2026-2027
STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

582 McIntosh Rd
Sarasota, FL 34232
Phone (941) 377-2278
www.SarasotaAcademyoftheArts.com

Before-Care Hours:
7:00 AM-8:15 AM
(School Breakfast 8:15 AM-8:30 AM)

School Hours:
8:30 AM – 4:15 PM

Aftercare Hours:
4:25 PM – 5:30 PM

Office Hours:
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Absent notes:
attendance@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com

Please read and sign the last page of the handbook.
Then the student will return the signed last page to Homeroom/Advisory teacher by Friday, August 14th, 2026

Welcome to the 2026-2027 School Year

Dear Families and Students:

The Governing Board members, administration, and staff of the Sarasota Academy of the Arts welcome you! The information in this handbook has been carefully prepared to help our students succeed.

In addition to reading this handbook thoroughly, parents and students should also read the Sarasota County Schools Student and Family Handbook which is linked to the Sarasota Academy of the Arts website. It is especially important to study the Code of Student Conduct to ensure that student behavior meets school and district expectations.

We look forward to the challenge of educating our students and helping them grow to be happy, secure, well-adjusted young adults. We hope this handbook will help your family be an active partner in making the 2026-2027 school year your students' most successful ever.

President of the Board/Parent Liaison:	Mrs. Mary Stewart Kennedy	TKennedy@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com
Principal:	Dr. Jodi Kopacz	JKopacz@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com
Registrar/Administrative Assistant:	Mrs. Melissa Egan	Maegan@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com
ESE/ESOL Instructional Facilitator:	Mrs. Heather Chambers	Hchambers@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com
School Counselor	Melissa Wente	MWente@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com

Mission Statement: Sarasota Academy of the Arts, a public charter school for kindergarten through 8th grade students, was established to provide a strong academic program enhanced by daily exposure to the visual and performing arts in a small, family atmosphere.

Vision Statement: SAA will provide students interested in visual and performing arts with rigorous academic skills in line with The Florida Standards of Education strongly infused with the arts. SAA believes that the opportunity to experience the arts on a continual basis promotes and enhances academic success. All students in elementary school will receive art and music instruction daily. Middle school students may elect from a wide variety of visual and performing arts to round out their academic day. The goal of SAA is to prepare students to become well-rounded, confident, academically prepared, and innovative adults who can reach their full potential as caring and responsible citizens.

SARASOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS
2026-2027 DISTRICT ACADEMIC CALENDAR
1960 Landings Blvd. Sarasota, FL 34231 Phone (941) 927-9000

JULY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

6th - 10th - 240 Staff Non-Work Days
13th - 220 Staff Return

AUGUST 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2	3	4	5	6	7	1 / 8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3rd - 196 Staff Return
10th - First Day for Students, 186 Staff

SEPTEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6		8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7th - Labor Day - Students, All Staff

OCTOBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12*	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

9th - End of 1st Grading Period
12th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff

NOVEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25			28
29	30					

23rd - 27th - Thanksgiving Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff
25th - 27th - Thanksgiving Break - 240 Staff

DECEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18th - End of 2nd Grading Period
21st - 31st - Winter Break - Students, All Staff

JANUARY 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4*	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17		19	20	21	22	23
24 / 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

1st - Winter Break - Students, All Staff
4th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff
18th - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Students, All Staff

FEBRUARY 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14		16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

15th - Presidents Day - Students, All Staff

MARCH 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12*	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26*	27
28	29	30	31			

11th - End of 3rd Grading Period
12th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff
15th - 19th - Spring Break - Students, All Staff
26th - Mini Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff

APRIL 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16*	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

16th - Mini Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff

MAY 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2	3	4	5	6	7	1 / 8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27*	28*	29
30						

26th - Last Day for Students, 186 Staff
28th - Last Day for 196 Staff
31st - Memorial Day - All Staff

JUNE 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

11th - Last Day for 220 Staff

* Inclement weather makeup day if needed

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Parents' Bill of Rights (HB 241) (2021) and Parental Rights in Education (HB 1557) (2022)
Please refer to: 9.11 Parental Rights and Responsibilities | Sarasota County Schools

100.0 Attendance Policies

Florida Statute 1003.21 mandates that all students are required to attend school and sets forth specific requirements for the school. Parents and students can be held legally accountable for truancy. Excessive tardiness and/or unexcused absences may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and a return to the students' districted school.

Attendance is reported by the period at the middle and high school levels. In order to be considered present for the day, a student must be in attendance minimally for:

Middle School

Four periods of the day (200 minutes)

Elementary School

Half of the school day (200 minutes)

- Sarasota Academy of the Arts will follow the Sarasota County Schools' calendar. The academic day starts at 8:15 am.
- K-5 car riders are dismissed at **4:00 PM**. Students who ride with 6-8 students will be picked up at **4:15 PM.**
- After-school care is provided by SAA as a fee-based program. Information concerning fees and the program schedule is available in the school office and on the website, or contact began@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com
- Regular school attendance is imperative and crucial to academic achievement. Every effort should be made to ensure regular attendance.
- Family vacations should be scheduled when school is not in session. Vacations are not excused absences.

100.1 – Excused Absences

- If a student is absent, a signed note or email via FOCUS or attendance@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com from the parents/guardian or a physician must be presented within three days for the absence to be counted as excused.
- If that communication does not occur, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.
- The following absences will be considered excused:
    - The student is ill (if illness persists for three or more consecutive days, or requires numerous nonconsecutive absences, a doctor's note may be requested by the principal.)
    - Major illness in the family (if illness persists for three or more consecutive days, or requires numerous nonconsecutive absences, a doctor's note may be requested by the principal.)
    - Therapeutic services appointment (i.e. speech, occupational, physical, behavioral therapy)
    - Any absence judged appropriately by the principal, provided that a written request is made 48 hours before the absence.
- With an excused absence, students will have an equal number of days to complete the assigned work without penalty.

100.2 – Unexcused Absences

- In accordance with the Sarasota County School District's policy, a student is considered truant if s/he has five (5) or more unexcused absence days within a calendar month or ten (10) or more unexcused absence days within a ninety (90) day calendar period and can be subject to judicial action.
- In the case of an unexcused absence, a student will have an equal number of days to complete the work missed but may lose points on assignments.
- An unexcused absence will occur if the student **uses their cell phone** on campus to call home rather than the clinic/administrative office.

100.3 – Tardies

It is extremely important that students arrive at school on time and are ready to learn. When students arrive late, they miss valuable instruction time and disrupt the classroom.

- Students are allowed to enter classrooms at 8:15 am.
- Students who are tardy **must be signed in** at the office **by their parents/guardians** before going to class.

100.4 Early Release

- Parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from picking up their children during the academic day.
- Students who are removed early from school are missing valuable instruction time and this will be treated in the same way as tardies.
- Should an emergency arise, the parent must sign the student out in the office.
- If a student is not feeling well, s/he must use the office phone to call a parent/guardian. **Students will not be allowed to use their cell phone**, a staff member's cell phone, or a classroom phone to call home when they don't feel well. **If a student goes home sick and they have contacted their parent/guardian from a cell phone, the absence will be considered "unexcused" and the clinic aid will write a Notice of Concern.**

Excessive tardies, early dismissals, and/or unexcused absences may jeopardize the standing of a student at SAA. Cases will be handled individually, and determination will be made based on the circumstances of the absences.

100.5 Student in Transition Enrollment Procedures (SCSB Policy 5.14)

A homeless/transition student is defined under the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:

- Sharing the housing of other people temporarily due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (doubled up).
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Living in motels, hotels, temporary trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- Migratory children living in one (1) of the above-described circumstances.
- Unaccompanied Youth living in one (1) of the above-described circumstances.

200.0 Behavior

Sarasota Academy of the Arts is committed to providing quality education in a family atmosphere and believes this is one of the strongest qualities in making SAA a nurturing and creative atmosphere for learning. There is no place for disrespect for teachers, other adults, or students in this type of environment. Please refer to Section 3 – Behavior | Sarasota County Schools for Code of Student Conduct; Bullying and detailed information related to Harassment and Student Dating Violence and Abuse, Sexual Assault, Sexual Battery and Sexual Offenses (other); Gangs and Discrimination-students' rights and responsibilities.

200.1 – Dress Code

Dress Code Guide Infographic:
2026-27 SCS Dress Code

Students are expected to always dress appropriately.
Students are **required to wear student Identification Cards, IDs, at all times**.

- Shorts that hem is at least the length of the longest fingertip
- Skirts or dresses that is at least the length of the longest fingertip with shorts underneath
- ANY pairs of pants or jeans **that have rips and/or tears above the knee must have colored tights (not neutral color) underneath;** holes/rips/tears at the knee or below do NOT require tights.
- Leggings or low-rise pants with a shirt that covers the buttocks
- Shirts/dress that have sleeves or at least a **2-inch-wide** strap
- Closed toe, closed heel shoes

Students may **not** wear the following:

- Baggy pants without a belt/exposed underwear
- Tights that are ripped or shredded
- Bike shorts
- Midriff tops, halter tops, tube tops, or cropped tops or **off the shoulder shirts/sweaters** even with a tank.
- Shirts or dresses with spaghetti straps or low-cut necklines.
- Spiked jewelry, chains, or excessive jewelry
- Visible body piercings other than earrings (no more than 2 per ear). A small stud nose piercing may be visible, no septum nose rings, hoop nose rings or facial rings (i.e. lip, brow), including performances, field trips, or activities that represent SAA.
- Pajamas
- Shirts with inappropriate slogans (offensive, suggestive, indecent, political, or associated with gangs)
- Hats, face coverings or head covers inside the classroom to include hoodies. Medical face masks worn correctly over the face and nose at all times is acceptable with a doctor's note.
- Flip flops, slippers, sandals, slip on shoes, and/or **Crocs**
- Tattoos
- Hand coverings or gloves in the classroom
- Clothing with any sheer or see through opening areas or panels (no sheer clothes)
- Any exposed under garments to include underwear, bras or bra straps, bralettes
- Tails, furry items that attach to clothing

The homeroom teacher is responsible for checking dress code compliance. **Students will be given appropriate clothing until their parents can bring a dress-code acceptable outfit if applicable.** The student will wait in the administrative office while completing their daily work until the student's attire is brought to school. If violations continue, this is a breach of the parent and student handbook and a referral with consequences may occur.

200.2 – Electronic Devices

In accordance with the revised Sarasota County School Board policy and Governor DeSantis State Policy, students may not possess an electronic device, such as a cell phone, smart phone, laptop computer, or other device that receives, sends, or stores digital data, while on campus. The electronic device remains **powered off and concealed from view during the school day**. A referral will be written and a parent is required to pick up the phone.

- All students must sign and return the Acceptable Use Policy before using electronic devices on campus.
- **SAA will not be responsible for any electronic devices when brought to school. Smart watches or smart Fit Bits are not allowed. All electronics must be used correctly.**
- Students may not use any electronic devices or other technology during school, on school vehicles or property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view websites that are otherwise blocked to students at the school. Students may never use School Board/SAA devices or technology to do so, regardless of location. In special circumstances, with permission from a supervising school district employee, a student may use an electronic device or technology for communication.
- Students may not possess any electronic device or other technology during testing, unless explicit authorization is given, regardless of the student's location during the testing or who owns the device, even if the device or technology is turned off or the student does not use it. Violation of this rule will result in the student's test being invalidated.
- If an electronic device or technology disrupts a class or students, for example by ringing, flashing, or vibrating, the student possessing the device or technology will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who uses an electronic device or technology in a manner that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or the invasion of the rights of others, including by threatening, bullying, harassing, discriminating against, or intimidating another student or district staff member through email, social network posting, or other electronic messages or technology, also will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the school administration.

- Personally owned electronic devices and technology used in violation of school rules will be confiscated and returned to the student's parent or guardian.

200.3 Prohibition of Weapons;
200.3b: Zero Tolerance

F.S. §1006.13 mandates that, "Each school district shall adopt a policy of zero tolerance that defines criteria for reporting to a law enforcement agency any act that occurs whenever or wherever students are within the jurisdiction of the district school board; defines acts that pose a serious threat to school safety; defines petty acts of misconduct; minimizes the victimization of students, staff, or volunteers, including taking all steps necessary to protect the victim of any violent crime from further victimization; establishes a procedure that provides each student with the opportunity for a review of the disciplinary action imposed pursuant to s. 1006.07." F.S. §1006.07.

Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm or weapon, as defined in Chapter 790, Florida Statutes to school, to any school function, or onto any school-sponsored transportation, or to have possessed a firearm at school, will be expelled, with or without continuing educational services, from the student's regular school for a period of not less than 1 full year and referred to mental health services identified by the school district pursuant to F.S. §1012.584 (4) and the criminal justice or juvenile justice system. Also, refer to School Board Policy 5.321

- No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall be in possession of any article prohibited by law or rules of the district/school, or any article which could reasonably be considered as a weapon. Any student who brings a weapon may be expelled from the regular school for not less than one year and referred to law enforcement or the juvenile justice system for criminal prosecution.
- Violations include any firearm, explosive device, or other weapons as defined by Chapter 790, Florida Statutes the possession, sale, distribution, display, transfer or use of any firearm, explosive device, or other weapons, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: guns, BB pistols, firecrackers, bullets, facsimile guns, smoke bombs or shock devices. Violations also include the possession of any object or material deliberately used to damage property intended for use or that may be used to inflict harm or intimidate any person. This includes the possession of a knife of any size or length, a box cutter or any other sharp object, mace, pepper spray or any aerosol chemical propellant.

200.4 **Prohibition of Drugs**

- No student, while on school property or school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell, distribute or be under the influence of any substance defined as a controlled substance under state or federal law, regardless of whether prescribed or authorized. These include, but are not limited to, marijuana, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any substance which requires a physician's prescription or authorization, or any substance, synthetic or otherwise, designed to create a sense of euphoria or intoxication, or any substance represented by or that mimics or imitates an illegal or controlled substance, such as "designer drugs."
- No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell or distribute any equipment or device for the purpose of preparing, measuring, or using controlled substances, designer drugs", or other unauthorized or drugs. These include, but are not limited to, items listed in F.S. §499.005, and items that may be determined to be drug paraphernalia or electronic cigarettes under the criteria set out in Florida Statutes and/or school/ School Board Policy 5.322.

200.5 – Resiliency Education

Sarasota Academy of the Arts uses the Sarasota County Resiliency Monthly Program within the Classroom and infuses the program throughout the day at all levels of the school.

- The goal of the Resiliency curriculum is to provide SAA students with information to help them develop the tools to become social, emotional and responsible compassionate adults.
- SAA strongly believes that Resiliency education is as important as other subject areas.

200.6 Discipline Policies and Procedures

Sarasota Academy of the Arts follows the Discipline Policies and Procedures set forth by Sarasota County Schools as described on the district website at www.sarasotacountyschools.net . All timely reports of discipline of the SSO, reporting absences, and reporting of deficiencies are sent to the Office of Safe Schools.

200.7 – Nonacceptable Forms of Discipline

Sarasota Academy of the Arts does not use at any time the following forms of Discipline:

- Corporal punishment or any type of physical punishment
- Degrading or embarrassing punishment
- Withholding snacks or lunch

300.0 - Expectations of SAA Parents/Guardians and Students

A strong partnership between school and home provides a greater likelihood of each student's education. Please let the school know if you have concerns as soon as they arise so we can work on them together.

The roles and the responsibilities of the **parents** are:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in this handbook.
- Maintain current home and work addresses and emergency telephone numbers in the student contact information files, including the doctor and hospital preferences.
- Be involved in the education of their children and understand that parents/guardians can be held responsible for the actions of their children.
- Inform the school of pending legal matters that may affect their child.
- Maintain communication with school personnel concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- Ensure that their child is in daily attendance and promptly reports an absence or tardiness in writing to school within three school days after an absence.
- Provide their child with the resources needed to complete class work.
- Assist their child in being healthy, neat, and clean.
- Identify responsible adults who may pick up their child from school.
- Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their child or other children at the school.
- Understand policies related to the dispensing of medicine to students and the prohibitions against student self-medicating and sharing medications with other students. Notify the school of anything that may affect the student's ability to learn, to attend school regularly, or to take part in school activities.
- Understand each school's guideline for student arrival on campus prior to the official start of the school day and student departure from campus at the end of the school day. Comply with transportation policies and understand that bus drivers may not allow students off the bus except at the designated stop unless permission is granted by a school administrator and the Transportation Department.
- Understand the rights of school officials and law enforcement officers regarding the search of student storage spaces and vehicles.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel.
- Discuss progress reports and work assignments with their child.

The roles and responsibilities of the **students** are to:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in the Code of Student Conduct.
- Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.
- Attend all classes daily and be punctual in attendance.
- Be prepared for class with homework and appropriate work materials.

- Be respectful of all individuals and property.
- Use appropriate language rather than profane or inflammatory statements.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Be clean and neat and comply with the school dress code.
- Be responsible for his or her own work.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel. Remember: silence hurts!
- Report criminal, dangerous or harassing situations to "BE BRAVE" Hotline at 1-877-BE-BRAVE (1-877-723-2728).

Student Rights and Responsibilities:
This section summarizes the broad principles of student rights. Each right has a corresponding responsibility in a free and democratic society. A primary responsibility for students is to understand the importance of reporting dangerous, potentially dangerous, or harassing behaviors to school personnel. The following rights and responsibilities are basic and reflect recent court decisions regarding student rights.

- Florida school laws grant principals, assistant principals, teachers, bus drivers, and other school staff the authority to control and discipline students. Students are expected and required to follow the requests and directives of all administrators, teachers, bus drivers, school staff members, coaches, school volunteers and chaperones when on School District property or at other places where they are under the supervision of School District personnel or designees.
- Students have a right to learn through equal educational opportunities that are appropriate to their needs and are provided in a safe, orderly, positive and drug-free environment.
- Students have the responsibility to:
    - Behave in a manner that does not interfere with the learning of other students.
    - Utilize the educational experiences made available to them.
    - Cooperate fully and exert every effort to achieve mastery of basic skills.
    - Behave in a manner consistent with school and district rules and policies.

300.1 – Civility Policy of Parents and Patrons

- All parents and patrons of SAA shall behave with civility, fairness and respect in dealing with fellow parents, patrons, staff, students, and anyone else having business with the school**.**
- **Uncivil behaviors shall be prohibited.** Uncivil behaviors shall be defined as any behavior that is physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent, or harassing. Examples of uncivil behavior include but are not limited to: use of profanity; personally insulting remarks; attacks on a person's race, gender, nationality, religion, or sexual preference; or behavior that is out of control. **Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication to include email, texts, and any social media platform. SAA will not use messaging via social media for communication.**
- Any uncivil behavior by parents or patrons shall be reported to the school administration. A record shall be made of the alleged incident and the action taken. Confidentiality shall be observed whenever possible to protect the complainant and the alleged offending person. Repeated incidents of uncivil behavior can result in the individual being banned from the school premises. Retaliation against a person who reports a claim of uncivil behavior shall be prohibited.

300.2 - Privacy Guidelines for Parents, Students and Guardians

- Google Classroom is a powerful tool that opens communication between students, parents, and teachers. This kind of communication and collaboration can have a huge impact on learning. SAA encourages parents to view and participate positively by adding comments to classroom projects when appropriate, however all parents should refrain from posting and/or distributing photos, videos, comments and names of non-related students at this school on their social media pages. Please refer to our Civility Policy.

300.3 - Parent Volunteer Hours

- Parents or guardians are expected to volunteer a minimum of ten (10) hours during the school year.
- Volunteer Opportunities may be posted in the newsletter, on our website and/or on our school's Facebook page, so be sure to sign up to get updates.
- Please do not wait until the last quarter to fulfill your volunteer hours as limited spots are available at that time of year.
- Each volunteer must have a background check through the Sarasota County School District's security system (Level I or II). All field trip chaperones must be Level II. The Level II requirement includes fingerprinting and a more extensive background check and could take 2 - 4 weeks to obtain approval.
- Volunteers who have previously been approved volunteers through SAA or other Sarasota County public schools must REACTIVATE their volunteer account each consecutive school year, PRIOR to volunteering.
- New volunteers will need to REGISTER and get background checked PRIOR to volunteering through RAPTOR.

300.4 – Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The mission of the SAA PTO is to support the school by fostering a sense of community among school families, assisting in the creative learning of our students, and raising the funds needed for school and student use. The SAA PTO Executive Board meets on a regular basis to discuss the needs and goals of the school. Parents are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in activities when applicable.

300.5 - Transportation

Transportation is available via Sarasota County School District buses for students through pre-determined pocket pickup locations.

- Uber, Lyft, or other car services **are not allowed** to transport students from school.
- SAA car tags must be displayed when picking students up in the car line for all cars.
- Authorized people picking up students without a SAA car tag, will provide an ID before the student is released to them.
- Any vehicle entering the school area is subject to search by school authorities and the law enforcement officers working with them. School officials may conduct the search based on "reasonable suspicion." A search may be conducted without a warrant for any reasonable purpose. A search of the vehicle includes all compartments and components thereof. Once a search begins, the person who owns and/or drives the vehicle will not be permitted to remove it from the premises during the duration of the search.
- Only authorized people listed on the enrollment forms may pick up your child.
- Bicycle Helmets: Florida State Law §316.2065 requires a bicycle rider or passenger less than 16 years of age to wear a bicycle helmet that meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute. Bicycle helmets must be worn by anyone under the age of 16 riding a bicycle.

300.6 – Class Interruptions

- Sarasota Academy of the Arts strives to provide a nurturing family atmosphere where students and parents can feel comfortable and safe. Open communication between parents and teachers is imperative.
- Every teacher has a daily planning time that can be used for parent/teacher conferences, but an appointment must be made in advance.
- If a conference is needed, either send an email, leave a phone message or inform the administration. Please do not text/call teachers on their personal cell phones, as this is NOT allowed and will not be considered a form of appropriate communication.

300.7 – Visitors on Campus, Raptor Visitor and Volunteer Management System (Jessica Lunsford's Act, more information-section 301.5)

- **Visitors to the campus must sign in with the main office and present a current state-issued form of identification (e.g. driver's license or state identification card)**. The identification is used to register the visitor on campus and process the visitor through the Raptor Visitor and Volunteer Management System.

After a visitor who has legitimate business with the school has been cleared, the visitor will receive a Raptor self-adhesive name tag with his or her name, photo and the campus location he or she is visiting. The badge must be visibly always worn while the visitor is on school grounds. Any individual considered a non-student must obtain administrative clearance through the visitor management system prior to entering the school. People without a pass are subject to a trespassing charge and may be arrested. Visitors who do not clear the sexual offender/predator database will not be allowed unescorted access to campus and must coordinate future visitation with an on-site administrator.

- Any authorized campus visitor wishing to serve as a volunteer (including mentors, tutors, field-trip chaperones, booster club members, etc.) must first apply to be approved as a volunteer through the school district's Volunteer & Partnership program. Applications may be submitted via computers at the Volunteer & Partnership Office. This application process prompts a Level 1 criminal history background screening to be completed at no cost to the volunteer. This background screening is required for all school volunteers, in addition, normal visitor screening. SAA must receive clearance notice from the Volunteer & Partnership Office before the volunteer is permitted to work in a school or at a school function. Please note that some volunteer interactions (such as one-on-one work with a student and overnight field-trip chaperoning) require a higher level of background screening for a fee.
- Upon each visit to SAA, after signing in at the office and producing identification for visitor access, approved volunteers through RAPTOR. This process allows volunteers to document volunteer hours and be covered by the school district's workers' compensation insurance policy. All volunteers must sign out on the computer when leaving to end their session.
- **Students who are enrolled in any Sarasota County public school shall not visit any other public school without the permission of the administrative personnel at the school being visited.** Any student found in violation of this policy shall be subject to school disciplinary action. Students enrolled in Sarasota County public schools serving as volunteers at any public school must apply and be approved through the school districts *Volunteers Count!* database and must sign in and out on the volunteer computer documenting their volunteer hours on that campus.
- Visitors must receive approval from the principal in advance to observe in the classroom.
- **Teachers cannot stop classroom activities to hold parent conferences.**
- Students cannot invite their friends or relatives from other schools to visit the school without expressed permission in advance from the principal's office.
- Any individual found on the campus without clearance from a member of the administrative staff is subject to a trespassing charge and possible arrest.

300.8 – Communication

- Please check the SAA website, Google Classrooms, FOCUS, your child's communication folder, and emails on a regular basis for information about school events, newsletters, permission slips, and/or announcements.
- Please be sure that you keep your home, emergency contacts and email addresses current. If you need to update your information, please update it in FOCUS.

300.9 – Permission for Publication of Pictures in Public Media

There may be times during the school year when students are photographed or videoed for public media. These pictures could appear in magazines, newspapers, television, advertisements or on the school website.

- It is necessary to have parent permission to publish photos or videos.
- **This permission is found on FOCUS**. (On the school registration forms, parents/guardians may either grant or deny permission for their child to participate in these types of media events. Parents/guardians who later wish to change their decision may do so at any time by completing the appropriate form available from the school's registrar.)

301.0 – Student/Parent Grievances

In the event there is a concern that is not resolved through parent/student/teacher communication, the parent or student may appeal to the administration which will conduct a thorough investigation and decide in the best interest of the student. At no time should the dispute be allowed to escalate to a level where other parents or students are involved or affected. If necessary, following the investigation, the following steps should be utilized:

- Make an appointment via **email** with the administration to hold a conference with the parties involved.
- The administration will schedule the conference.
- The administration will render a decision regarding the issue.
- If a suitable resolution cannot be reached, the parent/guardian can appeal to the SAA Governing Board through a formal letter of complaint and/or conference with the parent liaison who has been appointed by the Governing Board.
- Because the teachers and staff of SAA are employees of the SAA Governing Board and not the Sarasota County Schools, parents should go through the above steps before contacting the Charter School Department at the Sarasota County School Board Office.
- **At no time may a parent/guardian address a student other than their own child or another parent** about a conflict on school grounds without an administrative staff member present.

301.1 – Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Sarasota Academy of the Arts is an open enrollment public charter school. It is, however, like all charter schools, a school of choice requiring an application process, an enrollment lottery if applications exceed enrollment capacity, and a parent/student contract specifying the policies and disciplinary procedures of the school.

- Students may be dismissed from SAA and returned to their districted schools for:
  1. **Repeated violations of the parent contract, including excessive absenteeism.**
  2. Repeated serious violations of the SAA Code of Student Conduct resulting in In-School or Out-of-School Suspensions.
- **Reasonable interventions** may include but are not limited to student conferences, parent conferences, county discipline referrals, behavior contracts, probations, etc. will be implemented prior to a student being recommended for dismissal.

301.2 - Lost and Found

- Please label all items that your child may shed during the day with his/her last name.
- Students and parents are welcome to search for lost items during the school day or contact the office by phone or email to inquire about lost items.
- At the end of each month, items will be displayed, and students or parents can take what is theirs.
- Items that are not claimed each month will be donated.

301.3 – Meals and Snacks

Food that is delivered by a service for students is not allowed such as Uber Eats. Only parents can bring food for their child.

Breakfast will be provided through the Sarasota County School District Food Services may be purchased between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM.

Lunch will be provided through the Sarasota County School District Food Services.

- **Funding for Meals:** Parents may pay into a child's account by sending money with the child to school or through an online program called **www.myschoolbucks.com**. The school, grade, birth date and district N number is needed to create an account. The student's lunch account can then be funded with a credit or debit card. (A convenience fee is charged for each transaction.) Features of this program include online viewing of the account balance, viewing seven days of meal purchase history and the ability to enable the "Smart Pay" feature which automatically adds money to a child's account when a low balance is reached.
- **Free and Reduced Meal Benefits:**
  Parents and/or guardians are responsible for applying for Free and Reduced Meal Benefits and are

responsible for all charges until eligibility is determined. Parents will be notified when a child's account is running low. Please make sure if you sign up for **www.myschoolbucks.com**, the child's account is current. Free and Reduced meal benefits must be applied for annually. Parents and/or guardians may apply online under the Food and Nutrition Services Department section.

- Students may bring ready-to-eat packed lunch that does not require refrigeration or heating. SAA does not provide microwaves for students.
- Energy drinks, coffee, and "monster" drinks are **not permitted** in school. Only plain water is permitted in the classrooms.
- A snack time will be provided in the elementary grades, with snacks brought from home.
- Students may have water bottles in the classroom; no food or drinks are allowed during class times without teacher permission.
- Gum is not allowed in classrooms.
- While SAA is not a peanut-free school, every effort will be made to accommodate all food allergies on an individual and classroom basis.
- Please bring a snack for your child if they are in aftercare. Snacks are not provided.

301.4 School Safety and Security

The School Resource Officer Program is a nationally accepted program that places law enforcement officers on school campuses. Sarasota Academy of the Arts contracts with the Sarasota County Sheriff's Department. There are several areas in which the SRO will be actively involved while working on the school campus:

- A visible uniformed law enforcement figure on campus to deal with any law enforcement-related issues.
- A classroom resource for instruction in the following areas: safety programs, educational programs in drug and violence prevention, social media use, and several other similar topics.
- An extension of the school administration in dealing with a variety of situations.
- A resource for students enabling them to be associated with a law enforcement figure in the student's environment rather than in a traditional law enforcement environment.
- A resource for teachers, parents, guardians, and students for conferences related to individual problems or questions.
- A counseling resource for law enforcement issues that affect the educational environment.

SAA School Safety Teams: These teams are required by Florida state law. They are responsible for campus safety, training staff, conducting drills, safety tours, and finalizing the FSSAT. The SAA School Safety Team includes an administrator, the SRO(s), a Custodian or maintenance person, a Cafeteria Manager, and at least one teacher. The Safety Team must ensure that all staff are trained in all emergency procedures for the school. Teacher Classroom assessments are given to teachers and reviewed by Safety Team members during pre-service week. The District and SAA work together regarding the Raptor Team Assist configuration, school safety plans, and the School Safety Tour.

Emergency evacuation drills (fire, hurricane, tornado, active assailant/hostage situation, other natural disaster, and school bus) shall be held in compliance with state requirements and formulated in consultation with the appropriate public safety agencies.

The SAA principal is responsible for 1. Developing and posting emergency evacuation routes and procedures; 2. Assigning and training all staff members in specified responsibilities to ensure prompt, safe and orderly evacuation; 3. Identifying and reporting hazardous areas requiring corrective measures; and 4. Preparing and submitting a written report of each emergency evacuation drill to the district office.

Active Assailant. Emergency Response plans 1006.07 (6)(c) Active assailant response plans: The SAA governing board adopts an active assailant response plan which is submitted to the District by the Principal. This certifies that all school personnel have received annual training on the procedures contained in the active assailant response plan for SAA. SAA will follow, as applicable Safe and Secure Schools 3.24 Policy and Procedures related to providing a safe, secure and orderly learning environment,

Family reunification plan: The SAA school governing board shall have adopted, in coordination with local law enforcement agencies and local governments, a family reunification plan to reunite students and employees with their families if a school is closed or unexpectedly evacuated due to a natural or manmade disaster. This reunification plan is reviewed annually and updated, as applicable.

SAA Threat Assessment Management: SAA State-mandated team meets monthly to discuss students at risk. A record of each meeting is kept and accessible to the FLDOE when requested. The team must include an administrator (Team Leader), the SRO(s), a school counselor/ school psychologist (if available), and at least one teacher. You can have more team members but there must always be this core. A sign-in sheet is kept on file in the main office of every Threat Assessment Team meeting. All team members must receive PCG and Threat Assessment training no later than 90 days after their appointment with the team.

301.4a: Be Brave Hotline: BE BRAVE stands for Better Education by Reporting All Violence Early and is a statewide effort to encourage students and others to call and report suspected serious incidents or other criminal activities that could affect the safety and well-being of students, staff and visitors at school.

The toll-free number is 1-877-7BE-BRAVE or 1-877-723-2728. Trained personnel answer the number 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If it's an emergency, call 911. Callers may remain anonymous and will not be required to identify themselves to give information. All information received through the hotline will be forwarded to the appropriate school and law enforcement authorities who will investigate and take any necessary action.

SAA contracts with the Sarasota County Sheriff's Department during the school year and will pay additionally for extra-curricular activities/sports hours as applicable.

301.4b: Fortify FL: SAA encourages students to use Fortify FL, State-mandated tips line.

a. Posters are displayed in the entrance, near the SRO office, and the cafeteria, available in English and Spanish.
b. Dr. Kopacz, school administrator, is assigned to review school-specific tips.
c. The district sends current lists of alert recipients to all principals for corrections.

301.5 — Jessica Lunsford Act

The Jessica Lunsford Act (authorized by Florida Statute 1012.467) requires a Level II criminal history background check for contractors and vendors doing business on school grounds. This criminal history background check is done by obtaining and submitting fingerprints of the contractor or vendor to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Fingerprint clearance checks are performed by the school district Safety, Security & Emergency Management Department. If the contractor/vendor is cleared through the results of the criminal history background check, he or she has issued a photo identification badge.

301.6 Raptor Emergency Management System during Critical Incidents at SAA/Alyssa's Law

During a critical incident, parents should not go to the school unless notified to do so. The school will be secured by law enforcement and parents will not be able to get their students until the threat has cleared. To ensure student safety and security during an incident, parents are asked not to contact their student by cell phone. Updates and other important information will be provided through the Connect-ED telephone communications system by the school Principal, Dr. Kopacz. (1006.07 94) (b). Parents must make sure all their emergency contact information is current and listed correctly at the school. Faculty and Staff of Sarasota Academy of the Arts utilize the RAPTOR Emergency Management System as a panic alert system in the event of an on-campus emergency. This system is downloaded on mobile devices and computers/laptops.

301.7 Cell Phones during Critical Incidents

During a critical incident at the school, cell phones are not to be used by students. Using a cell phone during an emergency limits the students' ability to quickly acknowledge and respond to directions putting themselves and their classmates in jeopardy. Additionally, during certain emergencies talking is not allowed in the classroom. This

rule is enforced so that the room will sound vacant; conversation by the students or the ringing of a cell phone could identify their location to an attacker. Parents are asked to explain to their children the importance of not using cell phones during an emergency.

400.0 Health, Safety, and Documentation

The mission of Florida's school health services plan is to appraise, protect, and promote the health of students. Services are provided in accordance with a county School Health Services Plan jointly developed by the county health department, school district, and School Health Advisory Committee. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of any health condition of their student(s) which may require medication, treatment or monitoring at school or on school-sponsored trips or activities.

400.1 – Student Information/Student Pick Up

- Each student's Enrollment Information must be filled out prior to the first day of attendance. In case of an accident or illness, SAA must be able to reach a parent or legal guardian. Information must be kept current.
- Students will only be released to authorized people listed by their parents/guardians.
- If someone not listed on the form must pick up a student, a dated note to that effect must be brought to school that morning by the parent/guardian or student and given to the office. The name of the person picking up the student and the anticipated time of dismissal must be on the note.
- Anyone picking up a student must present a picture ID at the office.

400.2 – Required Documents

The following information is required to enroll a student in a Florida school. Please note that the student may not attend class until all documents are received.

- A certified birth certificate, which may be requested online from your birth state's health department.
- A Florida Certificate of Immunization, Form 680, completed by a Florida physician or by a Florida county health department.
- Florida Statute §1003.22 requires any child entering a Florida school for the first time to present documentation of a physical examination performed within one year prior to enrollment (registration date). This exam must include a review of all body systems (heart, skin, respiratory, etc.) performed by a licensed medical provider. The exam should indicate any condition which would warrant special considerations for the student at a school. The physical exam form must be readable (health department personnel can only accept exams in English), signed, dated and stamped by the provider, practicing physician or the county public health department.
- Official documentation that the parent(s) or guardian(s) is a legal resident(s) of the school district attendance area.
- Students who meet the definition of in transition/homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act can receive special assistance with school enrollment. For information on who qualifies as in transition/homeless see section 200.3.

400.3 – Immunizations

Florida Statutes §1003.22 and §402.305 and Sarasota County School Board Rule 5.10 require that prior to admittance to or attendance in a public or non-public school, each student shall present or have on file with the school a Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH 680 form) from a licensed practicing physician or the county public health department. The student must have all required shots for the entering grade level.

No-cost immunizations are available to eligible children through the federally funded Vaccine for Children program at Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County. Call 941-861-2784 in Sarasota or 941-861-3850 in North Port for locations and hours of operation and appointments. Please email your

child's shot records to DOHSarasotaImmunizations@flhealth.gov or fax to 941-526-1532 to have the immunizations put on the DOH 680 form.

- Parents must show proof of required student immunizations, or an immunization exemption issued by the Health Department prior to enrolling in SAA and/or attending classes.
- Required immunizations are listed in the Sarasota District Student and Family Handbook.

400.4 – Medications in School

Students are not allowed to carry medication and self-medication unless it has been approved by the school health nurse (only middle school students are allowed to self-medicate).

- Whenever possible, medications should be given at home.
- However, if necessary, the proper form and the medications must be turned in at the school office and the health room aide or assigned school employee will administer all medications in the school health room.
- Only FDA approved prescriptions and over the counter medications are permitted to be given at school.
- An M/TAF is needed for EACH prescription.
- The M/TAF is valid for the current school year only.
- The parent needs to pick up medication at the end of the school year or if the medicine is discontinued. Medication that is not picked up will be discarded.
- Medication must be in the original prescription or unopened over-the-counter container labeled with the child's name, medication name, dosage, and times to be administered.
- A parent must deliver the signed M/TAF and medications directly to the school health room or assigned school employee so that medications can be accepted and counted.
- Homeopathic remedies are not FDA-approved and will not be administered by school personnel.
- Dietary supplements are not approved by the FDA for use as drugs and will not be administered by school personnel.
- Controlled narcotic medications for severe pain management are not administered in the school setting. Because these medications are known to cause decreased coordination and decreased levels of consciousness, they present learning and safety issues that can be dangerous to students.
- Treatment equipment such as nebulizers and glucometers must be supplied by the parent. An M/TAF signed by a licensed health care provider and the parent must be on file along with a signed notarized affidavit. Both forms are only valid for the current school year.
- A Medication/Treatment Authorization Form, signed by a parent and physician, must be provided and medication must be stored and administered according to Sarasota County Student and Family Handbook 2023-2024.

400.5 – Screening Services

- Screening for vision, hearing, scoliosis, height, and weight are mandated by Florida Administrative Code 64F-6003 for specific groups of students, according to grade level.
- Permission is given when a parent/guardian enrolls in InfoSnap.
- Parents must inform the school in writing if they do not wish their child to participate in any screening. Adequate notice will be sent home prior to a scheduled screening.
    - Kg – Color, Vision, Hearing
    - 1 – Hearing, Height/Weight, Vision
    - 3 – Vision, Height/Weight
    - 6 – Vision, Hearing, Height/Weight, Scoliosis
    - New to the State Grade 2 – Vision, Hearing
    - New to State Grade 4 & 5 – Vision, Hearing

400.6 – Health Issues

- No child with an infectious disease, fever over 100.4 degrees, open skin infection, undiagnosed rashes, coughs, active head lice, serious diarrhea, or who is vomiting may be left at school.

- It is imperative that children with any of the above be picked up from school immediately.
- Students will remain in the health room until they are picked up.
- Students sent home with a fever above 100.4 degrees may return to school when they have been fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine.
- Students with undiagnosed rashes may return to school when they are rash-free.
- If a health care provider is seen, a note should be sent when the student returns to school.
- Students who feel sick while in school will be sent to the clinic and parents will be contacted after they have been assessed – they are not to call on a cell phone or a classroom phone.

400.7 – Head Lice

Students who display signs of head lice, such as excessive scratching of the head, may be sent to the health room to be checked as needed. A thorough examination of the hair and scalp should be done for the presence of live lice.

- Siblings should be checked for lice infestation as well.
- **If nits are present**, contact parent/guardian and send *Nit Notification and Treatment Letter* home with student. Students can return to class with a pass from the clinic staff. Students must report to the health room daily to monitor the process of nit removal until no nits are found*. Student must report to the health room in 10 days for a final recheck. If nits are still present, the nurse should be notified for follow up.
- **If lice are present**, call parents to pick up the student.
- Give parent/guardian the following forms and review information:
  - *Head Lice Notification and Treatment Letter* - See Forms Section
  - *Head Lice Treatment & Nit Removal Plan* (side two of above letter)
  - *Additional Head Lice Information for Parents/Guardians*

  Note: If the parent does not pick the student up, he/she can be given the information and ride the bus home at the discretion of the principal.

After lice treatment, the student must report to the health room with parent/guardian to be examined for lice/nits before they can return to class. If no lice or nits are present, the student can return to class with a pass from the health room aide, LPN or RN. Student must report to the health room in 10 days for a final lice/nit recheck. If lice are present, the student is sent home with parent/guardian. **Note:** Presence of lice 24 hours after treatment suggests very heavy infestation, re-infestation, resistance to therapy, or incorrect use of treatment product. Discuss with parent/guardian what treatment was used and re-instruct on treatment options. The parent/guardian may contact their licensed healthcare provider regarding re-treatment with pediculicide. If nits are present, notify parent/guardian using the *Parent Notification Form* and encourage continuing daily efforts to remove all nits. Student can return to class with a pass from the health room personnel, health room aide, LPN or RN. The student must report to the health room daily to monitor the process of nit removal until no nits are found. Student must report to the health room in 10 days for a final lice/nit recheck.

- Classroom head checks are not recommended. A *Head Lice Information letter* is available and can be used at the principal's discretion. Use the head lice/nit-tracking log to monitor progress.

HEAD LICE TREATMENT & NIT REMOVAL PLAN

When one family member has head lice it is important to check all members of the household and close contacts. Treat only the infested family members. Follow the plan below:

- The recommended first-line treatment is a FDA approved, over-the-counter, lice killing product (pediculicide) for humans. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the use of a product that contains permethrin.
- Before applying the treatment, cover the child's eyes with a towel or washcloth. Do not treat in the shower or bathtub. Instruct the child to lean over the sink and apply the product to the head area. This prevents absorption through other skin areas.

- Apply lice products according to the label instructions. If your child has extra-long or thick hair, you may need to use a second bottle to assure complete coverage.
- Wash the hair according to label instructions. Once applied, allow the lice killing product to continue working by using only regular shampoo for two weeks after treatment because cream rinses and conditioning shampoos coat the hair and protect lice from the lice killing the product.
- Following treatment, use a fine-toothed metal comb to remove lice and nits from the hair shaft. Metal lice combs (i.e. Licemiester, etc.) are preferred because they have finer teeth for nit removal, are less likely to break or bend when combing through the hair and can be boiled or sterilized. Any remaining nits need to be removed by sliding the nit down the hair shaft with your fingernails.
- Recheck the hair daily for lice or new nits laid close to the scalp. Continue to comb out nits with the fine-toothed metal comb. Removing all nits will help to prevent new infestation.
- Retreat according to the instructions on the lice-killing product (pediculicide).
- Continue to check all treated and untreated people in the same household for 2-3 weeks even after they appear to be nit and lice free.

400.8 – Animals on Campus

There are times throughout the school year when animals come to visit for specific classroom activities.

- It is necessary to have parental permission for students to touch and play with these animals.
- Due to allergies, some students may not be able to meet certain animals.
- Please be sure that permission is granted through the office before bringing any animals to campus.

400.9 – Accident and Illness Documentation

All reported accidents and visits to the health room will be documented

- If an accident is minor and requires simple first aid, parents will not be called but will receive written notification of the injury when the student goes home.
- If more than basic first aid is needed, the parent/guardian will be called immediately.

500.0 Academic and Curriculum Information

Honor Code

The School Board of Sarasota County and the Sarasota County School District strongly believe that academic honesty must be practiced by all students. Cheating is defined by the school board and the district as "The inappropriate and deliberate distribution or use of information, notes, materials, or the work of another person, or the unauthorized use of technology devices in the completion of an academic assessment or assignment." Students are expected to always demonstrate honesty and integrity. Each student is expected to do his or her own work, except where collaboration is required by the teacher. This includes test-taking, homework, class assignments and the original creation of essays, compositions, term papers and research. There is no distinction between giving and receiving unauthorized help; one who helps another to cheat is as guilty as one who benefits from cheating. All work submitted by the student should be a true reflection of that student's own effort and ability.

Violation of this policy may result in academic and/or disciplinary consequences, loss of eligibility for local scholarships, and/or loss of honors, awards and membership in extracurricular activities.

500.1 – School Books

- Books are very expensive and must be treated with respect. Each classroom will be furnished with a set of hardback books.
- Students in the lower grades will have individual workbooks and access to the texts and supplementary materials online.
- Middle school students will have online access to texts and supplementary materials online.
- Students can check out textbooks and are responsible for returning them in good condition.
- Lost and/or badly damaged books will be assessed at replacement cost.

500.2 – School Supply List

- A supply list will be published on the website prior to the beginning of the school year.
- School supplies must be brought to class daily by each student.

500.3 – Assignments: Homework, Tests, Classwork

- Homework is an independent activity to reinforce concepts learned in class and to be accomplished outside of the school day without teacher assistance.
- Some homework may require some assistance from parents/guardians.
- Parents will be given access to student assignments, homework, and rubrics on the teacher's website or Google Classroom.
- Teachers will assign homework based on the maturity and ability levels of the students. The following suggests the average amount of time students should spend on homework nightly. Teachers and parents may use these times as guides to monitor student time devoted to homework:
    - K & Grade 1 – 30 minutes
    - Grades 2 & 3 – 45 minutes
    - Grades 4 & 5 – 60 minutes
    - Grades 6, 7, 8 – 90 minutes
- Students are responsible for completing their homework and returning it to school on the required day.
- Teachers are responsible for assigning, explaining, and correcting student homework. They are also responsible for notifying parents if students have not turned in homework assignments.
- Parents are responsible for setting a specific time and place for students to do homework and checking to make sure that assignments are completed.
- Students are also expected to read at least 20 minutes at home at night.
- Assessments and tests will be administered on a regular basis in each subject area.

500.4 – Grades

Grades should never be a surprise to any student or parents/guardians. Access to student grades is available through FOCUS; each student and parent/guardian will have an individual password.

- Students will receive a district report card at the end of each grading period indicating their progress digitally through FOCUS.
- Sarasota Academy of the Arts will follow the Sarasota County School District Student Progression Plan regarding performance and promotion. Refer to the Sarasota County School District Student and Family Handbook for more information.

500.5 – Exceptional Student Services (ESE)/504

- All accommodations and modifications will be implemented as stated in Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, and Gifted Educational Plans (EP) as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- If a student is having difficulty academically, socially, or behaviorally, the classroom teacher will plan and document specific interventions within the classroom under the RtI (Response to Intervention) system. If these interventions do not change the student's concerns, the teacher will refer the student to the grade level MTSS team.
- Before a student is considered for an Exceptional Student Services Plan, interventions will be provided in the classroom by the classroom teacher with guidance from the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Team.
- If the MTSS interventions do not make the changes needed for the student to show progress, s/he will be referred to the SWST (schoolwide support team).
- The parents/guardians have a right to be involved in all intervention plans and SWST meetings. They also need to be involved in writing an IEP if the student qualifies for special education services, a 504 plan, or gifted services.

- The SAA charter allows the school to provide special education services for students who are in the regular classroom for a majority of the school day.

500.6 – Make Up Work

Students who miss school for any reason (excused or not excused) are expected to make up all work missed during their absence, tardiness, early removal from school, or suspensions.

- Parents may contact the school office to request work but should provide at least 24 hours to prepare materials.
- Parents may also access the teacher websites for assignments. Students in grades 5-8 have access to assignments through Google Classroom.
- Students will have as many days as they are absent to make up work.
- Extended illness may receive special consideration

500.7 – Google Accounts

Sarasota Academy of the Arts can create accounts for all students to allow for collaborative sharing using Google Suite for Education. These accounts will be used for school-related projects. However, no student will be assigned an account without parent or guardian approval. The rules governing proper electronic communications by students are included in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy that is part of the Student Code of Conduct. Once accounts are assigned, students gain access to the wealth of collaborative tools available through Google Suite.

The following services will be available for each student, including Google Suite for Education:

Gmail: An official school email address will be assigned to students for school related use only in the username@sarasotaacademyofthearts.com format.

Google Drive: A secure online space where students will store all their schoolwork, including but not limited to, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, and other classroom related material. Anywhere students have access to the Internet, they can access their work.

Google Classroom (as applicable): Classroom is designed to help teachers create assignments and keep track of progress. Features like making a copy of a document for every student and making class announcements help keep everything more organized.

Calendar: Students will have the ability to create and manage a calendar to keep track of assignments, and upcoming events.

SAA's Google Suite for Education domain is different from a personal Google account and is **NOT open to the public**. It is a safe and secure "self-contained" cloud-based system that is unique to our domain. Features typically available to personal Google accounts like video chat, personal profiles and social networking will NOT be accessible to our students. Teachers will have the ability to monitor everything that a student does within Google Suite.

Conduct - Students are responsible for good behavior just as they are in a traditional school building. It is against school policy to use obscene, profane, threatening, or disrespectful language. Communication with others should always be course related. Students should never say anything via email that they wouldn't mind seeing on the school bulletin board or in the local newspaper. Students should notify the teacher of anything inappropriate or that makes them uncomfortable. Bullying will not be tolerated, and the privacy of others should be always respected.

Access Restrictions - Access to and use of Google Apps for Education is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of Sarasota Academy of the Arts. SAA maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of the account when there is reason to believe that violations of law or School policies have occurred. In such

cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the principal for further investigation and application of necessary consequences as indicated in the Student Code of Conduct.

Privacy – Sarasota Academy of the Arts reserves the right to access and review content in the Google Apps for Education system at any time. SAA complies with all state and federal privacy laws.

500.8 – Acceptable Use Policy for Educational Technology and Devices

Purpose - Sarasota Academy of the Arts (SAA) provides information technology resources with a firm belief that the educational advantages outweigh the potential for misuse. In return, SAA expects our students to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources. Our goals are to provide access to educational tools, resources, and communication and to encourage innovation and collaboration. Our policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of these tools.

General Guidelines - The use of technology is a privilege, not a right.

1) The use of technology may only be for purposes related to schoolwork. SAA technology may not be used for personal, commercial or political purposes.
2) No one other than technology administrators and teachers are allowed to add or remove software. This includes, but is not limited to applications, games or other types of software programs.
3) Food and drink are not allowed in Technology Labs and should not be kept or consumed around electronic devices in other parts of the campus.
4) Users are not allowed to play technology-based games unless directed by a faculty member for educational use.
5) Users are not permitted to alter any computer settings unless directed by a technology staff member.
6) G-mail is provided for educational-related purposes only and should not be used for personal reasons.
7) Supplies such as printer paper, ink, toner and other consumables should be used responsibly and sparingly.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

All technology errors, suspicious activity, or damage must be reported to a faculty member as soon as it occurs.

1) At no point should a user attempt to access, alter, or otherwise tamper with system files, network files, or files belonging to or assigned to another user.
2) Users should only use the access accounts and passwords which have been provided to them by SAA. Users should never use another person's account access or password.
3) In most cases users are allowed to select and change their own passwords. Passwords should never be shared with or used by other users. When selecting a password, users should choose something easy to remember but not easy for others to guess. Information on choosing the most secure password is available from SAA.
4) Users must alert the technology staff and change their password at the slightest indication that their password has been compromised.
5) Users should never reveal telephone numbers, addresses, passwords or other forms of personal information about themselves or others online or via email.
6) All Code of Conduct, Honor Code, and other regulations shall apply to technology as they do to other forms of interaction.
7) It shall be considered a violation of this policy if users engage in any illegal act, harass, engage in cyberbullying, or threaten the safety or well-being of any person using SAA resources.
8) It shall be considered a violation of this policy if users create, display, or transmit obscene, libelous, derogatory, or threatening messages or materials using SAA resources. Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages, private messages, emails and material posted on web pages, including but not limited to a user's own web page, Facebook, YouTube, or similar sites.
9) In the interest of safety for our school community and in maintaining ethical standards, SAA reserves the right to review and examine laptops or other digital devices including but not limited to media players or cell phones at any time while you are on campus, whether that device is owned by you or the school. This review can occur randomly.

Limitation of School Liability

1) While many precautions have been instituted, SAA makes no assurances that users will not encounter objectionable material while working on the Internet. Should a user encounter such material he/she navigates away from the site and immediately alerts a technology staff member or teacher.
2) SAA provides no expectation of privacy on the part of the user. SAA administrators may authorize technology reviews including real-time or historical reviews of a user's computer activity, email, web history, stored files or other resources.
3) Do not assume that e-mail is private. Technology administrators have full access to all incoming and outgoing e-mail. Messages in relation to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
4) SAA will not be responsible for any charges related to fees for service access to on-line resources without prior written approval.
5) SAA makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the technological service or equipment it provides. SAA will not be responsible for any damage suffered. This includes but is not limited to loss of data.

500.9 Student Search and Seizure: F.S. 1006.09 (9)

School personnel may search students reasonably suspected of being in possession of contraband or other prohibited items while on school district property or wherever students are under the official supervision of district employees, such as on field trips, at extracurricular activities, or while being transported to and from such places either by school bus, by approved drivers, or by other means of conveyance.

- **School personnel may conduct** a search of a student, a student's possessions, a student's locker, or any other storage area on school property without a warrant when school personnel have reasonable suspicion that illegal, prohibited or harmful items or substances, or stolen property, maybe concealed on a student's person or in a storage area.
- **School personnel are encouraged** to attempt to obtain consent from a student to search for illegal, prohibited, harmful items or substances, or stolen property, but may proceed with a search without a student's consent, upon reasonable suspicion of a prohibited or illegally possessed substance or object.
- **School personnel have the authority** to search a student's backpack, purse, or wallet, upon reasonable suspicion, if the student refuses to reveal the contents inside.

501.0 – Field Trips

SAA staff members design a variety of experiences throughout the year for students in all grades. Field trips are valuable learning opportunities for students and behavioral expectations are even more important when students are representing the school off campus.

- If a student has demonstrated an **inability to control his/her behavior** in school**, they may lose the privilege of attending the field trip**. It is possible extra steps will be taken to ensure that the student has a successful experience.
- Students cannot be excluded from a field trip based on the inability to pay a fee. If a family is facing financial difficulties, the parent/guardian can contact the SAA principal prior to signing the field trip permission form to request financial assistance.
- Opportunities for "raising funds" for longer, more expensive field trips will be provided.
- Students are required to wear an SAA shirt on all field trips to provide a direct visual on all students.
- Chaperones must follow the volunteer guidelines found within the policies of SAA and must be a **Level II**.
- Chaperones must register with the school prior to attending a field trip.
- Chaperones must have the appropriate clearance level, either through Volunteers Count or Level 2 clearance through the Sarasota County Schools security office.
- Each chaperone will be provided with a detailed list of the students s/he is responsible for, including emergency contact information for the teacher and parents when applicable.

- The teacher in charge will coordinate times and locations for all chaperones and students will meet periodically throughout the day.
- A complete roll call of all students and chaperones will be completed before leaving on a bus.

501.1 – Visual, Digital and Performing Arts

Sarasota Academy of the Arts is a visual, digital and performing arts academy that provides experiences that are unique in an academic school setting. Self-esteem, confidence, and poise are improved through performances, these attributes positively affect other aspects of a student's performance in school.

- SAA students are expected to be actively involved and take advantage of the opportunities that are offered.
- Students will participate in evening performances during the school year.

501.2 - Emergency Drills

Monthly safety drills are required by the Sarasota County School District.

- It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone must obey orders promptly and clear the building for fire drills by the prescribed route as quickly as possible.
- Each teacher will give instructions for leaving his/her classroom.
- During a critical incident, the school will go into a lockdown, where students must stay calm and quiet.

501.3 Understanding Assessments

Throughout each child's education, he or she will take many standardized assessment tests, including the Florida Standards Assessment Test (FSA) in grades 3-10. Results from these tests show whether students are meeting grade-level expectations and help teachers plan instructions and measure students' progress. Schools use testing results to develop school-wide plans for improving academic performance.

- Florida Kindergarten Readiness: This screening is given to kindergarten students during the first 30 days of school to determine readiness to start school.
- WIDA - The Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment is taken by English Language Learners (ELLs) to see how well they are learning skills in English.
- FAST PM1, PM2, PM3 English Language Arts & Mathematics - These tests in reading, writing and math measure how well students have met the Florida Standards. These tests are mandatory per Florida State Statute 1008.22(3).
    - ELA Grades 3-10
    - Mathematics Grades 3-8
    - Writing
    - Statewide Science Assessment - Students are tested on the State Standards in science. Grades 5 and 8.

- End-of-Course Examinations (EOC) - Students enrolled in Algebra l, Geometry, Biology, Civics are required to take state End-of-Course assessments targeting Florida Standards.
- Renaissance Elementary K-2

501.4 Educational Records

Under Federal Law contained in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 99), either parent has access to all educational records, unless the district has been provided with a copy of a court order specifically revoking such rights. Therefore, **no parent/guardian can restrict the other parent's/guardian's access to their child's educational records, including directory information, without a court order.**

Parents/guardians and adult students have the following rights to student records:

- The right of access to inspect and review all records maintained about the student by the district.
- The right to privacy with respect to data contained in personally identifiable records.

- Right to challenge and request amendment of any record thought to be inaccurate or misleading, and to a hearing if necessary.
- Right to copies of such records.

Parents/guardians and adult students requesting review and receiving copies of educational records, may do so in person or in writing at the student's school. The school shall comply within 30 days. Fees for copies of educational records shall not exceed the actual cost of reproduction and shall not exceed 15 cents ($0.15) per one-sided, letter-size page or 20 cents ($0.20) per two-sided page. The fee for a certified copy shall not exceed one dollar ($1.00).

2026-2027 Signature Page
Student and Parent Handbook

_____ I have reviewed and discussed with my child the 2026-2027 Sarasota Academy of the Arts Student/Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by the expectations set forth related to Attendance/Absences, Behavior/Civility, Academics, and Parent and Student Expectations, et al.

_____ I have accessed and reviewed the Sarasota County School District Student and Family Handbook 2026-2027. Student and Family Handbook | Sarasota County Schools

_____ Google Account: I give my permission for my child to be assigned a Google Apps account. My child agrees to adhere to the guidelines stated in section 500.8 for use of their Google Apps account.

_____ Technology: As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement. I understand that my child's access is designed for educational purposes only. I recognize it is **It is impossible for SAA to restrict access to all controversial or offensive materials, and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for the supervision, if any, when my child's use is not in a school setting.** I have read and understand the information in this agreement and hereby give my permission for my child to use the internet for classroom curriculum projects.

_____ _____
Parent Signature Parent Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Student's **Name** for Kindergarten Student Name (Printed)
Student's **Signature** for 1st-8th grade

_____
Date of Signatures

Please complete a signature page for each child in your family.
Return this page to homeroom/advisory teacher by August 14th,2026