

# Cornerstone Academy

## **Parent Handbook**

(Spanish copies available upon request)



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## **Preface**

This addendum to the SBISD Secondary Student/Parent Handbook contains specific and detailed information to facilitate the orderly operation of Cornerstone Academy. Students and parents should read this addendum along with the district handbook and keep both for future reference.

## **Bell Schedule (Typical)**

1 <sup>st</sup> Period	7:40 – 8:25
2 <sup>nd</sup> Period	8:30 – 9:15
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	9:20 – 10:05
Tutorials/Study Hall/Advisory	10:10 – 10:30
4th Period (CORE)	10:35 – 12:30
Lunch	12:30 – 1:05
5 <sup>th</sup> Period (CORE)	1:10 – 3:10

## **Assembly Bell Schedule**

1 <sup>st</sup> Period	7:40 – 8:15
2 <sup>nd</sup> Period	8:20 – 8:55
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	9:00 – 9:35
Report to 4 <sup>th</sup> period	9:40
Assembly	9:50 – 10:30
4 <sup>th</sup> period	10:35 – 12:30
Lunch	12:30 – 1:05
5 <sup>th</sup> Period (CORE)	1:10 – 3:10

## **After School Procedures**

Students are expected to get their necessary supplies and material and leave the campus in a timely manner. The campus should be cleared of students by 3:25 P.M. unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- Students are waiting for parents who were delayed from arriving at parent pick up on time. Students will be waiting for parents right outside the Cornerstone office.  
or
- Students attending tutorials, intramurals or Learning Lab.

When finished, students are to be picked up promptly by parents at the published time. Students are not to be roaming the hallways unsupervised for any reason.

## **Assemblies**

Students are expected to exhibit responsibility for self and respect for others. Parents are welcome to attend any assembly.

## **Attendance Information**

Students may not get credit if they attend less than 90% of the school year (excused or unexcused). Unavoidable extended absences must be cleared through the Director's office in advance (Texas Education Code 25.092).

Students must attend school every day. According to state law, students may only be absent from school for the following reasons:

*Personal illness , Sickness in the family , Counseling , Court appearance , Quarantine , Weather conditions , Religious holidays , and Doctor appointments (see also Appointments for Students)*

When a student returns to school after an absence, he/she must bring a signed and dated note from the parent to the ADA Specialist in the main office before school. The note must state the reason the student was absent and the dates he/she was absent. The student has two days to bring the note after an absence for the absence to be considered excused. If the student fails to bring a note within 2 days, the absence will be considered unexcused.

If students will be absent more than three (3) days, parents may get assignments by calling the office. Twenty-four hour notice is necessary to obtain the assignments.

If a student is absent for five (5) consecutive days a note from a health care provider must be provided.

If a student is absent ten (10) days or parts of days in a six-month period, school personnel are required by law to notify the Spring Branch ISD Police Department T.R.I.A.T.

After an absence, students are responsible for getting an admit to class. Admits must be obtained before school. The student is responsible for presenting the admit to each teacher for his/her initials and then turning it in to the office at the end of the day.

Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. should bring a note, signed by a parent, stating the specific reason for being late and report directly to the office for an admit to enter class. Students may be assigned a detention for being tardy depending on their reason for being late.

If students are absent without the knowledge of their parents, they are considered truant.

## **Appointments for Students**

When it is necessary for students to leave the campus for a doctor or other appointment, the student is expected to **bring a note to the office at the beginning of the school day**. The note should indicate the time the student is to be picked up by a parent or other adult authorized by the parent (as indicated on the student information card). The registrar will write a early dismissal slip for the student to present to the teacher when it is time to leave. The student and parent (or authorized adult) will meet in the office so that the parent can sign the student out. Upon return, the student must bring a note from the office of the

appointment in order for it to be classified as a medical excuse. If you do not bring a note from the doctor, it cannot be considered a medical excuse and will be classified as an excused absence instead. A medical excuse for an appointment is not counted as an absence as long as the student attends school for a portion of the day.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

(See Cafeteria/Lunch)

### **Book Bags and Back Packs**

Book bags or backpacks may be used to transport materials to and from school. Students are responsible for book bags and backpacks and should **never leave these** and other personal items unattended. Students are encouraged to leave valuable items and electronic devices at home. Due to limited floor space in classrooms, students may be required to arrive in class without their backpack or book bag. The backpack or book bag should be locked in the locker assigned to the student.

### **Bullying**

Cornerstone serves a diverse population. Tolerance and acceptance are expected. Bullying is not acceptable and is not tolerated.

#### *What is Bullying?*

A person is being bullied when he/she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other person(s). Negative actions are when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person, through physical contact, through words or in other ways.

Students are encouraged to tell a responsible adult if they are being bullied.

### **Cafeteria/Lunch/Breakfast**

The school cafeteria provides hot lunches for the convenience of students. Students must bring their lunch money or their lunch. The office does not have a lunch fund for students who lose or forget their lunch money. The Food Service Department will provide, on a limited basis, a sandwich and milk with the understanding that the money will be paid another day.

Families who cannot pay the full price may apply for a reduced price or a free meal. Application forms for free or reduced meals are sent home with all students at the beginning of the school year. These applications must be completed every year. Students may start receiving free or reduced lunches the day the application is approved. All applications are handled privately and the information is kept confidential. Students who participate in this program are treated in the same manner as those who pay the full price.

The cafeteria is a clean place to eat and relax and it is important that the students keep it this way. Students will follow the guidelines listed below:

- Report to the cafeteria in an orderly manner and be seated or go to the end of the serving line.
- Assume responsibility for picking up trash/trays and keeping the table and surrounding areas clean.
- Purchase items from the vending machines before 7:30 a.m., during lunch, and during snack breaks.

Parents may use PayPam to make online payments into student accounts and monitor student spending: <http://www.springbranchisd.com/admin/cn/school/menu.htm>

All students are required to eat at school and must not leave campus during lunch. Students may eat at any available table or out in the courtyard. Students may also participate in “wall ball” or may occasionally participate in other “gentle sports” activities (tossing a football, lightly kicking a soccer ball) as determined by the lunch monitors. When raining, students are expected to stay in the cafeteria or under the covered areas. Students are expected to pick up their own trash and deposit it into the trash cans. Failure to adhere to these rules may result in a detention or cleanup duty.

Parents may bring their child a sack or special lunch occasionally but are not allowed to provide any food for other students. Parents must hand deliver the lunch to their child at 12:30. Feel free to stay and eat with your child! Just obtain a visitor badge from the Cornerstone office. *The office will not be responsible for getting lunches to students.* Birthday celebrations are not allowed before or during lunch time.

Breakfast is available in the cafeteria each morning from 7:00 AM to 7:35 AM. Students are expected to eat all food in the cafeteria before exiting.

### **Clinic**

A school nurse is on duty five days a week to take care of injuries that occur during the day and to give professional attention to the legitimately ill. A student must have a signed pass to enter and leave the clinic. A student may not remain in the clinic more than one period unless the nurse is convinced that the student is ill enough to go home and a parent cannot be reached. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be kept in the clinic, appropriately labeled and in its original container. Dosage instructions must be signed by the physician and the parent.

### Non Prescription Medication Form

### Prescription Medication Form

Parents must sign out with the main office when taking students home from the clinic.

### **Communication with Teachers**

Each week, all LA/SS, Math and Science teachers will email gradebook progress reports to parents (as long as our gradebooks are working). **Please make certain that Cornerstone has a good working email for you.** Paper progress reports will go home at the midpoint of the grading period.

If you need to talk with one of your child’s teachers, please email the teacher or call the office. The teacher will contact you and schedule a meeting if requested.

### **Dances**

The Student Council sponsors 4 dances during the year (“6<sup>th</sup> grade welcome” which is held during school hours, fall, winter and luau). Dances are from 7 – 9 PM with the exception being the luau which is from 4 – 6 PM. Only students enrolled at Cornerstone Academy are permitted to attend, except for the luau, at which dance ONLY Cornerstone alumni are also

invited to attend along with current students. Once inside the dance, a student is not allowed to leave.

Parents are responsible for transportation to and from dances and must be prompt in picking up their child. Students who are not picked up within a reasonable period of time will not be permitted to attend future after-school activities and parents may be assessed a fee. Attendance at dances and other extracurricular activities is considered a privilege and may be revoked when students are not meeting classroom and school expectations. Regular school dress code is to be followed at all dances unless the dance has a specific theme. Even at theme dances, clothes must be appropriate for a school function (no low rise pants, midriff tops or tank tops, etc.).

### **Discipline Consequences**

Students may incur a lunch, after-school or Saturday detention as a result of committing a Level I, II or III offense as listed in the district handbook. The student will be expected to serve the detention as quickly as possible. Lunch detentions are served Tuesday through Friday. Students not attending detention on the assigned day will receive a consequence of 2 detentions, an after-school detention or a school suspension. Students with repeated Level 1 or II offenses or higher level offenses may be suspended from school for up to 3 days.

Refer to the district secondary student handbook for all disciplinary policies and procedures.

### **Early Dismissal Days**

The last Wednesday of each month is an early dismissal day for students. CSA teachers are involved in staff development responsibilities during that time. Additionally, the district calendar holds early dismissal days at the end of each semester for finals. Students are dismissed at noon.

The early dismissal calendar for 2009-10 is as follows:

September 30<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

October 28<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

November 18<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday)

January 27<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

February 24<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

March 31<sup>st</sup> (Wednesday)

**April 21<sup>st</sup> (Wednesday)** – Note: This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month rather than the last due to TAKS administration.

May 28<sup>th</sup>, June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> (Friday, Tuesday, Wednesday)

### **E-Flash-Campus News Email Communication**

Communication in a variety of forms is important especially at middle school! A Cornerstone parent coordinator delivers an online news email group to inform parents of upcoming events, news, and campus needs. If you did not sign up at Back to School Night, please contact the Cornerstone Office.

## **Electronic Devices**

Radios, tape players, CD players and MP3 players may be brought to school and used during certain CESIT classes (as specified by the teacher). The use of all music players is not allowed anytime in the common areas of the building (hallways, bathrooms, etc.) after 10:00 AM, the exception being in the lunchroom and courtyard at lunch time. Students who are seen with these devices and/or headphones in the common areas after that time will have the devices confiscated and will receive consequences if deemed appropriate. These items may be returned to a parent or to the student at a time determined by the campus administration.

Cell phones are not allowed to be active or turned on anytime between the hours of 7:35 AM and 3:10 PM. Any cell phone that is seen and turned on between these hours will result in confiscation of the cell phone. A student who has had a cellular phone or paging device confiscated will receive written notice from the office administration. The notice will advise the parents of the student of the time in which they may collect the phone.

The bringing of any items of value to school is discouraged. The school is not responsible for any items the student brings to school.

## **Hall Passes**

Students who plan to enter the A Hall before school for any reason must have obtained a Hall Pass from a teacher on the previous day. So, if you need tutoring, if you want to decorate a locker, if you need to complete an assignment, if you are participating in a Student Council or other club functions, you will need a pass. Students without passes will not be allowed into the hallway.

## **Homework**

Homework may be assigned to reinforce instructional concepts and/or to provide additional practice. When homework is assigned, students are expected to complete and turn in the work on time and will be held accountable for its completion and correctness. Parents will be notified in the event that a student develops a pattern of not being able to complete assigned work within the required time and students will be assigned to Learning Lab.

Parents can be involved and informed by checking the teacher websites (Classroom Portal) each day. If a website is not current, please contact the Cornerstone office. The lesson objective and assignments will be posted on the Classroom Portal. Additionally, parents can obtain a username and password for Parent Portal (Intouch), a site designed to give parents up-to-date grades and attendance information. We will be handing them out at Open House. Parents must be physically present to receive a password. You can also stop by the office to sign up and receive your information!

## **Learning Lab**

Learning Lab is held on Tuesday through Friday afternoons from 3:15 – 4:15 beginning September 15<sup>th</sup>. Teachers may assign students to Learning Lab when students fall behind on assignments or forget to complete an assignment. A student may also elect to attend Learning Lab to have a quiet place to work. In either case, parent approval is required. If a parent cannot be reached by 3:00 PM, then the student will go home and will be reassigned for the next day.

Learning Lab is NOT a tutorial session. Tutorials are scheduled on specific days by the teachers.

Students must be picked up at the west end of the “A” hall promptly at 4:15. The late buses will leave campus at 4:30. Any student still on campus will be on the bus and will be delivered to the elementary campus nearest home.

See specific guidelines and procedures on the Learning Lab Commitment Form.

### **Library**

The Spring Branch Education Center Library’s hours are from 7:10 AM through 3:30 PM. Cornerstone students may visit the library before and after school every day and during lunchtime several days of the week. A wide variety of materials such as books, magazines and audio books are available for use and check out. Most items are due back in two weeks. No fines are charged for late items, however students may not check out additional library items if they have any overdue materials. Fifteen computers are available to students for research, writing, or other school related purposes. All students must abide by the Technology Honor Code of Conduct.

### **Lockers**

Each student is assigned a locker and a combination lock during the first week of school. Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers and should make certain they are locked and that the combination is not given to others. In order to prevent theft, it is essential that students use the lockers assigned to them. Students who persist in leaving clothing and/or materials in unlocked lockers can expect mischief to occur. Students who give their locker combinations to their friends or who “rig” their locks (by not actually leaving them locked for ease of use purposes) are also inviting possible losses. The school is not responsible for property placed in lockers. We encourage students not to bring valuables to school. If a lock is lost, a replacement lock (one that can be opened with our key) must be purchased from the school for \$7.00.

Lockers are assigned to individual students. Lockers remain under the jurisdiction of the school. Searches of lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable suspicion to do so, whether or not students are present.

### **Lost and Found**

We are always amazed at the quantity of articles that students leave behind and rarely seek to find. A “lost and found” table is located in the B hall across from the CSA office. All unclaimed “found” articles are donated to charity at the end of each semester.

### **Messages**

Every effort will be made to preserve instructional time by minimizing classroom interruptions. If a student must receive an important message during school hours, the parent must make the request by 1:30 PM. Messages will be delivered at lunch time and at the end of the day. Any message regarding a change of transportation received after 1:30 PM is not likely to be honored

### **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences are scheduled in mid-November and student-led conferences are scheduled in late February. Attendance by parents at these 2 conferences is required as part of the 10-hour commitment to your child as stated in the application. In addition, parents and/or teachers may request additional conferences as needed. To request a conference, call or email the teacher.

### **Parent Contact Information**

It is important that the campus be able to reach you in case of an emergency and that you are able to receive campus mail-outs such as report cards. Parents must provide the school with current home, work, cellular, emergency phone numbers and email address. If at any time during the school year your physical address or phone number changes, please contact the school promptly.

### **Parent Involvement Policy**

Parents are encouraged and expected to participate in their child's education. A minimum of 10 volunteer hours is required. This obligation can be met through a variety of opportunities such as: parent conferences, teaching CESIT classes, attending and supporting PTA meetings and activities, chaperoning special events, etc.

### **Pre-AP Classes**

All core subjects (Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) are Pre-AP. Students are expected to maintain passing grades in all classes. If a student falls behind and/or cannot maintain passing grades in his/her classes, our only alternative is for the student to withdraw and return to his/her home campus to enroll in academic level classes. Therefore, it is important that students attend classes, ask for help when needed, and complete all assignments. Parents **must** monitor their child's academic standing.

Students should consider exiting a Pre-AP course at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> six weeks if they are not maintaining at least a "C" average. If a student's grade falls below a 70 at the end of any six weeks, the parent/guardian of the student must sign a statement documenting that he/she understands the student may need to exit the course. If the average remains below a 70 at the end of the semester, the student will be removed from Cornerstone to attend grade-level classes at his/her home campus.

### **PTA**

Cornerstone Academy benefits from a strong and supportive PTA. We work in partnership to support our students and staff members. There are many ways to become involved in the Cornerstone PTA. Please visit their web presence at: <http://csa.springbranchisd.com/volunteers.htm>. We encourage you to join and participate!

### **Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Progress reports are sent home with the student at the mid-point of the 6 weeks period. Report cards are mailed home, handed out at conferences, or sent home with the student the week after the end of the 6 weeks period. Progress reports and report cards can be accessed online through Parent Portal. To see the schedule for progress reports and report cards, see the CSA calendar at <http://csa.springbranchisd.com>

### **Roller Shoes and Skateboards**

For safety reasons, roller shoes and skateboards are not allowed at Cornerstone. Skateboards may be a way for students to arrive at campus. Once on campus, the skateboard must be stored in the Cornerstone office or in a classroom. If a student chooses to ride the skateboard while on campus, the skateboard will be confiscated and kept by the not be brought to campus/unless a school-sponsored activity permits.

### **Schedule Changes**

6<sup>th</sup> grade students are randomly placed in core classes at the beginning of the year. **At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 weeks grading period, student schedules may change based upon teacher observations/student needs.**

Students enroll in CESIT classes each 6 weeks on a first-come, first-serve basis. Classes are rotated so that each class receives “first choice selection” one six weeks. Due to limited course offerings and space, CESIT schedules may not be changed.

A written request from the parent is required to exit a semester or year-long course.

### **Spirit Days**

Flip Flop Friday – Every Friday, students and staff are allowed to wear flip flops and CSA spirit wear!

Mad Cap Monday – Every Monday of each month, students and staff are allowed to wear caps! Ball caps must be in accordance with district dress code requirements.

Additionally, the CSA Student Council is sponsoring a number of activities throughout the school year. Please check the website for additional information at:

<http://csa.springbranchisd.com>

### **Student Recognition Program**

#### **Cougar of the Month**

Every month one student per team will be selected as Cougar of the Month using the following criteria:

- Working at individual ability level
- Showing exceptional citizenship and positive aspects of character (courteous, helpful, cooperative, honesty, compassion, kindness, tolerance, etc.)
- Improvement in academics or citizenship (when applicable)
- Positive role model for others
- Being the best he/she can be!

We will recognize the students over our announcements, post their picture in the hallway and provide them with a treat.

#### **Cougar Cash**

Any staff member may present Cougar Cash to any student who demonstrates good citizenship, a positive attitude, demonstrates helpfulness to others or service to the school. Students who receive Cougar Cash are entered into a monthly drawing where they are eligible to receive movie tickets, bookstore cards, etc. Students who receive Cougar Cash are responsible for completing the back and turning it into the office.

#### **Highest Honor Roll**

Students who meet the following criteria at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 6 weeks grading period and the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> 6 weeks grading period will receive school wide recognition and will attend a celebration in December and May respectively:

- 95 % or better in all classes
- S or E in conduct in all classes
- 2 or fewer tardies

## **Honor Roll**

Students who meet the following criteria at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> 6 weeks (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> six weeks combined) grading period and the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> 6 weeks (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> six weeks combined) grading period will receive school wide recognition and will receive a small token of appreciation (possibly ice cream coupon).

- 90% or better in all classes – exception – (1) 85% or better is allowed for 1 class
- S or E in conduct in all classes
- 2 or fewer tardies

## **Tardies**

In order for classes to run smoothly and without disruption, it is important for students to be on time. A student is considered tardy to class if the tardy bell rings and students are not inside the classroom. Students are to report to class for roll check before participating in any special event. If a student happens to be detained in the office or by a teacher, a tardy excuse will be issued and should be presented to the teacher upon entering the class tardy. Parents will be notified when a pattern of tardiness is identified for a student.

Note: When a student is more than 15 minutes late, the student is counted absent for that period, not tardy.

## **Technology**

All students sign the Cornerstone Technology Honor Code at the beginning of the school year and are expected to follow the standards of behavior as stated in the code. Failure to abide by the guidelines will result in disciplinary action as well as possible financial restitution for any damages.

## **Transportation/Bus/Parent Drop-off and Pick-up**

Bus: School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Students must comply with all rules and regulations for School Bus Behavior, Section 37.126 in the SBISD Student Handbook. The Transportation Administrator, Manager, or school administration may suspend students from riding on any school bus for violations of the Student Handbook rules and regulations.

Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising students at the bus stop. Bus drivers are responsible for supervising students while they are on the bus. The campus is responsible for supervising students while the bus is loading and unloading on campus.

Students must ride the bus they are assigned. Students who need to ride another bus for emergency purposes must bring a note stating a need for after school care to the school office **in the morning** so the campus can coordinate with transportation to prevent overcrowding. Students who fail to obtain the necessary permission from the school office will be expected to ride their assigned bus.

Due to traffic conflicts on Westview, our morning drop-off is on the east side of the building. Procedures for the morning are the same as in the afternoon. The best option is to enter the property off of Ruland (a street north of the campus intersecting Campbell Rd.) and follow the road around to the east side of the complex (heading south). After dropping off your child at the curb, you can then pull out of the drive and onto Westview.

**Do not drop your child off in the front of the building!** We expect everyone to follow the correct procedures. Spring Valley and Spring Branch ISD police officers do not appreciate parents who choose not to follow school procedures.

**Reminder: Staff is not on duty until 7:20 AM.** We encourage you to wait until then to drop your child off. If you must drop your child off prior to 7:20 AM, he/she is expected to sit in the main hallway close to the auditorium until the first bell rings at 7:35.

Additionally, we will no longer allow students to be picked up at the front of the building in the afternoon for security reasons. If you will be picking up your child (or participating in a carpool), students will be waiting for you on the east side of the building next to the parent drive line. Please do not ask your child to violate our security-driven procedures (such as walking across the field toward the front parking lot) because you do not feel the need to wait in the line. Students will be withdrawn from CSA if their actions put other students in danger – even if it is the parent telling them to violate our procedures.

### **Visitors**

Parents are welcome at school. All visitors to the campus must sign in and receive a visitor's badge. Parents bringing lunches to students must check in and obtain a visitor's badge before entering the lunchroom or courtyard.

### **Volunteers**

We welcome volunteers! Any adult working with students is considered a volunteer and must adhere to the following regulations for the safety of our students:

All volunteers must register online at the SBISD website every year and pass a criminal background check. Please volunteer today! That way, if you are uncertain as to how you will fulfill your 10-hour volunteer commitment, you will already be in the system when an event occurs! If you want to attend a field trip, the district cannot guarantee your paperwork will be processed if you wait until a day or two before the event to register.

Volunteers must bring their driver's license the first time they volunteer on our campus to have it scanned into the V-Soft system.