

Somerset Career Academy  
Student Handbook 2024-2025



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Port Saint Lucie, Florida 34986  
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[www.somersetcareeracademy.org](http://www.somersetcareeracademy.org)



## **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 Career Academy Vision**

The vision of SCA is to provide the families in our community a school to workforce solution by developing responsible, self-directed students in a safe and hands-on learning environment.

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

### **Mission**

Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a culture that maximizes student achievement and fosters the development of responsible, self-directed life-long learners in a safe and enriching environment.

### **Beliefs**

S-Set high expectations

O-Objective

M-Meaningful Curriculum

E-Effective

R-Resourceful and Responsible life-long learners

S-Students who achieve proficiency and beyond

E-Evaluate continuously and use data to drive curriculum

T-Teachers 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)

**Non-Voting Officers**

Bernardo Montero, President Suzette Ruiz, Vice-President

**School Based Administration**

Principal: Erika Rains

Asst Administrator: Gina Russo

Dean of Discipline: David Horne

CTE Coordinator Shannon Murphy

School calendar year:

SCA will adhere to the Saint Lucie County School District's calendar.

\*Calendar subject to change according to Saint Lucie County School Board

## Bell Schedule

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

## Early Release Schedule

| Fall                            | Spring                          |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8:30-8:35 Morning announcements | 8:30-8:35 Morning announcements |
| 8:35-9:35 Period 1              | 8:35-9:35 Period 5              |
| 9:35-9:40 Transition            | 9:35-9:40 Transition            |
| 9:40-10:40 Period 2             | 9:40-10:40 Period 6             |
| 10:40-11:30 Lunch               | 10:40-11:30 Lunch               |
| 11:30-12:30 Period 3            | 11:30-12:30 Period 7            |
| 12:30-12:35 Transition          | 12:30-12:35 Transition          |
| 12:35-1:35 Period 4             | 12:35-1:35 Period 8             |
| 1:35-1:45 Somerset Seminar      | 1:35-1:45 Somerset Seminar      |

\*Scholars are considered tardy if they are not in their seats at **8:30 A.M.** and must report directly to the front office for a tardy slip. Students assigned to a bus will receive a detention for any tardy. Students not assigned to a bus will receive a detention for every 3 period 1/5 tardies and for each tardy to periods 2-4/6-8.

Students assigned to a bus who are tardy due to a school or bus related issue, will receive an excused tardy.

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

## **A Message from Your Principal**

The inaugural year of Somerset Career Academy is especially exciting for me because I have been working to bring this idea to life since 2019. As many of you may know, Career Academy was supposed to open in 2021, but with the onslaught on COVID, best laid plans were laid to rest.

Three years ago Somerset College Prep operated a trades related summer camp to gauge the interest of our students in the trades. We had an electrical and a welding camp and it was a hit! That August, Somerset College Prep made use of a large space on campus and started its first electrical program. In 2023, College Prep started carpentry and early childhood classes. With the success of these programs, administration and the powers that be began to recognize that it was time to move forward with the Career Academy.

The Career Academy will continue to grow on the College Prep campus for the next two year. The goal is to move into our very own facility in August of 2026. Until then, it will take hard work and cooperation by all of our stakeholders to make this Somerset as successful as the rest of the Somersets in our County. I have faith we can make that happen and I'm looking forward to working with you all.

As your principal, I am committed and determined to provide our students with a safe and challenging environment. It is in the spirit of meeting this challenge, that I invite all of our parents to partner with our students, their instructors, guidance counselors and our community in collaborating to help pave the path to the endless new horizons in our school to workforce environment. 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 SCA. If you have any questions or needs, please contact us. We are here to serve you.

Erika Rains, Principal

Somerset Career Academy

## 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 student educational records. Under this law, parents/legal guardians have the right upon request, to inspect, release, and challenge information contained within the student'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 "Student Educational Records," and is available through the Division of Student 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 student 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 student'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 student's identification code, social security number, picture, or other information that would make it easy to identify or locate a student.

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.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In order to participate in any extra-curricular activity a student must attend school at SCA, SAB, or SCPA. Students who are under academic or behavioral probation are not permitted to participate in any extra-curricular activities other than tutoring. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide transportation after the activity.

## DRESS CODE POLICY

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individuals, students and others, and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress during normal school days. SCA reserves the right to interpret these guidelines and/or make changes during the school year. Students are expected to follow these guidelines. Every student in attendance shall wear the school uniform.

A student in violation of the dress code will receive a dress code violation/detention, may be asked to leave and return when in compliance, or may choose to call for appropriate attire and wait in the office until such attire has arrived and student has changed. The student will be marked absent, unexcused. We all desire the students to be in class, but we cannot have a policy that some follow and others do not.

Parents elect to have their children attend SCA with full acknowledgement of the expectations and policies. Purchasing uniforms from SCA designated and approved vendors are a policy requirement. Parents may not purchase an article of clothing and have it embroidered with the SCA logo. This is a copyright infringement.

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring a safe and secure environment, we have implemented a dress code policy designed with your safety in mind and aims to minimize the risk of accidents and injuries.

1. **Closed-Toe Shoes**: To protect your feet from potential hazards, please wear closed-toe shoes at all times. This is particularly important in areas where there is a risk of falling objects or exposure to sharp materials. The construction trades programs require work-boots.
2. **Protective Clothing**: When working with machinery or hazardous materials, please wear the appropriate protective clothing, such as long sleeves, long pants, and gloves. This reduces the risk of skin injuries and exposure to harmful substances.
3. School sanctioned uniform shirt: **100% Cotton T-Shirts**: We require that T-shirts be 100% cotton because cotton is less flammable than synthetic materials. This provides an additional layer of safety, especially in environments where there is a potential fire hazard.
4. **Dickies Pants**: We require the use of Dickies pants (black or khaki) due to their reinforced knees, reinforced seams, stain/fade/wrinkle resistant, and thicker, less flammable material. These features offer enhanced protection against wear and tear as well as potential fire hazards, ensuring your safety while performing physically demanding tasks.

5. **Hair and Accessories**: Long hair should be tied back, and loose accessories (jewelry) should be avoided to prevent entanglement in machinery. This is crucial for preventing serious accidents and ensuring smooth operation.

6. **High-Visibility Attire**: In designated areas, wearing high-visibility clothing is mandatory. This ensures that you are easily seen by others, particularly in environments with heavy equipment or low visibility.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can create a safer learning space for everyone. We appreciate your cooperation and commitment to maintaining a safe environment. If you have any questions or need further clarification on the dress code policy, please do not hesitate to contact administration or your instructors.

#### Allowable:

- School approved shirts from school designated vendor.
- School approved hoodies, jackets or outerwear from school designated vendor.
- Dickies Workpants (black or khaki) <https://www.dickies.com/>
- Work boots with reinforced toes or tennis shoes/sneakers with backs & closed toed, only. Shoes must always be tied.

#### Not Allowable:

Anything in contrary to the above

#### Allowable on designated dress down days:

- Pants or slacks in a black, blue, grey khaki, or tan color.
- Denim jeans (solid color of blue, black or gray denim with no acid wash, logos, markings, or prints)
- Pants worn at the waist at all times
- Shorts, capris or skirts worn at the waist (finger-tip length).
- Club and athletic shirts on designated days only

#### Not Allowable on designated dress down days:

Wearing any of these items will result in a dress code violation (resulting in assigned detentions).

- Any low cut tops, tank tops, crop tops, or tops with thin straps (nothing less than a cap sleeve)
- Pajamas, sweatpants, spandex pants/jeggings, leggings, athletic wear
- Any bottoms with frays, rips, or tears regardless of whether skin can be seen or not
- Crocs or open toed shoes

#### PE Dress Code

PE uniform from school designated vendor only



## EMERGENCIES

Illness: The importance of regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized, but students should not be sent to school when they are ill. If a student 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 students for long periods of time. School personnel must be notified of any student'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 student:

1. Instructors will send the student to the office if the injury is minor.
2. Instructors will notify the office if the student 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 student 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.

## 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 must have a volunteer application on file, with Level Two background check and negative drug test.

Parents chaperoning 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 and Volunteer Application must be signed and submitted prior to any parent chaperoning a field trip. Parent chaperones are required to adhere to these guidelines.

Participating in field trips is a privilege. Students 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, students must have a GPA of 2.0 or higher. The GPA used is the cumulative GPA, which includes all subjects/courses. Any School Suspension can negate attending a field trip.

Parent permission must be given for students 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 in advance of each field trip. Money and permission slips must be turned in according to the instructor's instructions, prior to the field trip or the student will not be permitted to take part in the field trip. The students must wear the instructor-designated uniform on all field trips.

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

Three items are required in order to attend a field trip.

- 1) Field Trip Authorization form and LEE form must be filled out completely and signed and returned by the preset deadline for each field trip.
- 2) Associated fees must be turned in by the preset deadline for each field trip.
- 3) The Authorization for Medical Treatment form is required to be filled out completely and notarized for out of county field trips. This will be completed once at the beginning of each year.

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 student 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

In order to foster its students' academic success, Somerset Career Academy maintains a number of provisions for assisting those students who are deficient in their academic performance. Among these is the policy of limiting student 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 students to participate in Extracurricular Activities they must have a Learning Experience Elsewhere (LEE) slip signed by their teachers that includes their current grade and a comment section. This LEE slip must be signed for each activity. (Example: If the volleyball team has 3 matches in 1 month, students on the volleyball team would need to get the permission slip signed by every teacher, every time, in order to participate.)

Students are ineligible who, at the distribution of grade reports, have a D or F in any course. Students 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. Students on behavioral or academic probation are ineligible.

#### ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Somerset Career Academy encourages each of its students to actively participate in the learning process. It is the school's expectation that students, 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 student's years at SCA.

The academically honest student:

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

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

Cheating - Student 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 student on any graded assignment
- Copying another's test answers with or without his/her permission
- Possessing "cheat notes"
- Demonstrating an intent to cheat
- Providing answers for any assignment
- Utilizing artificial intelligence and submitting the work as one's own.
- Collaboration that results in identical responses to a product that should be individualized

Students 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 student 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. Students 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 Career Academy, any violation of it is considered a serious offense. Such offenses are cumulative. A student remains responsible for all violations of academic honesty committed at any time during their SCA career.

#### First time violators:

- 0% on the work in question with NO opportunity to make up
- Automatic three (3) Saturday Detentions from 9:30-12:30 PM
- Automatic probation
- Parent Notification

#### Second time violators:

- All of the above and a three day suspension (minimum) and possible dismissal from SCA

### BATHROOM POLICIES

All students are required to buy a planner for the school year, and a number of these policies will be used in conjunction with the student planner. As the planner only has a limited number of bathroom "slots" in it,

the goal is to discourage students from using the bathroom every period, and to make better use of passing time between classes.

- Students must have their student planner in order to leave class to use the bathroom.
- The student planner must have the student's name written in sharpie on the planner in order to use it as a bathroom pass.
- Students must fill out time and destination in their planner, and have a teacher sign off on it before they can leave the classroom.
- Students 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, students may not use the restroom after 3:00PM.
- If a student has completely used all of their bathroom passes in the first or second nine weeks it may result in a parent teacher conference to address any possible issues.
- If a student has filled all of their "bathroom pass" slots, they will be required to purchase a new student planner.
- If a student 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 their web pages regarding class assignments, projects and homework.

An interactive, online tool for monitoring student grades, SKYWARD Parent Portal, will be available for all students and parents. Progress reports and/or report cards will be uploaded/posted on Skyward at the beginning and mid point of each month. Student 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 student, 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 SCA 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.

The school communicates through morning announcements, shown in the first class of the day, daily. Morning announcements are posted on the main page of the school's website for viewing by parents and by students who miss or don't have a scheduled first period class. The school posts all pertinent information on the school's official Facebook page and sends out all posts/reminders via text blast. The school may also send reminders and information to parents through the school's Skyward messaging system. The school will also communicate information to students through the school based email system.

Progress reports will be posted twice quarterly, and report cards will be posted once each quarter, based on the district calendar.

### "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 students 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 student's illness or a written note stating an emergency, which prevented homework from being done. If a student 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.

Grades will be updated in Skyward on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and report cards will be posted at the end of each 9 weeks.

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 student.\*\*

## INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS, EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

Books, materials and tools 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/tools, based upon replacement costs.

Students 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 student 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.

**\*\*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 students by employees of SCA 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 office personnel. A parent may also choose to come to school and administer medication.

## PARENT TEACHER STUDENT 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 students, 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 STUDENT RETURNS TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE, A NOTE MUST BE BROUGHT INTO THE MAIN OFFICE FROM HOME.

\*DOCUMENTATION FOR EXCUSED ABSENCES MUST BE FILED WITH THE OFFICE WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS OF THE ABSENCE OR THE ABSENCE IS CONSIDERED 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 student'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 students' 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. Students 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 student out after 3:15 PM.

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

1. Failure to 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 students missing school for vacation purposes, any student 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 student. This will be considered part of our Family Leave Policy. Students 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 for 170 out of the 180 days the school is in session. Therefore, after 5 unexcused absences the parents or guardians and the student may be required to meet with an attendance board (made up of school personnel). The board will then monitor the student's future attendance and the student may be considered for retention or possible dismissal from the program.



## Make Up Work – Excused Absences

Students are expected to make up all work missed during excused absences. The student must contact the instructor on the first day back in school in order to make arrangements to make up the work. Students 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 student's absence, must be made up on the day the student returns to school. Instructors have the prerogative to require a student on school or administrative leave to complete work assigned SAMPLE in advance of the leave.

## Make Up Work – Unexcused Absences

It is up to individual instructors as to whether they will accept missing work due to unexcused absences. If an instructor chooses to accept make-up work, the student 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 student data card or birth certificate. Friends and strangers will be denied access to a student 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.**

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Somerset Career Academy is a career technical school. The Academy holds its students accountable for the highest level of student conduct. We expect our students to treat others with respect and courtesy. The goal of the Code of Conduct is to assist students in developing self-discipline, character and responsibility for our school, the larger community, family and fellow students. The primary goal of the code of conduct is to maintain a safe environment where students can focus on their learning and hands-on training without distractions or concerns for their well-being. By adhering to these guidelines, we can prevent accidents, foster a positive atmosphere, and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

We want to ensure that our vocational educational environment is a safe, respectful, and productive place for everyone. To achieve this, we have established a code of conduct that outlines the expectations and responsibilities of all students.

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 student's conduct determines, to a great extent, the full development of his/her potential for learning and the development of positive relationships.

## LUNCH CONDUCT

Students will proceed through the lunch line in an orderly fashion, “first come, first served.” Students may not hold a place in line for other students. Students may not have headphones/earbuds on/in ears in the lunch line. Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves by placing their trash in the proper receptacles and helping to maintain a clean eating environment. Students 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

Each teacher at SCA has a cell phone pocket chart in the front of the classrooms. Students may have their phones turned off and in the pocket chart or turned off in their bookbags. Students may NOT have their phones on their person in class, in any way, shape or form.

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

Second Offense: Teacher will take the electronic device from the student. The device is given to the main office, and the student can get the device and a detention back from administration at the end of the school day, with a detention, and parent notification.

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

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

Students may use their devices at lunch.

A student’s personal laptop computer may be used in class only with the instructor’s permission.

## **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.

## Discipline Matrix

Anything not covered herein defaults to the Sponsor's Matrix

| Expectation                                                                                                                                               | Rules                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Consequences                            | By whom |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------|
| SCA students will contribute to keeping the campus safe for everyone.                                                                                     | No student 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   |
| SCA students are expected to resolve conflicts peacefully, which means reporting potential problems to instructors, counselors, staff, or administration. | No student is permitted to threaten to cause or 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   |

|                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                  |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| SCA students respect themselves, other students, and all staff at all times.              | <p>THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ALLOWED</p> <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 |
| SCA is a drug, alcohol, vape and tobacco free learning environment.                       | No student shall possess, sell, furnish, purchase, 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 |
| SCA students are responsible citizens who respect their fellow students and their school. | <p>THEFT, ROBBERY, EXTORTION, GRAFFITI, VANDALISM, AND PROPERTY DAMAGE ARE NOT ALLOWED:</p> <p>Students are not allowed to steal, attempt to steal, take or damage property of another or any SCA property or equipment.</p>                                                                                       | Up to and including immediate dismissal- Contact Law Enforcement | Admin |

|                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                     |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| SCA students will come to school dressed according to the SCA uniform policy in all aspects. | Students will wear approved SCA uniforms purchased from the designated SCA vendor, with SCA logo.                                       | Parent Phone Call and<br>Unexcused absence until issue is rectified:<br>10 per year can result in retention                                                         | Admin |
| SCA students will attend all their classes.                                                  | Students may not leave campus without written permission and proper identification from person picking up the student                   | Unexcused absence: 10 per year can result in retention or dismissal                                                                                                 | Admin |
| SCA students are expected to be in class on time.                                            | All students are expected to be in class on time. Entering the classroom late disrupts the educational process as per SCA tardy policy. | 3 morning tardies for non-bus riders= 1 detention.<br>1 transitional tardy or morning tardy for bus-riders= 1 detention.<br><br>3 detentions= 1 Saturday detention. | Admin |

“Up to” can include the following:  
ASD After school detention

OSS Out of school suspension  
SS Saturday school

ISS In school suspension  
Lunch Detention/Work Detail

Detentions/Suspensions

1. Detentions are held after school for one hour. Students will be given notice of detention. Detention must be served when scheduled. Students 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 student illness or a doctor’s appointment. Written proof of a doctor’s appointment will be required upon the students return to school. If such proof is not provided upon the students’ return, they will be considered to have skipped the detention. Detention takes precedence over any other after school activity or sport.
2. Students 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.
3. Students who fail to attend Saturday Detention will be suspended for two days, progressively.

4. Detentions not served in one school year may be carried over to the next school year at the discretion of Administration.
5. Students/Parents will be notified of receipt of detentions.
6. An excessive amount of detentions may cause a student to be liable for dismissal from SCA or probation upon recommendation of the Administrative Team. Only the Principal may ask a student to withdraw from the Academy (mandatory withdrawal). Once a student is withdrawn, their re-admittance in the future will be at the discretion of the Principal, based on space availability.

\*Under ordinary circumstances, one or more sanctions may be appropriate. However, a student may be placed on probation for all or part of one school year due to a previous school year's infractions. Students who have been suspended two or more times in a school year may be placed on behavioral probation for the first quarter of the following year. Suspensions will be recorded in the student'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 instructor's department head
3. Meet with the other staff personnel, as applicable: dean of discipline, guidance counselor, ESE coordinator, etc.
4. Meet with the Vice Principal
5. Meet with the Principal

If a parent is unsatisfied with the Level One Conflict Resolution, the parent may move on to:

#### 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 instructor's department head
3. Meet with the other staff personnel, as applicable: dean of discipline, guidance counselor, ESE coordinator, etc.
4. Meet with the Vice Principal
5. Meet with the Principal
6. Meet with Board's designated Parent Liaison for conflict resolution

7. Appear before the Board of Directors for a final appeal.

### RIGHT of SCA Student 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 students who fail to meet the SCA Board established policies for continued enrollment include:

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

### Dismissal Procedures

1. Letter to parent regarding intent to dismiss and/or an in person meeting with parent.
2. Final declaration of dismissal or option of withdrawal.
3. Transfer records to home-zoned school.

### 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 required to log the volunteer hours with the front office staff. Parents are required 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 required 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 SCA.

Section 1002.33(10)(e)5.,F.S., states that a “charter school may limit the enrollment process only to target the following student populations: ...students 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.

- PTSO duties
- School Advisory Committee (SAC) duties
- Donations at a rate of 1 hour per \$10 spent (with receipt)
- General meetings, Board meetings, Booster meetings, Choir meetings, Band meetings, etc
- Board member
- Working in the classroom
- Helping with classroom items at home (decodable books, book orders, etc.)
- Copying
- Room parent duties
- Orientation
- 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 events/activities
- Assisting w fundraising events

## SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION

Somerset Career 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.

## STUDENT GIFTS

Please DO NOT send or bring gifts such as balloons, flowers, etc., to students. 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, the student will be issued a detention, and the delivery will be held in the office until the end of the day.

## STUDENT RIGHTS

Students 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 student other than their own child are requested to speak to the Administration. At no time may parents approach the student directly.

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

Dismissal offenses include but are not limited to the following:

1. Fighting or other dangerous and/or disruptive behavior.



2. Smoking on school grounds or possession of tobacco or drug products/paraphernalia (to include vape pens).
3. Being under the influence or possession of alcoholic beverages or drugs 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 students, 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 SCA.

## 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 students, 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 students.

## Student Volunteer Service Program

All students are required to complete a minimum of twenty-five (20) documented hours of volunteer service in order to graduate. All Volunteer Service hours must be documented on the appropriate Volunteer log and turned into the guidance department. Students are required to keep records of their log sheets. Please contact the Guidance department for further information.

## Guidance Department:

The Somerset Career Academy Guidance Department works with students, 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 student advocate. Advisors assist with personal, academic, social and post-secondary concerns that can aide the student 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 student is emotionally distressed, a counselor is always available for support. Classroom activities and presentations are developed throughout the year to assist students with their personal, social, career, and educational development.

## WHAT DOES YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISOR DO FOR STUDENTS?

- Administers and assists with standardized testing.
- Assists with conflict resolution.
- Conducts individual and group counseling.
- Carries out schedule and class changes.
- Participates in Parent/Instructor conferences.
- Assists in the process of transitioning from childhood to adolescence.

- Facilitates the development of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) and Career technical Portfolio (CPP) as needed.
- Assists with career, personal/social, and academic development.
- Connects students with professionals in the field to help with internship opportunities and networking
- Assist in job applications and interview skills.
- Assist in dual enrollment registration, as needed.

### SKYWARD

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.somersetcareeracademy.org](http://www.somersetcareeracademy.org) . Parents and students 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.

### **Pupil Placement and Progression and Graduation Information**

#### Anything not covered herein defaults to the Sponsor's Plan

Grade level placement will be done as dictated by St. Lucie County Schools based on state policies and requirements set by state statutes.

- Course placement: The school will use the District's student progression plan as it relates to placement. In addition, student course placement will be determined by courses required for student progression, student's performance in classes the previous year, state assessments and by the Florida Statutes. Recommended course break down can be seen in "High School Graduation and Diploma Options" chart. SCA will distribute a course selection sheet where students will be permitted to select the courses they wish to take for the following school year. Course selection sheets will be reviewed by the guidance department to ensure that the student has selected the appropriate classes for their career goal, academic ability and interests. All high school students must be enrolled in a CTE course/program.
- Placement for SWD: The information contained in the IEP for each student will form the basis for the placement decision for any student transferring into the school. Placement decisions will be made based on each student's abilities and needs. The general education setting will be the first consideration when determining placement for SWD. The school will review and may revise the current IEP as necessary.
- Placement for ELLs: For a student identified as English Language Learner (ELL) and transferring from a school in another country, placement will comply with appropriate procedures for students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs found in the ESOL District ELL Plan. Students

identified as ELL will be placed in two ESOL courses as applicable to the grade level and language proficiency: a Language Arts content course scheduled by grade level: (English through ESOL course) and a Language proficiency course scheduled by English Proficiency Level: Developmental Language Arts Through ESOL (Level 1-4). Instructional time for ELLs will equal the time non-ELLs are required to participate in the regular English Language Arts/reading program.

The school will use the District's student progression plan as it applies to student grade level promotion.

Somerset Career Academy Port. St. Lucie will adhere to the pupil placement and promotion standards set by St. Lucie County Public Schools in accordance with Florida statutory requirements and FLDOE guidelines and graduation requirements.

To satisfy graduation requirements, students must earn credits in all required core coursework and required electives, and maintain an unweighted grade point average of 2.0 or higher. Somerset Career Academy will use the following grade forgiveness policy:

- For middle grades students taking high school courses, forgiveness for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D", "F", or "I" with a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course.
- For high school students, forgiveness for required courses shall be limited to replacing a grade of "D", "F", or "I" with a grade of "C" or higher, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. The Forgiveness Rule shall be applied only one time per course. For a student whose cumulative Grade Point Average is below a 2.5, courses previously passed with a grade of "D" (1.0) may be retaken through an extended learning opportunity or through co-enrollment in order to maintain continuous progress toward graduation.
- In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade shall be used in the calculation of the student's GPA; however, all forgiven courses and grades must be included on a student's transcript as an accurate reflection of a student's record of achievement.

The School will require students to complete all necessary FLDOE requirements to earn a chosen high school diploma type with the completion of the additional courses for industry certification.

\*ESE Students: The IEP team may waive the FSA as a requirement for graduation with a standard high school diploma for students with disabilities whose abilities cannot accurately be measured by the statewide assessment test.

Per Section 1003.428, Florida Statutes, students eligible for consideration are those students with disabilities who:

- are currently seniors in high school who have an IEP and for whom the FSA is the graduation test.
- have met the state's graduation requirement of 24 credits/ courses and 2.0 cumulative GPA, and any other district requirements for graduation with a standard diploma.
- have taken the Grade 10 FSA ELA with allowable accommodations at least twice but have not attained a passing score (e.g., one opportunity in Grade 10 and one opportunity in Grade 11)

- have participated in intensive remediation for Reading and for Algebra 1, if passing scores were not earned.
- have demonstrated mastery of the Grade 10 Florida Standards.
- the IEP team determines that the FSA cannot accurately measure the student's abilities taking into consideration allowable accommodations.

### Exceptional Student Education

The Exceptional Student Education Program (ESE) is implemented in accordance with Saint Lucie County District Procedures for Exceptional Education. Student 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).

### English Language Learners Program

The screening and placement of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students will be met in accordance with district procedures. For further information you may contact the ESOL Coordinator.

### Middle 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, as applicable, with concentration on the CTE courses.

### Graduation Requirements and Diploma Options

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

- 24 credit standard high school diploma with a 2.0+ GPA
- 18 credit accelerated high school diploma with a 2.0+ GPA
- CTE Diploma

The appropriate graduation program for a particular student is one that best fits the abilities, interests, and goals of the individual student. Families should consider the educational benefits of each program and choose the program that will best prepare the student for his or her postsecondary education or career plan. Families and students should work with their school counselor 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.

## High School Graduation Programs

| Subject Area                                                           | 24+ Credit Diploma                                                                                                                                                                                      | 18 Credit ACCEL                                                                                                                                                                                         | CTE Pathway Diploma                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>English</b>                                                         | ELA 1, 2, 3, 4 <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | ELA 1, 2, 3, 4 <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | ELA 1, 2, 3, 4 <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Mathematics</b>                                                     | Algebra 1, Geometry, and an additional 2 credits in Math. <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                            | Algebra 1, Geometry, and an additional 2 credits in Math. <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                            | Algebra 1, Geometry, and an additional 2 credits in Math. <b>(4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Science</b>                                                         | Biology, and an additional 2 credits in an equally rigorous Science course with a lab component. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                     | Biology, and an additional 2 credits in an equally rigorous Science course with a lab component. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                     | Biology, and an additional 2 credits in an equally rigorous Science course with a lab component. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                     |
| <b>Social Studies</b>                                                  | World History, US History, 0.5 credit in US Government, and 0.5 credit in Economics. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                                 | World History, US History, 0.5 credit in US Government, and 0.5 credit in Economics. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                                 | World History, US History, 0.5 credit in US Government, and 0.5 credit in Economics. <b>(3 credits)</b>                                                                                                 |
| <b>Personal Financial Literacy</b>                                     | <b>(0.5 credit)</b> in Personal Financial Literacy                                                                                                                                                      | <b>(0.5 credit)</b> in Personal Financial Literacy                                                                                                                                                      | <b>(0.5 credit)</b> in Personal Financial Literacy                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Fine Arts or Performing Arts, Speech, Debate, or Practical Arts</b> | <b>(1 credit)</b> in Fine Arts or Performing Arts, Speech, Debate, or Practical Arts.                                                                                                                   | <b>(1 credit)</b> in Fine Arts or Performing Arts, Speech, Debate, or Practical Arts.                                                                                                                   | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Physical Education</b>                                              | <b>(1 credit)</b> in Physical Education.                                                                                                                                                                | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Foreign Language</b>                                                | Not required for HS graduation but required for admission to state universities.                                                                                                                        | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>CTE</b>                                                             | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            | Not Required                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>(2 credits)</b> in CTE courses, must result in a program completion and industry certification.                                                                                                      |
| <b>Electives</b>                                                       | <b>(7.5 credits)</b> in electives.                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>(2.5 credits)</b> in electives.                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>(1.5 credits)</b> in electives: 1.5 credits in work-based learning programs.                                                                                                                         |
| Additional Graduation Requirements                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements</b>                          | Students must earn a 2.0 unweighted GPA on a 4.0 scale for all cohort years.                                                                                                                            | Students must earn a 2.0 unweighted GPA on a 4.0 scale for all cohort years.                                                                                                                            | Students must earn a 2.0 unweighted GPA on a 4.0 scale for all cohort years.                                                                                                                            |
| <b>State Assessments Requirements</b>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 10 ELA or a concordant score.</li> <li>• Algebra 1 EOC or a comparative score.</li> <li>• EOC for Algebra, Geometry, Biology, and US History.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 10 ELA or a concordant score.</li> <li>• Algebra 1 EOC or a comparative score.</li> <li>• EOC for Algebra, Geometry, Biology, and US History.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 10 ELA or a concordant score.</li> <li>• Algebra 1 EOC or a comparative score.</li> <li>• EOC for Algebra, Geometry, Biology, and US History.</li> </ul> |

## Course Selection Process

It is important that you involve your parents in your selection process so that you have the proper prerequisites and requirements for high school graduation, your future career, scholarship and apprenticeships opportunities.

Selection Procedures:

1. Review the list of graduation requirements.
2. Consult your counselor to determine which requirements have been met, and which courses need to be taken for this upcoming year.
3. Talk to your parents and instructors about your selections and appropriate academic levels.
4. Select courses that will correspond with your goals for the future and have instructors sign appropriate levels.
5. Parents must sign the course selection sheet.
6. Student must sign the course selection sheet.

## 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
- I Incomplete

## 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 student 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. Students 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,
- study skills sessions
- free tutoring after school and during lunch by teachers and peers

### Grade Forgiveness/ Recovery Rule

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

### Dual Enrollment

High school students who meet program requirements may concurrently enroll in courses that are creditable towards their field of choice as permitted by Indian River State College and state universities that have entered into an articulation agreement with the SCA.

Students must meet the following requirements:

- Academic courses-Earn a minimum 3.0 unweighted grade point average prior to enrollment
- 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 Recentered) to qualify for specific college credit dual enrollment courses.
- Obtain 4 high school credits
- 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.
- 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.

### 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, student-centered, virtual learning environments. For registration information please contact your child's guidance counselor.

### Graduation

The senior handbook will be distributed at the senior info night where the graduation policies, senior fees and other senior related information.

### Honors for Graduates

#### Valedictorian

The student with the highest cumulative weighted G.P.A. from the graduating class, who has attended SCA for the entirety of his/her cohort.

#### Salutatorian

The student with the 2nd highest cumulative weighted G.P.A. of the graduating class, who has attended SCA for the entirety of his/her cohort.

Honor Cords will be addressed in the Senior Handbook.

### SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA NOTICE OF PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, affords parents certain rights for the protection of student privacy. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education ("ED") –

- (a) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- (b) Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- (c) Sex behavior or attitudes;
- (d) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- (e) Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- (f) Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- (g) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
- (h) Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –

- (a) Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;



(b) Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination, or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical examination or screening permitted or required under State law; and

(c) Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

(a) Protected information surveys of students;

(b) Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and

(c) Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The School Board of St. Lucie County has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The School Board will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive change. The School Board will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The School Board will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the Board has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at the time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below, and will be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C, 20202-5901

SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA), and corollary state law, Section 1002.22, Fla. Stat., afford parents and students who have attained 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to each student’s education records. These rights are:

(1) The right of privacy with respect to the student’s education records.

Personally identifiable records or reports of a student, and any personal information contained in these reports, are confidential. The School District of St. Lucie County will not release the education records of a student without the written consent of the eligible student or the student’s parents or guardian, except to the extent FERPA and state law authorizes disclosure without consent.

(2) The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 30 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(3) The right to request amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student’s privacy rights. Parents or eligible students may ask the School District of St. Lucie County to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student’s privacy rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student’s privacy rights.

If the District decides not to amend the records as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(4) The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA and state law authorize disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the District discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled.

(5) The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers

FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office United States Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Other disclosures without prior consent; parents' right to limit:

School administrators may disclose directory information about a student without the consent of either the student or his/her parents(s)/guardian(s) unless, within ten (10) days after enrolling or beginning school, the student or parent/guardian notifies the school in writing that any or all directory information should not be released. Directory information includes the student's name and grade level. A limited release of information is required for participation in student athletics as described on the Parent and Player Agreement, Permission, and Release form.

Military recruiters and institutions of higher education have access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary school student unless, within 10 days of enrolling in or beginning school, the student or the parent notifies the school in writing that such information should not be released without the prior written consent of the parent.

The School District of St. Lucie County policy on education records of students is set forth in District Policy 5.70 Student Records and the District's Student Education Records Manual. The policy and manual are available for inspection at the District Administration Office located at 9461 Brandywine Lane, Port St Lucie, FL 34986. Office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A copy of the policy and the manual may be obtained, free of charge, upon request.

### ***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 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.

Links:

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(PDF\):](#)

\* [Ley de Derechos a la Educación y Privacidad de las Familias \(Spanish\) \(PDF\)](#) \* [Lwa sou Dwa ak Entimite Lanseyman pou Fanmi \(Haitian Creole\) \(PDF\)](#)

Bullying Complaint Form: [Bullying Complaint Form](#)

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities and for Students Identified as Gifted:

\* [Notice of Procedural Safeguards for Parents of Students with Disabilities \(PDF\)](#) Revised 05/2014