Attendance per quarter	+10
Perfect Attendance per year	+20
No Discipline per year per student	+20
Academic Societies per student	+15
Athletic Event Support per student	+1
School Event Support per student	+1
Penny Wars	+% score
Canned Food Drive	+% cans
Volunteer Hours	+1 per 10 (0.1)
Saturday Preps	+1
Tutoring Volunteers	+1
4.0+ GPA per quarter per student	+4
3.5+ GPA per quarter per student	+3
3.0+ GPA per quarter per student	+2
2.0- GPA per quarter per student	-1
FSA/EOC score 5 per student per test	+3
FSA/EOC score 4 per student per test	+2
FSA/EOC score 3 per student per test	+1
Dual Enrollment per student	+10/-10
House Games Competitions	TBD for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3 <sup>rd</sup> place per event

# Class of 2024

## Somerset College Preparatory Academy

### Senior Handbook

Principal.	.	.	.	.	.	.	Erika Rains
Interim Assistant Principal	.	.	.	.	.	.	Ovidio Rivera, Jr.

#### **Somerset College Preparatory Academy**

725 NW California Blvd.

Port St. Lucie, Florida 34986

Phone: (772) 343-7028

Fax: (772) 343- 7029

#### **Saint Lucie County School Board**

9461 Brandywine Ln

Pt St Lucie, FL 34986

(772) 429- 3600

Superintendent

Dr Jonathan Prince

# Welcome Class of 2024

Somerset College Preparatory Academy family extends a warm welcome to each of you, as you are working to complete the final year of your high school career. We want you to experience a successful year. We are very excited to assist with making this a memorable time, as many exciting activities are being planned for you. This handbook is provided to keep you up to date with events, deadlines, and pending fees.

Class of 2024 is only our 9th graduation class. It is important that we build strong relationships and memories by participating in these planned activities. As school leaders, we expect you to set an example, stay motivated and most of all have a memorable final year filled with fun school spirited activities.

Please know that as your class sponsors, we are here to help you. Feel free to stop by (at an appropriate time), email or leave a note for any of us if you are in need of assistance. We are here for you!

Class of 2023 Contact Info:

Ms. Erika Rains – [Rains.Erika@somersetcollegeprep.org](mailto:Rains.Erika@somersetcollegeprep.org)

Mrs. Jenifer Silva - [Silva.Jenifer@somersetcollegeprep.org](mailto:Silva.Jenifer@somersetcollegeprep.org)

## Senior Fees

Senior fees cover everything *except* activity week, Grad Bash, Prom and yearbook which can be purchased separately.

**Senior fees for the class of 2024 are \$175.00 per student.**

The payment for senior fees will be collected by Mrs. Jenifer Silva, and all checks should be made payable to Somerset College Preparatory Academy. **The fees are due by DATE TBA.**

### **Refund Policy**

*If you have paid your graduation fees and do not graduate in 2024, but you return to Somerset College Preparatory Academy in the fall of 2025 as a 2nd year senior, the senior fee for the Class of 2024 will be waived.*

*If you do not graduate in 2024 and do not return to Somerset College Preparatory Academy, no refund will be issued.*

## Graduation Cap and Gown

Representatives from Jostens will be at Somerset College Preparatory Academy, on a date to be announced, for a mandatory senior presentation on caps, gowns, victory hood, and class of 2024 tassels. The ordering of your cap and gown for graduation will be taken by Jostens. You must complete an order form for the cap and gown when Jostens representatives are on campus during the announced date. **Cap and Gown cost is included in senior fee.** Jostens representatives will be on campus taking graduation material orders on date to be announced.

## Graduation Announcements

The Jostens representatives will present the Somerset College Prep Class of 2024 graduation announcements and other graduation memorabilia. These dates will be later announced. The cost of announcements varies depending upon the item(s) you choose to purchase and the quantity. A deposit for your announcement order will need to be paid when you place your order. The amount of the required deposit will be given to you in the meeting with Jostens. If you pay by check, **MAKE THE CHECK PAYABLE TO JOSTENS.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Parents are encouraged to meet with Jostens. Do not miss this opportunity to order all the items you may need to celebrate your graduation\*\*\*\*\***

## PICKING UP YOUR CAP AND GOWN FOR GRADUATION

**Your cap and gown may be picked up approximately a week prior to graduation.**

All seniors **may** receive up to 8 (eight) tickets to the graduation ceremony. This number is determined by the space available. Due to the planned seating arrangement for graduation and because of traffic and security considerations, there is a seating capacity for the graduation ceremony that will be enforced.

Graduates may request extra tickets during the second week in April. Every attempt will be made to give you additional tickets. However, there is NO GUARANTEE that you will receive the total number of tickets you request. The request form for additional tickets will be located in the main office.

**Before your cap and gown can be issued to you, all obligations... books, fines, parking fines, athletics, activity money, and any other outstanding obligation... must be cleared.**

It is not wise to wait until the last minute to take care of these important matters.

# 2024 Graduation

Seniors, you and your Parent/Guardian must read and sign the SCPA Graduation Contract on the last page of this handbook in order to participate in the graduation ceremony.

To graduate in 2024, you are REQUIRED to attend the rehearsal that will guide you through the Graduation Ceremony activities. Rehearsal information will be announced at a later date.

IF YOU WANT TO WALK FOR GRADUATION, YOU MUST ATTEND REHEARSAL.

## Required Dress Code for Graduation

Ladies: Dresses or skirts/blouses: do not let your dress show below the hem of your gown  
Dress shoes are mandatory. Thong type shoes (any type of flip flop) are not allowed.  
This is a safety issue for your protection as you are going up and down the stairs of a stage.

Gentlemen: Dress pants must be worn. You must wear dress shoes. No tennis shoes or sandals may be worn.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTENDING SENIOR ACTIVITIES

Seniors must:

1. HAVE A GOOD ATTENDANCE RECORD
  - a. Excessive absences may result in your NOT being allowed to participate in Senior Activities. No more than 10 (ten) unexcused absences per year.
  - b. Special circumstances will be addressed and considered on an individual basis.
  - c. Remember that all notes for absences need to be turned in to the attendance office within 3 days. The note should include first and last name.
2. BE A SENIOR OF RECORD (20 or more COMPLETED credits)

School records must verify you are classified as a senior, and will graduate in May 2019. You must have a minimum GPA of 2.0.
3. HAVE A GOOD DISCIPLINE RECORD
4. TURN IN CORRECTLY COMPLETED and SIGNED PERMISSION FORMS BY THE SPECIFIED DATE

All financial obligations must be paid in full to participate in all senior activities.

At SCPA it is expected that ALL students will be on their best behavior at all senior activities. **Seniors who do not follow the rules at any of the senior activities will NOT be permitted to attend other senior functions.** You may also be subject to a discipline referral, along with disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from walking in graduation ceremony.

## SENIOR PINNING

The Senior Pinning will be held at the Senior Banquet on **DATE TBA** at 6:00pm.  
Ticket costs per person will be announced at a later date.

## SENIOR ACTIVITIES WEEK

See separate handout.

## Graduation Cords

### SCPA Cord: Maroon/Gold

Requirements: 4 Science Credits	.5 Economics / .5 Government Credit
4 Math Credits	2 Foreign Language Credits
4 English Credits	1 Physical Education Credit
1 US History Credit	1 Performing Arts Credit
1 World History Credit	1 Online Credit
8 Elective Credits	

### Scholar Designation Cord: Teal

Requirements: Earn 1 Credit in Algebra II  
Earn 1 Credit in Statistics or an Equally Rigorous Mathematics Course  
Earn 1 Credit in Chemistry or Physics  
Earn 1 Credit in a course Equally Rigorous to Chemistry or Physics  
Earn 2 credits in the same World Language  
Earn at least 1 credit in AP, IB, AICE or Dual Enrollment course  
Pass the Geometry EOC exam  
Pass the Biology 1 EOC exam  
Pass the US History EOC exam

### National Honor Society: Blue/Gold

Must be a current member

### Science National Honor Society: Green/Purple/Gold

Must be a current member

### High Honors Cord: Gold

Weighted GPA of 4.0 or above

### Honors Cord: Silver

Weighted GPA of 3.5 - 3.9

### Talented 20 Cord: Teal/White

Be in the Top 20% of your class

### Volunteer Cord: White

Have 250 Documented Volunteer Hours



<b>SGA Cord: Maroon</b>	Served as an elected official for at least one full school year
<b>Volleyball Cord: Purple</b>	Participated for at least one full season
<b>Basketball Cord: Red</b>	Participated for at least one full season
<b>Soccer Cord: Green</b>	Participated for at least one full season
<b>Cheer Cord: Red/Black</b>	Participated for at least one full season

## Valedictorian and Salutatorian

To be selected as *Valedictorian*, you must have the highest weighted GPA **AND** have been an SCPA student continuously since the first day of 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

To be selected as *Salutatorian*, you must have the second highest weighted GPA **AND** have been an SCPA student continuously since the first day of 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

# Somerset College Preparatory Academy Graduation Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of senior). Being a senior of the class of 2024 at SCPA and planning to participate in the Graduation Ceremony to be conducted on **DATE TBA**, do agree to the following:

I WILL ATTEND the Graduation Rehearsal. I WILL STAY FOR THE ENTIRE REHEARSAL.

I WILL FOLLOW all guidelines concerning behavior and dress code.

I WILL NOT DISRUPT the Graduation Ceremony by leaving my seat at inappropriate times.

I WILL ARRIVE ON TIME to graduation rehearsal and also at the designated time for the Graduation Ceremony.

I WILL NOT LEAVE the Graduation Ceremony until the Recessional is complete and I have received my diploma.

I understand and acknowledge that failure to attend Graduation Rehearsal in its entirety may result in my not participating in the ceremony.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, as the parent/guardian of the above listed Senior of the Class of 2024, I have read this Graduation Contract. I understand and acknowledge its contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Parent/Guardian name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian signature

### **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of scholar educational records. Under this law, parents/legal guardians have the right upon request, to inspect, release, and challenge information contained within the scholar's educational records. Without prior consent, only authorized individuals having legitimate educational interest will have access to confidential and other kinds of information contained in those records. This Board approved directive for implementing the provision of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is contained in the document "Scholar Educational Records," and is available through the Division of Scholar Services, Saint Lucie County Public Schools.

FERPA's legal statute citation can be found in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations for Title 34; (20 USC section 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). Educational records include a range of information about a scholar that is maintained in schools in any recorded way, such as handwriting, print, computer media, video or audiotape, film, microfilm, and microfiche. Examples are:

- Date and place of birth, parent(s) and/or guardian addresses, and where parents can be contacted in emergencies;
- Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic specializations and activities, and official letters regarding a scholar's status in school;
- Special education records;
- Disciplinary records;
- Medical and health records that the school creates or collects and maintains;
- Documentation of attendance, schools attended, courses taken, awards conferred, and degrees earned; and,
- Personal information such as a scholar's identification code, social security number, picture, or other information that would make it easy to identify or locate a scholar.

Personal notes made by instructors and other school officials that are not shared with others are not considered educational records. Additionally, law enforcement records created and maintained by a school district law enforcement unit are not education records.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are guaranteed the right, upon request, to inspect and review their children's records and to obtain copies of them under federal and state laws. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are guaranteed a right of "meaningful" access to copies of their children's records. The parent's rights extend to any lawyer, lay person, or advocate whom the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) authorizes to represent him or her. Access must be granted within 30 calendar days from the initial request.