

# Teacher Orientation Manual

Sebastopol Independent Charter School

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This manual contains information about many of the specific workings of our school. It is meant to work in tandem with the *Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook*. Please familiarize yourself with this manual and all appropriate handbooks. It is a work in progress and we appreciate comments and ideas for additions. If you disagree with any items in this manual, please consider addressing it at a faculty meeting. If you have any questions, please ask for clarification from either the Executive Director or Operations Manager.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>COLLEGIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>1</b>
FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE SCHOOL	1
STAFF MEETINGS	1
CHILD STUDY OR CLASS STUDY	1
DISCIPLINE	2
MID- AND END OF YEAR REPORTS	2
PUNCTUALITY	2
SUBSTITUTION	2
PROFESSIONALISM	3
ACCOUNTABILITY	3
CONFIDENTIALITY	4
SUBJECT TEACHERS	4
MENTORING	5
RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS AND STAFF	5
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	8
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>11</b>
SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS	12
SCHOOLWIDE MESSAGES	12
EMAIL AND WEBSITES	12
LETTERS TO PARENTS	13
VOICE MAIL	13
WORKING WITH PARENTS	13
<b>MANAGING THE CLASSROOM</b>	<b>14</b>
ATTENDANCE	14
INDEPENDENT STUDY	16
CLASSROOM SUPPLIES/ORDERING	16
FIELD TRIPS, INCLUDING EIGHTH GRADE TRIP GUIDELINES	17
LOST AND FOUND	19

PHOTOCOPYING	19
SENDING CHILDREN FROM THE CLASSROOM	19
SUSPENSION/SENDING A CHILD HOME	19
<b>THE OFFICE</b>	<b>20</b>
MAILBOXES	20
MASTER CALENDAR	20
PHONES, FAX, COPIERS, AND COMPUTER USE	21
<b>PEDAGOGY</b>	<b>21</b>
SEPARATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE	21
HOMEWORK	22
MUSIC PROGRAM	22
PARENT CONFERENCES	22
SPECIAL EDUCATION	23
SPORTS AND MOVEMENT PROGRAM	23
CAASPP TESTS	24
<b>PERSONNEL MATTERS</b>	<b>24</b>
BENEFITS	24
PAY PERIODS AND TIME CARDS	24
REIMBURSEMENTS	25
EVALUATIONS	25
PERSONNEL RECORDS	26
EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	26
OPEN DOOR POLICY	26
RESOLVING ISSUES OF CONCERN	26
<b>RECESS/OUTDOOR TIME</b>	<b>27</b>
PLAYGROUND ACTIVITIES	27
PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT	27
RECESS SCHEDULE	27
PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION BEFORE SCHOOL	28
PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL	28
<b>SAFETY</b>	<b>28</b>
CHILD ABUSE AND MANDATED REPORTING	28
FIRST AID AND SAFETY RULES	28
ACCIDENT REPORTS	29
EARTHQUAKE DRILLS	29
FIRE DRILLS	29

WILDFIRE/ AIR QUALITY DAYS	29
DISTANCE LEARNING	30
<b>SCHOOL POLICIES</b>	<b>30</b>
BICYCLES AND OTHER WHEELED THINGS	30
CELL PHONE USE	30
DISCIPLINE POLICY	31
DRESS CODE FOR CHILDREN	31
DRESS CODE FOR TEACHERS	31
FORMALITY	31
FUNDRAISING	32
ILLNESS/SUBSTITUTES	32
LIBRARY USE	32
SOCIAL INCLUSION	32
SUSPENSION	33
VISITORS AND GUESTS	33
<b>SITE</b>	<b>33</b>
CARING FOR CLASSROOM WALLS	33
CLEANING SUPPLIES	33
CLIMATE CONTROL	33
FURNITURE	34
LOCKING AND UNLOCKING THE SCHOOL	34
PARKING	34
REPAIRS	34
RESTROOMS	34
TRASH AND RECYCLING	35
<b>STUDENT PERFORMANCES</b>	<b>35</b>
SCHEDULING PERFORMANCES	35
ASSEMBLY ROOM USE	35
CLASS PLAY GUIDELINES	35
COSTUMES AND STAGING	36
COSTUMES, PROPS AND THEATER EQUIPMENT	37
PLAY/ COSTUME ROOM PROTOCOL	38
FILMING OR RECORDING PERFORMANCES	39
SCHOOL EVENTS CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS	40
<b>APPENDIX: REFERENCES</b>	<b>41</b>
School Verse	41

Student Morning Verses	41
Teacher's Morning Verse	42
Faculty Meeting Verses	42

# COLLEGIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

## FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE SCHOOL

Make sure to read this Orientation Manual, as well as the following information, to fully familiarize yourself with the school culture and policies:

- *Parent Handbook*
- *Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook*
- [Employee Portal](#)
- *SICS Charter* (the legal document authorizing our school and defining its purpose)
- *Charter Notes* (school-wide weekly newsletter)
- School Website – [www.sebastopolcharter.org](http://www.sebastopolcharter.org)
- Student dress code (see *Parent Handbook*)
- School Calendar and Bell Schedule
- Emergency Plan

## STAFF MEETINGS

The faculty and Executive Director meet once each week on Thursdays to conduct the pedagogical business of the school with the administrative arm of the school. This work forms the heart of the school and it is required for all class teachers and full-time subject teachers to attend these meetings. Part-time employees may be requested or asked to attend to present specific information to the faculty.

In order to add topics to a faculty meeting agenda, talk to a Faculty Council member (the Executive Director is a member too). Agendas for meetings are emailed the day before the meeting.

The all-school meeting begins promptly at 1:15 pm on Thursdays. Separate committee meetings may follow. These meetings may end at about 4:00 pm. All full-time faculty are expected to attend the entire time each week. If you expect to be absent from the meeting due to illness or other emergency, you must notify the Operations Manager and Executive Director. Missing a meeting (or a portion of it) counts against full-time faculty members' personal time. If there is an attendance problem, the Executive Director will address the chronic issue with the employee.

## CHILD STUDY OR CLASS STUDY

Periodically, the faculty engages in a class study or child study at the meeting. The purpose of such a study is to develop a picture of the child or class that is held by the group. The format for these studies may be obtained from the Faculty Council or Executive Director. Please note that all information presented or discussed at these studies are to be held in the strictest confidence, as well as respect for the colleague bringing the study.

## DISCIPLINE

There are laws directing how discipline should be held, including special consideration and process around working with special education students and a requirement that no student should be routinely denied access to the educational process by continually being sent out of the classroom. Our school has adopted the Restorative Justice method of discipline which seeks to hold the student accountable without blame or shame. Please review the Discipline Policy section of this manual. It is important that we all uphold a similar standard for the children. If you encounter disrespectful or inappropriate behavior from students, step forward and let the children know that the behavior is unacceptable—even if the students are not members of your class. If another teacher disciplines your students it is important to uphold their actions and decisions, even if you are in disagreement. Any disagreement should be addressed away from the children.

## MID- AND END-OF-YEAR REPORTS

All class teachers and subject teacher must create and submit mid- and end-of-year reports for the students they teach every school year on SchoolWise. Class teacher end-of-year reports are entered into SchoolWise, proofread and confirmed complete to the office by June 1. Subject teachers must enter their student progress assessments into SchoolWise by May 1 for end-of-year reports. End of year reports usually include both curriculum summaries and individual student reports. The Executive Director may provide specific guidance about the reports and due dates.

## PUNCTUALITY

It is essential that we show up on time for the classes we teach, that we return with our classes from recess on schedule, and that we relinquish the class to the next teacher at the scheduled time, and that we dismiss promptly at the end of the school day. We are so tightly scheduled that each person is a vital link in the harmonious working of the whole. One class running late has a domino effect on everyone else. It is important that teachers show up for their recess duties on time. It is important that all employees show up on time for meetings.

Full-time employees are expected to be on campus from 8am to 4pm. There can be flexibility around those hours as long as there is communication with the executive director, but it shouldn't be assumed. Please communicate with the executive director about anytime you may not be there during those hours. If you don't communicate, you are assumed to be on campus 8am – 4pm on all school days. Consequences for not being at school during normal hours without prior permission may result in docked personal/sick hours for time you were missing. Repeated lack of punctuality, depending on the situation, may be cause for disciplinary action.

## SUBSTITUTION

When you are absent:

1. Arrange for your own substitute using the school's approved sub list. Notify the Receptionist, the Operations Manager *and* the Executive Director of your absence, preferably the night before, or before **8:00 AM** of that day. If you are sending an email, send it to the Receptionist, Operations Manager and Executive Director.
2. Have lesson plans written out for the substitute. It is a teacher's responsibility to always have complete substitute lesson plans prepared for an emergency and to keep the file updated. Seating chart, verses, daily schedule, and supplemental materials should all be current and in the folder.
3. Be sure to notify other teachers who are dependent on you teaching their class or covering recess duty.
4. In an emergency, call and text the Executive Director's cell phone for assistance.
5. Even if you are gone for a personal appointment for a portion of the day, you need to let the Executive Director and Operations Manager know, as this is considered personal time.
- 6.

## PROFESSIONALISM

Standards of professionalism are difficult to legislate, as so much of our behavior as adults is dictated by cultural norms and expectations. The Executive Director establishes professional standards.

Some obvious things to avoid include romantic involvement with a parent in your class, being "friends" on a social network site with current students, and carrying over what should remain in the work setting to the social/personal realm. In a small town and a close community, we frequently find ourselves at the store or at an adult gathering with school parents and students. Rather than dictate right and wrong behavior, we feel it is best to use your own careful judgment, remembering confidentiality concerns. If in doubt about the appropriateness of any setting or relationship, you might ask a colleague or the Executive Director for advice.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Professional conduct is expected of all employees.

Teachers are given a large degree of freedom, which the very pulse of the education requires. This freedom, however, implies an equal degree of responsibility.

Teachers are accountable for presenting lessons in keeping with the guidelines of the Waldorf-inspired curriculum, and for adequately covering the subject matter. New teachers



are encouraged to ask questions of more experienced teachers and to explore all avenues of further professional development when needed. Teachers required to be mentored must participate in the school's mentoring program.

Teachers not trained in Waldorf methods will be asked specifically to supplement their teaching skills by studies and/or professional development of Waldorf pedagogy. Tutorials and/or mentoring can be arranged to meet individual needs. Teachers may be asked to provide evidence that they are attempting to meet general educational and/or Waldorf training requirements. All teachers are encouraged to attend to their own professional development by taking courses, by attending conferences, or by personal study. All teachers are expected to self-evaluate as one part of the evaluation procedure.

Teachers are accountable for lesson preparation and for structuring and planning their classes. Advice and materials from other teachers can be useful, but replicating others' lesson blocks is not encouraged without careful tailoring of the material to each individual class and situation.

Teachers are accountable to work within the framework of the school organizational structure. No class exists in isolation nor has its own rules, nor does any teacher.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Each employee is responsible for safeguarding confidential information obtained in connection with his or her employment. In the course of your work, you may have access to confidential information regarding the School, its suppliers, its students, or perhaps even fellow employees. It is your responsibility to in no way reveal or divulge any such information unless it is necessary for you to do so in the performance of your work. Access to confidential information should be on a "need-to-know" basis and must be authorized by your supervisor. Any breach of this policy will not be tolerated and legal action may be taken by the School. All employees are required to observe discretion, privacy, and confidentiality with all matters involving students and their families including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### SUBJECT TEACHERS

Class teachers and subject teachers work under very different conditions. The success of each subject teacher is greatly influenced by the way class teachers and subject teachers work with each other and how class teachers respect the time and space of their colleagues' work.

Before welcoming a subject teacher, it's helpful for the class teacher to make sure the class has reached a point of settled-ness and ready for the next class. Activities from the previous class should be complete, materials should be put away, and each student should be at his or her desk. This state should also be reached at the end of each subject class.

When a subject teacher is about to enter the room, the presiding teacher has the class stand, ready to greet her/him. One of the students opens the door to welcome the new teacher in. The two teachers greet each other first by shaking hands. This may look differently in the middle school. Then the new teacher turns to the class and says, "Good morning, Fifth Grade." The class responds and the presiding teacher leaves.

It's important that class teachers leave their classroom, relinquishing it to the subject teacher, unless the two of them have made special arrangements for the class teacher to be present. It signals to the children that there is a "changing of the guard," and that a new teacher is now the authority. Class teachers should never work with students during subject teachers' time.

It is also important that a class teacher communicate with the subject teacher if there are unusual circumstances in the class or with individuals in the class. For instance, if the class just returned from an ice cream bash in the park the subject teacher should know this before embarking on her or his lesson. If a child in the class has experienced a personal loss, notification of the subject teachers is in order. Subject teachers should likewise notify the class teacher about any abnormal situations in the class. It is also helpful for the two teachers to communicate if telephone calls to parents become necessary. In some cases, a subject teacher might be the best person to make the call; in others the class teacher is the best choice, depending on the situation.

The class teacher must uphold any disciplinary measures taken by a subject teacher. If there is disagreement with the measure taken, the class teacher should uphold the subject teacher's procedure first, and then discuss the matter afterward, away from the children.

Always make sure to notify subject teachers of any field trip you are taking that might affect them. Also, if a student is having a difficult time at home or there is some matter you think would help a subject teacher work more effectively with a student, by all means let them know.

## MENTORING

All teaching staff members are required to participate in the mentoring program, as directed by the Executive Director. Teachers should be sure to communicate regularly with the assigned peer and/or professional mentor. Block rotations, plans for class plays and trips, projects, and all other major activities should be discussed with your mentor.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS AND STAFF

- A. Full-Time Teaching Staff
  - Class Teacher (all items below apply)
  - Subject Teachers (all items below apply except items #15, 16, 17 and 23) MUST:

1. Have health clearance for tuberculosis from a doctor. Tb status must be updated every four years.
2. Comply with background checks, usually through fingerprinting, as required by law.
3. Write course description and plans for all classes taught.
4. Generate individual mid- and end-of-year reports in SchoolWise on each child taught. Reports have to be completed by announced due dates (usually June 1 for end-of-year reports).
5. Report punctually (at least 15 minutes prior to the start of classes) to teach all classes scheduled and perform all yard duties as assigned.
6. Arrange for substitution in the event of illness or absence and notify substitution charge person by **8:00 AM**. Substitute teachers must come from the School's approved substitute list. The office staff and Executive Director must be notified of any times teachers are not present during scheduled teaching periods.
7. Be present to dismiss class each day, unless the Executive Director approves an exception.
8. Keep informed and up to date on school agreements, policies, and procedures.
9. Attend faculty meetings (usually held Thursdays from 1:15 to 4:00) unless specifically excused by the Executive Director.
10. Observe discretion, privacy, and confidentiality with all matters involving students and their families including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
11. Maintain tidiness of classroom and/or other assigned areas.
12. Participate in school-sponsored workshops and events that provide information to parents and the public.
13. Participate in the organization of festivals and assemblies.
14. Serve faculty through taking part in committees or other work that serves the goals of the school as guided by the Executive Director, and/or the Faculty Council.
15. Conduct class parent meetings and individual conferences as scheduled.
16. Provide newsletters to parents, preferably weekly, about class specific information, including curriculum, field trips, assignments and other pertinent information for the parents in the class.
17. Conduct interviews for new students and their parents as scheduled in cooperation with the office and provide office with all necessary forms and application materials within one week. Cooperate with student admission procedures.
18. Fulfill State of California requirements for teacher credentialing.
19. Report for Work Days and Work Weeks as scheduled.
20. Participate in mentoring and training as directed by the Executive Director.
21. Maintain cordial, professional, respectful, and cooperative relationships with colleagues, staff, and parents.
22. Abide by dress guidelines for staff. (See *Dress Code for Teachers* for more details.)

23. Maintain class attendance and independent study records daily and submit them to the office when required by the Attendance Coordinator.
24. Substitute for colleagues when necessary, within reason.
25. Participate in regular communication through the use of school mailboxes, email, and voicemail. Check all at least once each day; respond in a timely manner as necessary.
26. Process concerns and complaints through the appropriate channels.
27. Participate in school-sponsored professional development days; attend a Waldorf teacher's conference, summer preparation course or make other approved arrangements for professional development during time set aside for this purpose.
28. Supervise student snack, lunch times, drop off, and pick up times as appropriate. Do not leave students unsupervised in the classroom or in the yard.
29. All expenditures must be within an approved budget. No reimbursement will be made which exceeds approved budget, or without receipts.
30. Comply with all applicable laws, specifically including those laws governing the non-discriminatory and non-sectarian aspects of the School.
31. Comply with all obligations as a mandated reporter regarding suspected abuse.
32. Comply with all policies, procedures and regulations of the Charter School as established and from time to time, amended by the Board of Directors, including those found in the *Employee Handbook*.
33. Teach, faithfully and competently, the classes assigned.

B. Part-Time and Hourly Teaching Staff MUST:

1. Have health clearance for tuberculosis from a doctor. Tb status must be updated every four years.
2. Comply with background checks, usually through fingerprinting, as required by law.
3. Write course description and plans for all classes taught.
4. Generate individual end of year reports in SchoolWise on each child taught. Reports have to be completed by the due date, usually June 1.
5. Report punctually (at least 15 minutes prior to start of classes) to teach all classes scheduled and perform all yard duties.
6. Arrange for substitution in the event of illness or absence and notify substitution charge person by **8:00 AM**. Substitute teachers must come from the School's approved substitute list. The office staff and Executive Director must be notified of any times teachers are not present during scheduled teaching periods.
7. Keep informed and up to date on school agreements, policies, and procedures.
8. Hourly teachers are invited to attend faculty meetings, participate in festivals and serve on committees.
9. Observe discretion, privacy, and confidentiality with all matters involving

- students and their families including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
10. Maintain tidiness of classroom and/or other assigned areas.
  11. Participate in school-sponsored workshops and events that provide information to parents and the public.
  12. Fulfill State of California requirements for teacher credentialing.
  13. Report for Work Days and Work Weeks as scheduled.
  14. Participate in mentoring and training as directed by the Executive Director.
  15. Maintain cordial, professional, respectful, and cooperative relationships with colleagues, staff, and parents.
  16. Abide by dress guidelines for staff. (See *Dress Code for Teachers* for more details.)
  17. Participate in regular communication through the use of school mailboxes, email, and voicemail. Check all at least once each day; respond in a timely manner as necessary.
  18. Report any student difficulties or concerns to the Class Teacher as soon as possible.
  19. Process concerns and complaints through the appropriate channels.
  20. Supervise student snack, lunch times, drop off, and pick up times as appropriate. Do not leave students unsupervised in the classroom or in the yard.
  21. All expenditures must be within an approved budget. No reimbursement will be made which exceeds approved budget, or without receipts.
  22. Comply with all applicable laws, specifically including those laws governing the non-discriminatory and non-sectarian aspects of the School.
  23. Comply with all obligations as a mandated reporter regarding suspected abuse.
  24. Comply with all policies, procedures and regulations of the Charter School as established and from time to time, amended by the Board of Directors, including those found in the *Employee Handbook*.
  25. Teach, faithfully and competently, the classes assigned.

### **C. Office Staff**

The office is open from 8 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday during the school year. Individual staff hours will vary around this schedule. Work hours in the summer will vary based on the workload, but generally the office is open for much of the summer from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM except for several weeks usually scheduled in July.

Office Staff MUST:

1. Have health clearance for tuberculosis from a doctor. Tb status must be updated every four years.
2. Comply with the fingerprinting as required by law.

3. Arrange for substitution in the event of illness or absence and notify substitution charge person by **8:00 AM**. The Executive Director must be notified of any times an employee is not present during scheduled work shifts.
4. Keep informed and up to date on school agreements, policies, and procedures.
5. Observe discretion, privacy, and confidentiality with all matters involving students and their families including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
6. Maintain tidiness of office and/or other assigned areas.
7. Participate in organization of festivals and assemblies.
8. Report for Work Days and Work Weeks as scheduled.
9. Contribute to the School Newsletter as requested.
10. Maintain cordial, respectful, and cooperative relationships with colleagues, staff, and parents.
11. Abide by dress guidelines for staff. (See *Dress Code for Teachers* for more details.)
12. Substitute for colleagues when necessary, within reason.
13. Participate in regular communication through use of school mailboxes, email, and voicemail. Check all at least once each day; respond in a timely manner as necessary.
14. Maintain cordial, professional, respectful, and cooperative relationships with colleagues, staff, and parents.
15. Process concerns and complaints through the appropriate channels.
16. Participate in school-sponsored professional development days unless excused by Executive Director.
17. All expenditures must be within an approved budget. No reimbursement will be made which exceeds approved budget, or without receipts.
18. Comply with all applicable laws, specifically including those laws governing the non-discriminatory and non-sectarian aspects of the School.
19. Comply with all policies, procedures and regulations of the School as established and from time to time, amended by the Board of Directors, including those found in the *Employee Handbook*.
20. Faithfully and competently perform duties as specified in the individual job description.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

THE CLASS TEACHER is responsible to the school for the education in multiple subjects of each child in his/her class. The class teacher has a responsibility to communicate with a child's parents.

THE SPECIALTY TEACHER is responsible to the school for the education in specific subject(s) of each child in his/her class. The specialty teacher has a responsibility to communicate with a child's parents.

THE ASSISTANT TEACHER is responsible to the school for the education of each child in his/her class under the guidance of a lead teacher.

THE FACULTY is composed of full-time and part-time teachers. Under the guidance of the Executive Director (ED) and ED-designated faculty leadership, they meet weekly to study professional pedagogical methods and to conduct matters pertinent to the school and classroom.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR has responsibility over all things relating to pedagogy and student services. The Executive Director works closely with the Faculty Council and/or other faculty leaders. Although the Board of Directors shall be responsible for the general operation of the School in all its aspects, it may, at the appropriate time, delegate responsibilities for aspects of the curriculum and learning program to the Executive Director. The Executive Director, in particular, has a special obligation and ultimate authority for determining and overseeing the curriculum of the School, the methodology, and the evaluation of current and potential teachers at the School.

Examples of such responsibilities are as follows:

1. To determine the implementation of the school curriculum, and to oversee its presentation to the students. This involves a continuing evaluation process of both faculty and students to ensure a high standard of performance and achievement.
2. To coordinate or conduct evaluation of the performance of all current teachers.
3. To lead in recruiting and recommending in the realm of hiring faculty. Only the Executive Director may make any offer of employment on behalf of the school.

Only the Executive Director acting for the Board of Directors shall have the authority to make any offer of employment to anyone. The Executive Director shall also be the sole person authorized to quote or negotiate salary or benefit information to prospective employees and independent contractors. All requests for references must be directed to the Executive Director. No other manager, supervisor or employee is authorized to release references for current or former employees.

FACULTY LEADERS IN THE FORM OF A FACULTY COUNCIL OR OTHER FORM OF LEADERSHIP, shall work with the Executive Director to participate in advising, forming and implementing pedagogical matters and helping to form educational policy.

THE BUSINESS MANAGER is accountable to the Executive Director and the Board of Directors and is designated to manage the business and non-pedagogical operational aspects of the school. These functions include but are not limited to: finance, accounting, and budget.

THE OPERATIONS MANAGER is accountable to the Executive Director and Business Manager and is designated to manage facilities maintenance, repair, and upkeep; health and safety; payroll, benefits, and human resources management functions.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Staff operates under the direction of the Executive Director. This is the communication, administrative, and financial center of the School. Some of the

functions include (but are not limited to) record keeping, secretarial support, registration, enrollment procedures, publications and publicity. The Executive Director is accountable and works under the direction of the Board of Directors.

STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR (SSA) is accountable to the Executive Director and serves as the Special Education Director. The SSA is accountable to the Executive Director and assists and consults with the special education teacher, Response To Intervention (RTI) teacher assistants, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, counselors, physical therapists, psychologists and other special education service providers to facilitate services regarding programmatic instruction and specialized services for students, including but not limited to, social-emotional support, counseling support, IEP and 504 plans. The Executive Director may designate the Student Support Services Administrator to fulfill his functions in his absence or as otherwise needed.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS is the decision-making body of the School and is responsible for the legal, financial, and all other aspects of school operations. The Board may consist of parents or others who qualify by virtue of their professional expertise. The Board relies on the Executive Director to handle school operations on a daily basis, and to be a liaison with the faculty.

#### Specific Organizational Considerations

The Sebastopol Independent Charter School is a public school using a Waldorf-inspired curriculum. As a public school, it is subject to rules and regulations, laws, expectations, and standards that may not apply to private schools. It is important that teachers and staff understand the differences and unique structure of the Charter School so as to avoid misunderstandings that could lead to problems.

#### Faculty Responsibility

As in all schools, the teachers are responsible for implementing the school curriculum. Working under the guidance and pedagogical direction of the Executive Director, individual teachers must be the primary planners and decision-makers on matters within their mandated teaching responsibilities, so long as their actions are consistent with school policy. This is a fundamental necessity for the success of the Waldorf-inspired program; it is based upon the professionalism of the teachers, both individually in the classroom, and working together in the Faculty.

#### Areas of Administrative Responsibility

Because of the public school status of the Charter School, many issues, pedagogical or otherwise, are delegated by the Board of Directors to its executive officer, the Executive Director, and in business and operational matters, the Business Manager and/or Operations Manager. The following are some examples:

- The planning, supervision and direction of the business operations of the school.
- School finances, budgets, expenditures, loans, accounting, audits, banks, reimbursements.
- The organization of the school office, including hiring, training, evaluation and,



- when necessary, firing of office staff.
- Approval of all communication with governmental agencies, the general parent body, the press, prospective parents, etc.
- The formulation and execution of administrative policy in all areas.
- The definition and enforcement of proper safety standards school-wide.
- Facility acquisition, planning, development, construction, and maintenance.
- All legal matters, such as compliance with federal, state, and local laws, the terms of the approved charter, employment practices, child protective services, and all other regulations and regulatory agencies.
- Relations with the Sonoma County Office of Education, the sponsoring school district, local planning and building authorities, insurance providers, vendors, and other cooperating agencies.
- Recruitment and evaluation of teaching staff.

## COMMUNICATION

Our community has nearly 1,000 members, so it is to be expected that there will be occasional disagreements or upsets. Please make it a practice to speak directly to one another about things that distress you rather than sharing your resentments with others, and encourage others to do the same. Try to communicate to the other person in terms of your own feelings or responses, rather than speaking about someone else's shortcomings. Encourage parents to approach you directly with any concerns they have about the classroom, you, or their child. This applies to both class teachers and specialty teachers.

In all our communications we are striving to foster human-to-human relationships. Communications should occur in person whenever possible. Less desirable, but sometimes necessary is the use of the telephone. *Under no circumstances should we employ email communications to discuss differences or problems.*

If a grievance cannot be settled between two people, please share it with the Executive Director and it will be handled in a more formal manner. If you have a pedagogical concern or question, please talk to the Executive Director or the Faculty Council. Legal, budgetary, or administrative concerns are handled by the Executive Director and Operations Manager, depending on the nature of the matter.

It's very important that sensitive communications remain private. The office is not a private space, unless you're behind a closed door with an administrator or the Faculty Council. Sound carries and conversations may be overheard.

Discretion is called for when speaking to parents as well. It is not appropriate to share confidential information with parents about individual children other than their own. For example, a teacher should not refer to a specific child's struggles or challenges in a class parent meeting or to people who are not the parents of this child.

Finally, building a school community requires that we work as a group and that we uphold the decisions of the group and of the school as an entity. We will not always agree about what is decided by our fellow faculty members or by the administration. But, we must be scrupulous in our communications with parents and refrain from sharing grievances about the school or your colleagues with them. Again, please speak directly with the person with whom you have a concern and never speak to a group if the concern really just pertains to one person.

## SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS

The *Charter Notes* is the school's newsletter publication. It is distributed on a regular basis via email and on the school website. Be sure to read it yourself and if you would like to place an article in the *Charter Notes*, please submit it to the Receptionist well in advance. We *highly* encourage faculty and student submissions.

*The Parent Handbook* for the school contains information helpful to parents and staff. Please read it, as it outlines many rules and guidelines we expect parents and students to follow. A most updated version can be found online.

When administrators publish a *Memo* (usually in email form) with important administrative information, you must read it in its entirety and in a timely manner.

The Faculty Council communicates with teachers through emails and at meetings. In these you'll be reminded of important dates, and upcoming events. The faculty council may provide updates regarding hiring.

Please read ALL these publications in their entirety in a timely manner. It is *your* responsibility to stay informed.

## SCHOOLWIDE MESSAGES

### EMAIL AND WEBSITES

It is possible to send a voice, email, and/or text message to one (or more) classes or to the faculty. Teachers should only communicate with parents using their school email account. Sending communication to the entire school community requires the Executive Director's approval and is usually sent out by the Office Manager. For instructions on how to send a class message, please talk to the Office Manager. This method utilizes our Schoolwise system and is not as user friendly or flexible as using Google group. While you can send a text or voice alert (or a short email with no links or formatting) , sending a formatted email with links requires following a 4 page protocol (see Office Manager). You can also send a message to any student in your class or to your entire class through your online Schoolwise portal by choosing your class Grade (usually the bottom choice in the list) and right clicking

on the three horizontal lines just to the left of “Room”.

The easiest way for Teachers to communicate with all Teachers & Staff would be to use the Google Group. Depending on the message, check with the Executive Director for appropriateness and permission in sending an email to all employees. Sending an email to all employees regarding a grievance is not appropriate.

It is important that all of us communicate only factual information electronically. No discussion of business or sharing of opinions should occur. Encourage parents to follow this rule as well by modeling this behavior. Do not engage in a discussion with a parent via email and never send communications involving judgment or reprimand in this way. When discipline needs to occur, do it in person or over the phone, not via voice or email messages.

Some teachers have set up moderated e-discussions and class websites with great success. If the teacher controls the information to be shared/communicated, the chance of miscommunication is minimized. If you share information with your class parents, use a blind copy format, or better yet, a moderated “Google-group” to do so. If you use “BCC:” then parents can’t “reply all.” *Be sure to let the Executive Director know how you communicate with parents and copy him on your newsletters and other important announcements/sharings.*

## LETTERS TO PARENTS

It is a good practice to have another staff member read any printed matter you write for the parents. If a letter or publication is especially sensitive (i.e. a letter of resignation, a letter addressing a volatile issue), please have the Executive Director read it before you distribute it. The Executive Director appreciates copies of your parent communications so she/he knows what you’ve told parents and can support you.

## VOICE MAIL

The school will not give out your home phone and/or cell numbers and we discourage you from sharing them as well. Each staff member is given a voice mailbox. *It’s important that you check your voicemail once daily during school days and periodically during breaks.* Let parents know when they can expect to hear from them.

## WORKING WITH PARENTS

Employees are expected to be polite, courteous and professional to every parent and member of the public. When a situation arises where the employee does not feel comfortable or capable of handling the problem, the appropriate supervisor or the Executive Director should be called immediately.

You will have many interactions over the years with parents of school students. It is safe to say that when you are working with people for a long period of time about something they are emotionally attached to (their children), it is probable that a few sticky conversations will happen along the way. Teachers should be honest and direct with parents about the classroom and how their child functions in it. At times, parents need and ask for advice on parenting, rhythm, diet, and other activities appropriate for children, and it is fine for teachers to try to provide guidance. A good rule of thumb: am I qualified to provide this information? If you have serious concerns about the physical or emotional health of a child, speak with a colleague or the Executive Director about it. It is always better to have more than one adult informed about and helping to hold trickier situations.

Teachers and administrative professionals at our school are professional educators. We are not doctors, psychologists, or therapists. It is not appropriate to provide advice for which you are not qualified to give. Don't diagnose anything outside of your role in the classroom or office, and don't prescribe treatments that the school is not equipped to provide.

For example, if a child is struggling in the area of movement, it is good to discuss what you are seeing with the parents and colleagues. It is not appropriate to diagnose it or prescribe particular solutions. Here are some examples:

NO:

- "James has sensory integration problems and you should do such and such therapy."
- "Clearly Sally has a speech problem; don't worry, the school will provide services."
- "Tyler seems really frustrated and is probably ADHD. I'm not sure this is a good school setting for him."

YES:

- "Evan has a hard time with some of our movement activities and I'm watching it closely. Do you notice such and such at home? Tell me more about what you see at your end."
- "I suspect some speech struggles. I'll be recommending our Special Ed Director does a quick assessment on Maria to see if it is indeed something for which services would be appropriate or if it is just something for us to watch for a while."
- "I see restlessness and an inability for John to focus as long as most other students this age. He doesn't appear to be performing up to his ability. Let's meet and talk about his progress and consider what we can do both at home and school to support him."

# MANAGING THE CLASSROOM

## ATTENDANCE

As a public school, it is our legal mandate to take attendance each day. Our entire funding structure is based on it, and it is essential it is done properly. The office receptionist will provide you with a chrome book and show you how to use it. Attendance must always be taken by the class teacher (or the substitute) each and every day, first thing in the morning—and it should never be done by a student. It is the Teacher's responsibility to make sure when there is a substitute that attendance is taken. If the teacher is unable to communicate with the substitute about taking attendance, the teacher should let the office staff know so that someone from the office can ensure that attendance is taken.

Please read ALL these instructions carefully and if you have any questions please speak to the Office Receptionist or Office Manager.

### How to Take Attendance

Attendance is taken through our online Schoolwise portal [www.sebastopolcharter.schoolwise.com](http://www.sebastopolcharter.schoolwise.com) Go to your Class List and Double Click on the Attend button (little clipboard icon). Make sure that you select the correct class from the list as you may have several choices. It is usually the one on the bottom. Example : if you are 2nd Grade then you choose Grade 2(2A). Make sure the Date Tab is set to the correct Date. Then click on any of the "Abs" buttons next to student's name to record an Absence. In the Notes field, please indicate if this was an excused (due to illness, religious holiday, medical or dental appt, funeral) or unexcused absence (sleep in, vacation, etc). After you take attendance for the day, you must be sure to click on the Attendance Not Taken tab (upper right hand side) DAILY to change it to Attendance Taken. This is the only way we can be sure you have completed taking attendance for that day.

Tardy : It is required for all students who are tardy to come to the office first to get a late slip that they will bring to you. Please be sure to mark the appropriate Tardy button in the attendance. You can see the choice is Tardy <30 which means they are less than 30 minutes late to school and Tardy >30 which is later than 30 minutes to school. You should not mark the child late if they have come from a medical appointment, but they still need to get a tardy slip from the office.

Students who need to leave school early must be sent to the office to have their parent sign them out. You do not need to record it if they leave class early, as the office will have a record.

Tardiness occurs when you close the door to your classroom in the morning. Even one minute late constitutes a tardy. If a family has problems with recurring tardiness, they may need to meet with the Executive Director or even the School Board about it, perform community service, etc. These measures are meant to support timeliness overall. It only works if we all uphold the same guidelines. If some teachers mark tardies 5 minutes after the bell and others when it rings, it sends mixed messages to parents and students.

### Leaving Early

When K-2 children leave during the school day, a parent must sign them out with the teacher. If they return to school later in the day, parents should walk the children all the way to the classroom door, making sure there is a teacher there to receive the child. For grades 3-8, parents must sign out their children with the office staff. If they return to school the parent may walk the child to the school office; the child should check in at the office before returning to class.

### Truant

If a child is absent and the parent does not contact the Teacher or the Office to verify the reason for the absence, this is considered an unverified absence or truant absence. California considers any student who has unverified absences of 3 full days and/or tardy 3 times for more than 30 minutes in a school year as truant. This is why it is so important that you keep a record and let the office know if a parent reports an absence to you, even if they report the absence up to 4 days after the student returns.

### Weekly and Monthly Attendance duties

You must review your attendance by Friday of each week to make any corrections as you will not have access to the previous week once the current week closes. Monthly Attendance reports will be printed out from the Office and placed in your mailbox for you to review and sign promptly. It is important that these are reviewed and signed in a very timely manner.

### INDEPENDENT STUDY

Our school's funding is based on attendance, not enrollment. We receive about \$50 per day per child attending school. Each year, the school can lose over \$50,000 in funding due to children being absent from school. Obviously, when children are ill, they should be home. But, it is important that the entire staff encourages families to take vacations during school holidays. We highly discourage "rest days." If families know in advance that their children will miss school, it is possible for them to go on independent study. Teachers can obtain the forms for independent study from the office staff and should assist families in preparing the forms and following up with collection of the work assigned. That way the school gets paid for the days missed. Any more than 10 days absent per year is too many, independent study or not.

Teachers, please make sure you turn in your independent study forms to the office ASAP after a child returns, preferably the next day. For middle school, the math teachers needs to also provide independent study work. It is a huge amount of work to process them if they are late, as it means changing the attendance data already submitted to the state. Although this paperwork may seem to be an extra chore, keep in mind that in one school year, we generally recoup over \$50,000 through Independent Study.

## CLASSROOM SUPPLIES/ORDERING

Each class is given a budget for supplies. In the early grades, it's very important that children's supplies are uniform. As the children get older it's fine to give parents a list of basic school supplies for those items that are less specialized as long as parents understand that the school will supply anything they do not purchase. Be sure to give the families very specific instructions as to which supplies you want, or the varied quality of the supplies will become a point of distraction for the students. Please limit what you ask people to bring to inexpensive items readily available at local stores.

Supplies are stored in the classroom. Please keep shared storage spaces organized and let the Office Manager know if there are supplies that need replenishing.

Some supplies, such as main lesson books, Stockmar paints and crayons, are specialized Waldorf School supplies and may be ordered from sources such as Mercurius. We have an account with them which offers us wholesale prices. (FYI: The school also has an account with Blink, Office Depot and Amazon). Orders are placed by the Office Manager, however, it is the responsibility of each teacher to keep track of their supplies and when they need to have items ordered. Be sure to give time for delivery as some orders can take a week or more to arrive. **All requests for supplies go through our Office by using our [New Supplies Request Google Form](#).**

A few supplies belong to the school permanently. Examples of these would be classroom books, recorders and instruments. Typically, these each have an inventory number on them. For example, every school-owned tenor recorder says "T-3" or "T-5" on it. Books are usually marked with numbers on their spines. Please pass materials out in a way that instructs students to care for these school-owned items. *Keep a record in your record book of who has what items checked out so if the item goes missing or gets damaged, we can hold the student and their family responsible for it.* Make sure to collect these items and check them in carefully at the end of the school year.

## FIELD TRIPS, INCLUDING EIGHTH GRADE TRIP GUIDELINES

The Executive Director must approve all field trips. Anytime students get into a car, it is a field trip! In order to get approval for a field trip, obtain a field trip request form from the office and fill it out at least three weeks in advance, 30 days for overnight trips or those more than 100 miles away. In general, we are trying to lower our carbon footprint and simplify field trips, so teachers should make sure the trips they request are necessary events. See the school's field trip policy and protocol for teachers for more information.

We no longer collect money for field trips from parents on a trip-by-trip basis. The school will ask for a donation from each family that is meant to cover activities like field trips and after-school sports/music programs. Talk to the Operations Manager as you are planning your field trips so you can be sure to anticipate cost as accurately as possible.

All field trip drivers must submit a copy of their insurance coverage to the office; they must have \$100,000/\$300,000 coverage (including you if you drive children). It is the responsibility of the teacher to check with the office to make sure that all drivers have current insurance forms on file.

All parent chaperones must be fingerprinted, so be sure to provide the Receptionist their names well in advance so this process can take place. Parents only need to be fingerprinted once during their tenure at the school.

It is essential that you inform all subject teachers who will be affected by your field trip well in advance so that they do not show up to teach a class that is not there. Please be courteous in letting them know your plans in advance.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip: In September, 2010, the Executive Director, the Board of Directors, and the Faculty Council collated the guidelines pertaining to the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip is intended to be a meaningful, culminating experience for our graduating students, and should be both educational and transformational, promoting the students' movement into a new level of awareness concerning themselves and their peers. Increased self-confidence, mature, social, and emotional integration are goals, as the students share a final experience of their educational journey together. Trips that engage students in new and unique environments, especially natural environments, and have a reasonable degree of challenge to move beyond what is already known are best at accomplishing these goals.

- The class teacher and the Executive Director will work together to choose a suitable trip, taking into consideration the nature of the class, the location and nature of the trip, how the trip fits into the school's insurance coverage, cost, and necessary travel arrangements.
- The school's Executive Director and Faculty Council must receive and officially approve the Eighth Grade trip request well in advance, typically one year.
- No one's access to the trip can be limited for financial reasons.
- The overall cost of the trip is limited to a specific amount per student. Check with the business manager for this amount.
- No air flight should be needed for the trip.
- The trip shouldn't be more than a day's car ride away.
- Staffing should include both genders and the ratio is about 1:8 or higher during activities. The ratio can include staff from the location where the trip takes place. Fewer chaperones are necessary during transport to and from trip events if on a chartered bus. It is required that students are supervised while awake, even if they are in bed.
- A service learning component is highly recommended.
- The students will be physically and/or intellectually challenged in a manner that is developmentally appropriate for a Waldorf Eighth grader.



- A major goal of the trip is to enhance the social dynamic of the class, their connection to each other and with their teacher.

The trip is a required school activity; therefore, every member of the class is expected to participate. Independent studies are not approved in lieu of the trip. Under exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Executive Director, an alternate on-campus educational experience may be provided.

Trip Length and Scheduling: Eighth grade trips should be between 4 and 5 days ideally, allowing a weekend of rest afterwards before returning to class.

Student Behavior Expectations: All students and their parents must sign a Director-approved agreement of behavioral expectations for the trip. This agreement includes provisions for the early return of any student who is unable to abide by the terms of the agreement while on the trip.

Parent Chaperones: For the best student experience, eighth grade trips are ideally accomplished with paid school staff or staff from the trip venue, rather than parent chaperones. If, because of the nature of the trip, parent chaperones are necessary or preferable, only the minimum number is preferred. The decision about which parents will be chaperones will be made by the class teacher, and the Director.

New Teacher: In the event that a class has a new teacher for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year and the trip has already been selected, the trip will take place as planned.

## LOST AND FOUND

Children tend to lose things, but there is a way to minimize this habit. Teachers should try to build time into the schedule for rounding up stray items. For example, students should be taught that when it gets warm and they shed an item of clothing, they should put it in a certain central location. Then, when recess ends, ask all the students to collect their jackets and hats from the designated spot, as well as the balls and other equipment they have used. By getting into the habit of collecting their cast-off items, fewer things will get lost.

Items that are found at school are on a rack just outside the school office. A basket for smaller items (like a watch or special pen) is located in the office. After a time, if no one claims lost and found items they are given to charity.

## PHOTOCOPYING

Upper grades teachers occasionally provide some of their work to students in photocopied form. We encourage you to use this resource sparingly as it is not always the best way to provide information to students. Copies should be made on the faculty office copiers when possible.

## SENDING CHILDREN FROM THE CLASSROOM

When all other disciplinary interventions have failed we may choose to send a child from the classroom. Students may be sent to another classroom (as a lateral send) with a Reflection Form and return at the other teacher's consent when the form is completed. Consult the school's [Discipline Policy & Guidelines](#) and speak to your mentor or a colleague for ideas and support. The teacher who gave the student a reflection form should file the reflection form and communicate with parents when appropriate and necessary. Continued concerns should be brought to the attention of the Student Services Director.

Children should not be sent to the office as a disciplinary measure unless all other measures have failed. It is possible to request that a child have a conversation with another faculty member, the Student Services Director or with the Executive Director as a disciplinary measure. This is not necessarily a measure that is available at a moment's notice.

If a child is sent to the office due to illness or disciplinary action, please send a brief note describing the action the office staff should take. If a child is sent to the office to be sent home for disciplinary reasons, it is a suspension. See below.

## SUSPENSION/SENDING A CHILD HOME

*Whenever a child is sent home it is a suspension, no matter the age of the child or the circumstances, so keep this in mind. It does affect a child's permanent record and it affects the school's funding. A child may be sent home for the rest of the day or for the remainder of the day and the day or two following. Any suspension, by law, requires the approval of the Executive Director, so if you anticipate such an action with any child who is having difficulties, it is a good idea to speak with the Executive Director in advance about the situation.*

Should you need to suspend a child, send them to the office with a brief note describing what action the office staff should take. There are forms in the office that may be used for this purpose. NEVER SEND A CHILD TO THE OFFICE WITHOUT A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF WHAT STEPS THE OFFICE STAFF ARE TO TAKE. As soon as possible, go to the office and check in on the situation. Fill out the form that is required whenever you must suspend a child. Notify the Executive Director and the Student Services Director the same day the suspension occurs—by voicemail if not in person. Take direction from the Student Services Director and Executive Director regarding the call to parents to explain the action in detail.

Please consider alternatives to a suspension, such as an "in-house suspension," especially if it's for the rest of the school day. A student could be in another class for the rest of the school day serving the "in-house suspension" as an alternative. This kind of alternative can be explored depending on the situation.

## THE OFFICE

The office is the heart and hub of the school. This is where the faculty will collect their mail, where we will all run into each other and have business to conduct. It can be a place rich with social interaction. Please try to be considerate when you're in the office to help the staff balance their work in this busy place. Though everyone is delighted to see you when you stop in, a library atmosphere is more conducive to doing work and hearing phone conversations.

### MAILBOXES

There is a mailbox for each faculty and staff member in the school office. Please check it regularly.

### MASTER CALENDAR

Check the master calendar, located in shared drive SICS Faculty & Staff before you set dates for events. Whenever you schedule an event—parent meeting, performance, field trip, etc.—be sure to write in the shared document title. Communicate with the receptionist of any changes or additions you make on the calendar. As a group, we try not to schedule more than one parent meeting an evening if there are sibling conflicts and should avoid scheduling more than one or two per week when possible. It's a good idea to consult with the Faculty Council or a Director before scheduling any big event to avoid changes or conflicts. Also remember that all-school events take precedence over nearly all class-specific events (except perhaps the 8<sup>th</sup> grade play), so wait until the school-wide events are decided before scheduling smaller events for your grade/program.

Any requests for the Assembly Room and the Conference room are coordinated by the Receptionist. Inform the Receptionist in person or by email the event details, dates and times and it will be added to the Google calendar. To view this calendar, open from your app menu on your Google email homepage. There are sign-up documents for the Assembly Room and the Conference Room in SICS Faculty & Staff/ Schedules.

### PHONES, FAX, COPIERS, AND COMPUTER USE

School phones, fax machine, copiers, computers, and printers are for business use only. Please feel free to use them for these purposes. Teachers should use the Faculty copier as much as possible.

Students are allowed to use the phone in their classroom or the black phone in the office or and only with teacher consent. We discourage its use for things like planning play dates. But, if a student forgot something from home or needs a parent to bring different clothing to meet the dress code, they may phone home. Students may not use the copier.

Please let the office staff know immediately if there are problems with any equipment.

# PEDAGOGY

## SEPARATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

As a public school we may not teach any religious doctrine. Since Waldorf classrooms frequently use verses and song and since we study all the major religions of the world during the course of the curriculum, it is important to take care to avoid anything resembling prayer. Learning to recite a Hindu verse in fifth grade as part of the several weeks' study of Ancient India is fine. Repeating a religious poem on a daily basis all year is not.

Waldorf education has an inherent reverence and it is important to understand the difference between this reverence and religion. The First Amendment allows us to teach about other cultures and other periods of time and their religious beliefs. We may sing music from these cultures and to tell their stories, and in fact, we should.

In classroom verses or speech exercises we use we may be thankful for what we have, we may appreciate the world and the people around us, but we cannot praise or thank a being greater than ourselves for these things. In the normal course of our diverse and varied curriculum, this is rarely a problem, but all teachers should carefully read the packets on the First Amendment in public schools. A great source of more information can be found at: <http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/resources/publications.aspx> (Note especially, *A Teacher's Guide to Religion in Public Schools*).

To restate the obvious, it is not acceptable in any public school to preach, proselytize, or teach religion. Waldorf education does not teach religion and never has. However, there are some who falsely argue that it does, so it is important that we are particularly conscious in our work. We must never speak in verse to a deity, explicit or inferred. Legally, we're also probably on safer ground if we avoid using words like soul or spirit. Choose verses that are said before mealtime carefully so they show warmth and appreciation in a way that is not religious. Please consult the *Employee Handbook* for the school's Non-Sectarian policy or the Executive Director if you have any questions about this important topic.

## HOMEWORK

A young child's homework should be just that—work in the home. It is healthy for children to have daily chores that help the family to function from an early age. As soon as a child begins participation in the music program he or she has homework each night—practicing an instrument. Academic homework is usually not given until the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and then it is minimal, functioning primarily to introduce work habits rather than to bring extra drills to the student.

As the years go on homework does increase, but the aim is to minimize the amount of time students are expected to work on schoolwork outside school. If a middle school student practices an instrument each day for half an hour and does academic homework for an

hour, this is a reasonable amount of homework. A class teacher should modify homework and provide accommodations for students with an IEP or 504 accordingly. A class teacher is expected to modify homework within reason for various situations with students. If unsure about what is reasonable modifications, consult with executive director and/or student support director.

Class teachers should facilitate incorporating subject teacher homework into their students' routine of going home at the end of the day with a clear picture of what is due. Many class teachers have a dedicated space on their blackboards for this purpose. If you have questions about homework in general, consult the Executive Director.

### MUSIC PROGRAM

Participation in the school's music program and all subject programs is required. Students must play a musical instrument approved by the Music Director to ensure the instrument will work with the orchestra ensemble (snare drums and bugles might not!). If cost is prohibitive to a student's participation, the school makes certain provisions to ensure every student can participate.

It is important that class teachers support the music program by ensuring parents understand participation is mandatory, and by encouraging daily instrument practice. Many teachers include music practice in their list of daily homework. Any questions or concerns about the music program can be addressed to the Music Director.

### PARENT CONFERENCES

Each family is to receive at least one parent conference with their class teacher each year. In middle school, this may also include the math teacher for specific cases when necessary. In the case of divorce or separation, only one parent conference for both parents may be offered. If necessary due to serious conflict or tension between parents, the Executive Director or another faculty member may be asked to attend the conference.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our school complies with all special education laws and we provide services to students as needed. The Student Support Services Director coordinates special education testing and services. If you have a student for whom you have academic concerns or who you think may need testing, contact the Student Support Services Director. If you have a student who has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and receives services, you will receive regular communication about the special needs of that student.

### SPORTS AND MOVEMENT PROGRAM

The PE teacher/Athletic Director teaches PE twice per week to grades 1-8.

## K-2

- Movement and circle games activity facilitated by ML teacher.
- Parent Education: Class and kindergarten teachers and School encourage healthy before and after school routine including play, chores, and an early bedtime.
- Encourage parents to have nature explorations with their child and appropriate opportunities for play dates, and to consider avoiding organized sports in order to allow more child-directed activities.

## Grades 3-4

- Parent Education: Encourage parents to have nature explorations with their child and appropriate opportunities for play dates, and to consider avoiding organized sports in order to allow more child-directed activities.

## Grade 5

- PE Teacher introduce skill building in the following areas:
  - Javelin
  - Discus
  - Archery
  - Running: distance, sprint, relays, and long jump
  - Greek Wrestling
- Greek Games: the gateway to sports sponsored by the school

## Grade 6-8

- PE Teacher introduce skill building in the following activity areas
  - Volleyball
  - Basketball
  - Medieval Games Skills, (in 6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- After School Sports: school-sponsored sports participation in the following areas through the Middle School Sports League:
  - Volleyball: co-ed 7-8 grades
  - Basketball: girls and boys divisions; grades 6-8
  - Track and Field
  - Cross Country (available through the sports league, possible for grades 6-8)

## CAASPP TESTS

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) tests are given each spring for grades 2-8. The California Science Test (CAST) is also administered for grades 5 and 8. It is a legal requirement that our students to participate in these tests. We encourage the students to do their very best on the tests in order to support their school and demonstrate their academic progress. We reassure them that it is fine if they cannot answer the sections that test them on things they have not yet been taught. We do not significantly alter the curriculum in order to teach to the test, but we do help the children practice the standardized test format and make sure they understand the language used in the test. How our students perform on the tests matters with respect to our funding and

our ability to renew our charter, so it is essential that all staff take the tests seriously and speak of them in a positive light. It is important that teachers who administer the test follow the scrip carefully, which is explicit about not assisting students with answering questions. If a student asks for help, the teacher should only say something like “try your best.” The only assistance that can be provided by a teacher/ test administrator has to do with technical assistance, such as logging a student into their test and providing instructions on how to end a test.

## PERSONNEL MATTERS

### BENEFITS

If your position qualifies for benefits, such as medical, dental, or retirement, you may have periodic questions about the programs. Ask the Operations Manager for assistance, and likewise, please respond immediately with any paperwork or information we may request of you.

### PAY PERIODS AND TIME RECORDS

*Teachers will be paid on an 11<sup>th</sup> month pay cycle, August through June. A Deferred Net Pay option is available whereby employees can set aside or “defer” a portion of each paycheck in order to receive a July paycheck which is paid out on the last pay date of the year (typically July 10<sup>th</sup>). If the Deferred Net Pay option is not chosen the 11-month schedule employee will not receive a paycheck for July. This does not affect administrative personnel who work a 12 month schedule.*

Paydays are twice per month as follows. Salaried employees will be paid twice monthly on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the current month and 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Timecards submitted between the 1st half of the month will be paid on the 25th of the month. Timecards submitted between the 2nd half of the month will be paid on the 10th of the following month.

You may arrange with the Operations Manager to have your paycheck deposited directly into your account. Advances against paychecks are not permitted. If you have any questions on payroll or benefits, direct them to the Operations Manager.

### REIMBURSEMENTS

Teachers are encouraged to use the [New Supplies Request Form](#) located on the [Employee Portal](#) to order supplies. Save your receipts when you use your own money to purchase school supplies. Then, fill out a Reimbursement Request (available in the office and Employee Portal) and put it in the Operations Manager’s mailbox. You must submit a valid, original receipt in order to get reimbursed. Make sure to check with the Operations Manager periodically to make sure you do not go over your class or department budget!

## EVALUATIONS

Evaluation of employees is scheduled approximately once each year for full-time and part-time staff depending on the position. Class teachers are often evaluated every other year. The evaluator differs depending on the position. For example, the executive director evaluates office staff and lead teachers. The student support director evaluates student support staff. Our objective is to recognize areas of strength and weakness, to applaud strengths and gain assistance in areas needing improvement. Part of each evaluation is to set professional development goals to improve upon all aspects of one's work at the school, enabling everyone in the community to benefit from each other's experiences and growth.

### Evaluation Process:

1. Self-evaluation by employee.
2. Evaluation by the Executive Director or a person or persons designated by the Director.
3. Report, including summary of strengths and weaknesses.
4. Implementation of support as needed.
5. Records made of proceedings are filed in permanent personnel file.
6. Follow up and plan for professional development.

### Steps followed in evaluation:

1. Evaluator is identified; for most teaching staff, this will be the Executive Director. An attempt will be made to evaluate all employees within a two-year span.
2. Self evaluation form is given to employee.
3. Dates are set for the evaluation.
4. Follow up and discussion between employee, evaluator, and Executive Director.
5. Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors as appropriate.

### Areas to be Evaluated for Teaching Staff:

1. Content, according to Waldorf-inspired curriculum.
2. Implementation of Waldorf Teaching approach.
3. Teacher preparation and planning.
4. Classroom management.
5. Academic progress of Students.
6. Relationship with children.
7. Relationship with parents.
8. Relationship with colleagues.
9. Professional development.
10. Other areas as appropriate.

## PERSONNEL RECORDS

You have a right to inspect documents in your personnel file, as provided by law, in the presence of a School representative at a mutually convenient time. Personnel records are confidential and will only be disclosed in accordance with applicable law or as authorized by the employee.

## EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Only the Executive Director may provide employment references, verbal or written, regarding current or former employees of the School. Any reference, positive or negative, may put the school



in legal jeopardy and employees are explicitly prohibited from providing them in their capacity as a School employee or on school letterhead.

### OPEN DOOR POLICY

Suggestions for improving the School are always welcome. At some time, you may have a complaint, suggestion or question about your job, your working conditions or the treatment you are receiving. Your good-faith complaints, questions and suggestions also are of concern to the School. We ask that you take your concerns first to your supervisor, following these steps:

1. Within a week of the occurrence, bring the situation to the attention of any supervisor you may have, who will then investigate and provide a solution or explanation.
2. If the problem persists, you may put it in writing and present it to the Executive Director, who will investigate and provide a solution or explanation.
3. If the problem is not resolved, you may present the problem in writing to the Board of Directors for clarification or final decision.

This procedure, which we believe is important for both you and the School, cannot result in every problem being resolved to your satisfaction. However, the School values your input and you should feel free to raise issues of concern, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation.

### RESOLVING ISSUES OF CONCERN

If a question should arise over an issue and it is unclear who carries the responsibility and authority for making the decision, the following guidelines can help:

- A. The Board of Directors is the ultimate decision-making body of the Charter School. Unresolved questions may be brought to the Board agenda for decision via the Executive Director or any other Board Member.
- B. The Board of Directors may delegate responsibility for pedagogical questions to the Executive Director, who supervises individual teachers as to the content and presentation of classroom material and conducts regular evaluations of all teaching staff. Although teachers are given considerable freedom and latitude in the organization of lessons, nevertheless, they are accountable for direction and remediation when necessary.
- C. In the case of issues which arise from time-to-time which are not specifically addressed by existing Board policy: in the event of a disagreement between the Executive Director and a teacher over a decision affecting the Charter School, including pedagogical questions, the teacher and the Executive Director will attempt to reach consensus on the issue. In the event that they are unable to resolve the issue by agreement, then the Executive Director will retain temporary authority in the matter until such time as the Board of Directors can make a final decision.

## RECESS/OUTDOOR TIME

### PLAYGROUND ACTIVITIES

Over the years the faculty has developed guidelines for playground use that reflect the developmental appropriateness of the activities for the children. The faculty may modify these in the future. It is the responsibility of each teacher to stay informed about current recess rules. They are documented in the [Shared Drive/ SICS Faculty & Staff/ Recess Related/ Recess Rules](#) folder. At this date, the guidelines are as follows:

- All games that involve kicking the ball must be supervised closely by the teacher. If the children are not capable of controlling their kicks—if the kicks are wild and dangerous to others—the game may not be played.
- Ropes may never be tied to play structures or trees for any reason. Ropes should be used for jumping, tug of war, and other such activities

If you have any questions about age appropriate playground activities, please talk to the Executive Director, the Faculty Council, or bring it to the faculty meeting for discussion.

Please never let children out of your sight. They must not run ahead of you or hide on the trail where you do not have visual contact.

### PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Most balls and playground games are kept in the game sheds. Each class is responsible for taking care of their own equipment—for seeing that it is returned and kept in good repair. Children should understand that their supply of balls and other materials is limited. Many teachers assign a ball monitor in order to facilitate caring for the class equipment. It should be collected after each recess and returned. If you need additional, specialized equipment, talk to the games teacher to arrange it. Please don't rummage around in the games shed and remove things without prior arrangement.

### RECESS SCHEDULE

Snack 10:20am - 10:30am/ Recess 10:30am - 11:05am

Lunch 12:40pm - 12:55pm/ Lunch 12:55pm - 1:20pm

The Recess Supervision Map, Supervision Schedule and complete set of rules for all areas are located in the [Shared drive/ SICS Faculty & Staff/ Recess Related](#) folder.

### PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION BEFORE SCHOOL

Classrooms are open by 8:15am to students in grades 1-8. All classrooms need to be open at 8am for students on rainy days.

Kindergarten teachers open doors by 8:15am and inform parents they are responsible for the supervision of their children in the yard until doors open.

Outdoor supervision is required by school staff for students of grades 1-2 and grades 3-8 from 8-8:30am.

Third through Eighth grade supervision is provided by subject teachers, usually Study Hall and Games teachers, from 8:00am to 8:30am. The First and Second grade supervision is provided by RTI staff members from 8:00am to 8:30am. This may be a rotating job coordinated between staff, usually RTI and subject teachers.

#### PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION AFTER SCHOOL

Sometimes teachers are asked to assist with supervision for fifteen minutes after school. A staff member typically supervises the traffic pickup every day until 3:20 p.m. (1:15 on early dismissal days). The operations manager or school secretary often takes this duty when the designated staff member is unavailable.

## SAFETY

#### CHILD ABUSE AND MANDATED REPORTING

As a school employee, by law you are a mandated reporter for child abuse. If you suspect child abuse, it is required that the suspicion is reported within 24 hours. Often the nature of what we see in our community with respect to abuse is not obvious as to whether to call CPS. If you suspect abuse, you must report it but we encourage you not to feel alone in this process. Report the incident or suspicion to the Executive Director immediately. Often the Director may have heard enough about a particular situation over time that a call may be warranted. He can help make decisions whether to call and even help you place the call. A written report must be made after a CPS call. See the Executive Director for details and assistance.

Sonoma County Child Protective Services: (707) 565-4303 or (800) 870-7064

#### FIRST AID AND SAFETY RULES

Each class must have a first aid kit. The class teacher is responsible for keeping the kit well supplied. *We may not administer any oral medication to the students, including Rescue Remedy or arnica.* You may provide topical products, such as calendula and arnica creams. No student may have medications at school, even over the counter products, without filling out and having a doctor sign a form available in the office.

Each teacher should have a first aid kit that accompanies him or her when taking the class on a field trip. Each teacher is required by law to have first aid training and CPR. We

schedule a training session early in the school year for all those who need it; most teachers complete this course every other year.

Accidents do occur and children get injured. Should an accident occur you must fill out an accident report. (See ACCIDENT REPORTS below for more details.) To decrease the likelihood of accidents children should not be allowed to climb trees during the school day except under the following conditions: children may climb no higher than their own shoulder height on limbs that are at least as big around as their own thigh. Of course, you can ask children who are not playing safely to stop at any time.

### ACCIDENT REPORTS

Accidents do occur and children get injured. Should an accident any more serious than one needing a band-aid occur you must fill out an accident report. These can be obtained in the office. It is important that the accident report be filled out within 24 hours of the injury. Turn them in immediately to the office. With any injury more serious than a scrape, please call the parents and speak with them personally to let them know what happened. Then, check in with them the next day to see how the child is doing.

### EARTHQUAKE/LOCKDOWN/FIRE DRILLS

Once a month, teachers are responsible for conducting either an earthquake, lockdown or fire drill. You will be informed in advance when this is necessary. For fire drills, the class should file out silently and orderly to the nearest exit, and out to the athletic field. Classes should line up by grade in single, straight lines. Teachers should take the class laptop with Attendance out with them and close the classroom door upon departure. Detailed instructions will be put into teacher mailboxes for earthquake and lockdown drills.

### WILDFIRE/ AIR QUALITY DAYS

Wildfires have become more common in recent years and it is sometimes necessary to close the school for the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff due to danger of proximity or unhealthy air quality. The Office Manager tracks AQI levels when class is in session and will give additional instructions based on levels throughout the day. Such recommendations could include indoor recess or outdoor field trip cancellations. There are two extra days built into the school year to accommodate a possible closure. Additional days would require a later end to the school year to meet the instructional minutes required for the school year.

### DISTANCE LEARNING

In the case of extended school closures due to natural disasters and community health threats, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning may be initiated. This method is

not ideal for our curriculum but may be necessary to meet our responsibility to educate our students with the goal of ensuring students are receiving lesson plans equivalent to what we normally provide.

Protocols for distance learning are located on the [Shared drive/ SICS Faculty & Staff/ Distance Learning Pages](#) folder.

Instructions for parents are on the Parent Portal (password: waldorf) on our website [www.sebastopolcharter.org](http://www.sebastopolcharter.org). The webpage, Sebastopol Charter Distance Learning, has a menu for all grade levels, in addition to other resources.

## SCHOOL POLICIES

This is not a comprehensive list of school policies, but a few things of which you may want to take note and which may be unique to our school culture. For a more complete description of school policies see both the *Parent Handbook* and the *Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook*.

### BICYCLES AND OTHER WHEELED THINGS

We encourage students and staff to bike and walk to school whenever possible. There are bike racks on campus. Bikes should remain in the bike rack area and are not to be ridden on campus. No use of other wheeled things is permitted – no skateboards, rip sticks, roller skates, wheeled shoes, etc. Please help enforce this rule by asking parents and students not to use them on campus.

### CELL PHONE USE

Cell phones may be used on campus only in the office or faculty room. They are not to be used elsewhere on campus—by students, teachers, parents or employees of the school. Never use your cell phone in the presence of a student unless it is an emergency, and class teachers should never call a student’s parents via cell phone (or allow children to do so) to report an illness. The office staff must be the ones to make the call so they can relay proper information when the parent calls back or arrives at school. If you see a student using a cell phone, please take the cell phone to the office. If you see an adult using a cell phone, please ask them to step off campus or into the office to make their call. Students may bring cell phones to school, but the phones must remain out of sight and powered off while the student is on campus, no exceptions.

If you see or hear a student cell phone during the day, please take it away immediately, no matter the circumstances, and bring it to the office. Explain to the student that they may retrieve it by meeting with the Executive Director, along with a parent, at the end of the

day. (This is also true of ipods, itouches, ipads, digital cameras, etc. which are never allowed on campus.)

### DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our school has adopted the Restorative Justice method of discipline which seeks to hold the student accountable without blame or shame. Students are provided a Reflection Form to complete for each incident followed by a private check-in by the teacher addressing the unwanted behavior. The parent(s) are notified by email that the Reflection Form is to be signed and returned. If you have ongoing discipline challenges with a student that is progressing through the levels, it is your responsibility to follow the steps set out in the Discipline Policy and Guidelines document and communicate, as appropriate, with the Director of Student Services and the Executive Director. Discipline related documents referred to above, including [tracking sheet instructions](#), are located on the shared drive in the [httpsSICS/ Faculty and Staff/ Discipline and Restorative Justice](#) folder.

### DRESS CODE FOR CHILDREN

Please familiarize yourself with the school's dress code. It is the responsibility of all teachers to enforce it. Especially in the older grades, children are capable of changing their attire once their parent(s) have left the campus. When we work as a common group of adults with the same guidelines we provide a structure for the children that is healthy and supportive of their education. All teachers should feel free to "police" all children, regardless of the grade.

### DRESS CODE FOR TEACHERS

It's important that teachers appear professional when they stand before the children. Just as we avoid clothing in the children that causes distraction, we aim as teachers to avoid clothing that makes us stand out as an individual or which is overtly expressive, opting instead for the appearance of the archetypal teacher. Please feel free to wear comfortable clothing that allows freedom of movement as long as your clothing appears professional as a teacher. Clothing that is ripped should be avoided. Appropriate, protective shoes should be worn.

### FORMALITY

In an effort to uphold a professional atmosphere at the Sebastopol Charter School, the attitude between teachers and students is formal. While we expect warm, friendly student-teacher relationships, they are relationships in which the adult is a role model for the student. In support of this, teachers are addressed by their surnames, with Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. Teachers should model a clear, rich use of the English language, devoid of slang

expressions. Teachers should avoid having conversations about colleagues or students when students are present. Please remember, that in your dress, grooming, mannerisms, and inner gesture, you model for the students what it is to become a human being.

This formality carries over into the “changing of the guard.” When a subject teacher is about to enter the room, the presiding teacher has the class stand, ready to greet her/him depending on the grade level. One of the students opens the door to welcome the new teacher in. The two teachers greet each other first by shaking hands. Then the new teacher turns to the class and says, “Good morning, Fifth Grade.” The class responds and the presiding teacher leaves.

### FUNDRAISING

The Executive Director must approve all school or class fundraising, or they may refer such requests to the Charter Foundation for approval. See the *Parent Handbook* for more details.

### LIBRARY USE

The school library is available for teacher use. You may check out items from the library by putting your name on the clipboard along with the titles you are borrowing. Children are not allowed to check out books from the library, nor are they allowed in the teacher’s room without the teacher. You may check out books to the children that you have checked out from the library. Children are responsible for any books they check out from you and must pay for any lost or damaged articles.

To return books, please file them back on the appropriate shelf and mark ‘Returned’ on the clipboard.

### SOCIAL INCLUSION AND RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

SICS has been studying and practicing a school-wide social inclusion program for some time now. The faculty engaged in a three-year training with Kim John Payne, and students are trained each year to serve as assistants in the Student Social Action Committee (SSAC). The SSAC is a group of Eighth grade students who are trained to assist with the mediation of social issues. Our social-emotional coordinator teaches the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students about helping with conflict and social inclusion during recesses.

The social-emotional coordinator also helps with restorative discipline situations. The school has provided professional development on restorative discipline. There are restorative discipline cards for teachers to refer to in each classroom.

## SUSPENSION

If a child is sent home, it is a suspension. Suspensions longer than one day may be given only with the approval of the Executive Director.

Should you need to suspend a child, send him or her to the office with a brief note describing what action the office staff should take. There are forms in the office that may be used for this purpose. Never send a child to the office without a brief written explanation of what steps the office staff are to take. As soon as possible, go to the office and check in on the situation. Fill out the form that is required whenever you must suspend a child. Notify the Executive Director the same day the suspension occurs—by voicemail if not in person. Call the parents that evening to report the incident and discuss next steps.

## VISITORS AND GUESTS

If you have visitors to your classroom or on site, they must sign in and out at the office, and they will need to have a visitor sticker with their name stuck onto their shirt. Guest lecturers or speakers should be cleared through your mentor or the Executive Director before you have them in. It protects you to have someone at the school know who you are having in to be with the students. In some cases, guests must obtain a background check first (overnight field trip chaperones, those who will be alone with the children one-on-one).

## **SITE**

### CARING FOR CLASSROOM WALLS

Please do not use duct tape or push pins on the walls. Use “sticky tack,” blue painter’s tape, or magnetic strips for hanging the children’s work.

### CLEANING

A cleaning company comes to clean the bathrooms daily, but classrooms and common areas are all of our responsibility. We also contract for once-a-week cleaning for classroom floors and surfaces. Many teachers have a rotating parent list for other weekly cleaning duties. A list of class chores for each grade is posted in the office. When every class is responsible for a certain area, things tend to look nicer.



## CLIMATE CONTROL

Each room on campus has a separate climate control system. Ask the Operations Manager how to operate the systems appropriately. Please do not guess how to operate nor run the air conditioner with the doors and windows open.

## FURNITURE

Mark desks and chairs with children's names by using blue tape or chalk or a simple name sign. Do not use crayon, pencil, or marker to mark whose chair is whose. Check the inside and undersides of desks regularly to make sure students are keeping them mark-free. There are tools and hardware for tightening the double desks in the office you may borrow – students can help with this chore. If there are student-made gouges or graffiti on the furniture, please ask the student (with their parent's supervision) to sand and repair the desk back to its original condition.

## LOCKING AND UNLOCKING THE SCHOOL

When teachers arrive in the morning, several doors must be unlocked on campus. This job may be rotated among the faculty and staff.

When you leave make sure all gates and bathrooms are locked, and the assembly room windows and doors are tightly shut. Please err on the side of locking up too much, however, consider that a parent without a key might be cleaning after school, so do check.

## PARKING

Designated teacher and staff parking is on the far side of the parking lot closest to the athletic field. Administration parking in the small lot near the admin building. The west side of the school parking lot has a few designated spaces for city citizens using the trail. Please keep these parking spaces free per our agreement with the City of Sebastopol.

## REPAIRS

Please report any repairs or safety concerns to the Operations Manager. You may do so by using the [Maintenance Request Form](#) or by email.

## RESTROOMS

Student bathrooms are located by the 1st and 2nd grade area and next to the music room. There are two Staff and Faculty bathrooms in the office.

We have two “All Gender” bathrooms that double as Adult-use bathrooms: one by the bathrooms next to the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2nd grade classrooms and one by the bathrooms next to the music room. Any student who identifies as gender neutral or trans and wants to use the All Gender bathroom is allowed by law (AB 1732). Students who clearly identify as biological male or female should use gender-identity bathrooms only due to availability and use of a single stall bathroom for the teachers is important during the brief opportunities during the school day.

Please supervise younger students (Grades 1 and 2) due to many issues with damage to the stalls and locks. For older grades, please only send one student at a time in order to dissuade bathroom shenanigans.

### TRASH, RECYCLING AND COMPOST

The school has a daily cleaning company that collects trash and recycling from the classrooms. There are green compost buckets in each classroom that have specific food waste listed for our compost system. Trash and recycling are stored in the wooden building closest to the staff parking lot.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCES

### SCHEDULING PERFORMANCES

Schedule student performances by writing into the document Parent Evenings, Testing, Field Trips and Performances Schedule located in SICS Faculty & Staff.

### ASSEMBLY ROOM USE

There is a great demand for the assembly room. It is important that teachers schedule any times that they plan to use it in order to avoid conflicts. There are assembly room calendars in the office and on the [Shared drive/ SICS/ Faculty & Staff/ Schedules](#) folder. Check both to ensure the date/ time is available. If the PE teacher wants to use the Assembly Room during a rainy day, the PE teacher should make sure there are no conflicts with scheduled uses of the room.

No matter how good our planning there will be surprises or conflicts over room use, and these usually occur when we are most stressed out about time and space. At these times it's essential that we maintain an attitude of flexibility and understanding. With this attitude most problems can be solved and a feeling of good will is cultivated among us.

There is no custodian for the Assembly Room. We should all leave the assembly room in good order when we leave it. Vacuuming is required after using the room, and please be respectful to your colleagues who will also be using this room. It's important to put away all sets, props and costumes when a performance has been completed. Remember that this room is used as a classroom and the teachers who teach in it appreciate finding it as they left it.

### CLASS PLAY GUIDELINES

The performance of class plays in The Sebastopol Independent Charter School is a major undertaking requiring much preparation on the part of a class teacher. Generally, plays are performed each year by each grade. In some grades, a teacher may choose to perform a second play. While the teachers are always encouraged to stretch their class a little bit more each year as far as difficulty is concerned, it is always hoped that teachers will keep in mind the effect that their play will have on other grades and other class teachers.

It is hoped that teacher ideas concerning plays will be in keeping with the mood of the school. A class teacher should speak to his/her mentor concerning content appropriateness. It is hoped that no teacher will go so far with a play with regard to costumes, sets and lighting as to make it difficult for subsequent teachers to perform their plays in a simpler form. The class teacher is THE director of the play. The teacher may ask parents for support but should remain in charge. Plays are typically performed in the classroom, outdoors, and in the Assembly Room. Plays are performed for the classes and separately for the parents. In grades one through six there are generally only two performances. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades may add additional performances, if desired. Only 8<sup>th</sup> grade is allowed to ask for donations to help defray costs of putting on the production; no admissions price can be required. Refreshments may follow the performance for the parents. Printed programs may be presented to the parents at that performance.

Just as costumes, props, and staging gets more complex as the students get older, so might other traditions, such as bowing at the end of the play. In grades one through four, it is appropriate for all the students to bow together. As individual parts become more prominent in the plays in the upper grades, it makes sense for small groups of those in larger roles to bow separately in addition to the "whole group" bow.

### COSTUMES AND STAGING

In grades one through three, the story presented in the play should be firmly rooted in the imaginative realm. Therefore, only the simplest of costumes or tunic is recommended. Belts, crowns, vests, and such should be used sparingly, increasing as the class matures. Movement should not be encumbered by costumes. Some teachers prefer to use a choral format with the entire class reciting the entire script. Generally, individual speaking parts

come in third grade. Staging is generally circular or semi-circular and on one level (with no stage platforms used). It is requested that no theatrical lighting or backdrops be used.

In grades four and five, the play content is imaginative but more complex than earlier grades. While some of the play may remain choral, much of the play has individual speaking parts. The semi-circular format gives way to more complex staging. Costumes that become more complex with moustaches, beards, etc., are more widely used. Beginning in the fourth grade, the play may be performed on multi-level platforms, and occasionally some simple sets may be used. Props in these grades should be simple. Stage make-up should not generally be used; however, a special character may lend itself to specialized treatment. Simple lighting may begin in fourth and fifth grades. Blackouts between scenes are appropriate from fifth grade and up.

In sixth grade, the play stories and treatments become more sophisticated. Simple stage make-up, theatrical lighting and backdrops are appropriate. Sets and scenery should be designed, constructed, and painted by the students with adult supervision and guidance. In seventh and eighth grades, the plays again become more difficult and challenge the students and class teacher to take the next steps. The complexity of these plays is such that class teachers should feel comfortable seeking extra support from colleagues in all areas of production development. In grades one through six, the plays are generally curriculum-based, re-telling stories the students have been living with, in the grade. In seventh grade, the plays may take a new turn. The play content may be curriculum-based or might be a modern play, farce, musical, or even Shakespeare. At SICCS currently, a Shakespeare play is typically performed in the eighth grade. If a teacher wishes to do this in the seventh grade, they should consult their mentor and the current eighth grade teacher before taking this step. Seventh grade plays may have complicated sets, props, theatrical lighting, make-up and content. They are a lead-up to the culminating eighth grade play.

In eighth grade, the graduating class performs their most difficult play up to this point. All aspects of the play are more complicated than the prior years. The play in eighth grade should be the crowning achievement of the class. It is generally agreed that this is where the Shakespeare play should be performed. However, if an eighth grade teacher wants to perform a different style of play, they must discuss this with their mentor.

As class teachers we are responsible to present plays with content that is suitable for the school community, it is good to consider if the material is legally in the right and culturally in the right. Teachers should consider the choice of material, costumes, props, music, and set with care. Teachers should consult their mentor, colleagues, or Executive Director with questions.

Examples of things that could be problematic include:

- Very specific religious references
- Material that is strongly anthroposocial in nature
- Behavior by characters in the play that is “off color”, such as drunkenness, use of slang or swearing

- Use of technology for either a special effect.
- Avoid anything that can be problematic with diversity issues, such as stereotyping gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Be sure to check with your mentor, or the Executive Director about the appropriateness of any such content.

### COSTUMES, PROPS AND THEATER EQUIPMENT

Over the years the school has acquired a number of lovely costumes for all grade level plays. The costumes are located behind the stage in the assembly room. The school's selection of stage sections, backdrops, and stage lighting are located in the assembly room or nearby sheds.

### PLAY/ COSTUME ROOM PROTOCOL

#### During Class

##### Play:

1. Make note of where costumes and props are coming from.
2. The teacher is in charge of play coordination. If there are parent helpers, please communicate with them about the rules and expectations of the school.
3. Children are not allowed in the costume area without direct adult supervision.
4. Costumes need to be kept at all times inside classrooms or locked in the assembly room, not on the courtyard.
5. While the current play being performed has first access to the costume room, please be open to coordinating with the next class play for their needs. (i.e. tell them when you have completed pulling costumes, etc.)
6. Please stress that older children should be using deodorant when using costumes.

#### After Class

##### Play:

1. Put chairs back on rolling racks.
2. Vacuum assembly room and backstage area.
3. Remove backdrops and return if not needed for the next play.
4. Return shelving to cleanliness and accessible status
5. Throw away all trash

6. Let Operations Manager know if anything has been broken such as lighting, stage, etc.

#### Costumes:

1. Please treat costumes with respect. Hang them on costume racks after each use (i.e. don't leave them balled up on the ground).
2. Use hangers (if applicable)
3. Put back where they are normally stored
4. If the costume needs to be washed or laundered because of smell, or they become soiled, speak to the Operations Manager. Props –
5. Put back where they are normally stored

#### General

##### Rules:

1. The costumes are for school plays only. Exceptions: Specially marked bins are stored in the costume shed for costumes donated for Fort Ross Class trip use, and white tunics for the Pentathlon.
2. Costumes will not be loaned outside the school, during the school year or during vacation time.
3. Costumes are not available for personal use.
4. Costumes will not be taken home after plays. If an item needs cleaning/repair, please contact the Operations Manager.
5. Donations of costumes, props and fabric are greatly appreciated. They can be left at the front desk in a bag clearly marked "For costume room."

#### FILMING OR RECORDING PERFORMANCES

It is the policy of this school not to photograph or videotape any performances by the children, except for the Eighth grade play, which may be photographed only. It is acceptable to take photographs of the children in costume after a performance has been completed.

## SCHOOL EVENTS CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Month</b>	<b>Date/ Timing</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
August	Saturday before first day Of school	Work Day	Assign parents to prepare classrooms
September	2nd Friday of School	Opening Rose Ceremony	G1 & G8; G7 train
	Mid-month, Friday 9am	New Parent Orientation	ED & Development Co
	Last Friday	Festival of Courage	
October	TBA	School Photo Days	Office Manager
November	1st or 2nd	Dia de los Muertos	Spanish Teachers
December	1st Weekend after Thanksgiving	Winter Garden	Kinder teachers w/G1&2 support
	Friday before break	Winter Offering	G6 supervise w/ teacher support; G5 train; parents participate by invitation but event is held by teachers
February	1st weekend	Enrollment Event Open House	Enrollment Coordinator + 3-8 class teachers on Friday night; K-2 teachers on Saturday morning
	Wednesday before break	All School Assembly	G4 & Resource teacher supervise, G8 set up & clean up; G3 train
May	On or near the 1st	May Faire Festival	G3 & G5 supervise; G4 tain
	Thursday, mid-month	Spring Middle School Ensemble Concert	G7&G8; music director
June	Last Day of School	Closing Rose Ceremony	G1&G8; G7 train
	Last Day of School	Graduation of Class 8	ED, G8, G7&G8 parents

# APPENDIX: REFERENCES

## School Verse

This is our school.  
Let peace dwell here.  
Let warmth flood our hearts,  
Light fill our heads,  
And good flow from our hands.  
Let us remember  
That many hands built this place  
So that many hearts could make a school.

## Student Morning Verses

### GRADES 1 – 4

The sun with loving light  
Makes bright for me each day  
The self with inward power  
Gives strength unto my limbs  
In sunlight shining clear  
I do revere  
The strength of human kind  
Which so graciously grows within my being  
That I with all my might  
May strive to work and learn  
Toward me come light and strength  
From us rise love and thanks.

### GRADES 5 – 8

I look into the World  
In which the sun is shining  
In which the stars are sparkling  
Where stones in stillness lie  
Where living plants are growing  
Where animals move in feeling  
And striving human beings  
Give dwelling to living thought

I look into my heart  
Where lies my inmost being  
Life's thinking lives and weaves



In light of sun and self  
In heights of world without  
In deepest depths within.  
From that wide world around me  
I ask that joy and strength  
For learning and for work  
In me may live and grow.

### Teacher's Morning Verse

We have the will to work  
That into this our work may flow  
That which, from out of the spiritual world,  
Working in soul and spirit, in life and body,  
Wills to become human within us.

### Faculty Meeting Verses

May there reign here spirit-strength in love;  
May there work here spirit-light in goodness;  
Born from certainty of heart,  
And from steadfastness of soul,  
So that we may bring to young human beings  
Bodily strength for work, inwardness of soul, and clarity of spirit.  
May this place be consecrated to such a task;  
May young minds and hearts here find  
Servers of the light, endowed with strength, who will guard and cherish them.

Imbue thyself with the power of imagination  
Have courage for the truth  
Sharpen thy feeling for responsibility of soul

To educate youth means to develop spirit in matter.  
It means to develop tomorrow within today.  
It means to develop spirit existence in earthly life.