

**Sam Houston State  
University  
Charter School  
Teacher/Staff  
Handbook**

**2020-2021**

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## SHSU CHARTER SCHOOL STAFF

### Administration Staff

Superintendent: Dr. Ronny Knox

Principal: Dr. Renee O'Neal Office

Manager: Joseph Mesa

PEIMS: Rebecca Carruthers

Business Managers: Brytnie Miniel & Erika Ancrum

### Charter School Advisory Board

Chair: Dr. Debbie Price

Vice-Chair: Dr. Kristina Vargo

Member: Dr. Casey Creghan

Member: Dr. Andrea Foster

Member: Dr. Baburhan Uzum

Parent Member: Kelly Clarkson-Smith

Community Member: Susan Kamman

### Teaching Staff

**\*Denotes Site Lead Teacher**

Brighton Academy (The Woodlands), 101-11

Kindergarten: Michelle Jordan, Elizabeth Smith

1st Grade ELA: **Mary Elizabeth Mueller\***

1st Grade Math/Science: Kendle Samuel

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Miranda Cloud and Ashley Willingham

3<sup>rd</sup> ELA: Stacy Guthrie

3<sup>rd</sup> Math/Science: Danielle Trahan

4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Brandi Knighton

5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Vicki Armacost

6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Heather McRorie

Paraprofessionals: Maribel Martinez, Cheyenne Crespo

Greengate Academy (Spring/Klein), 101-12

Kindergarten: Tammy Sanders  
1st Grade: Tara Bleecker  
2nd Grade: Carolyn Thompson  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: **Katie Statlander\***  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Emily Batelaan  
Paraprofessionals: Misty Moreno, Jessica Alferez

Cypress Trails Preschool and Childcare Center (Spring), 101-13

Kindergarten: **Kendra O'Neal\***  
1st Grade: Crystal Pflughaupt and Dawn Hill  
2nd Grade: Brittany Newton  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Kathleen Francis  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Nacol Hicks  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Christopher Krafcik  
Paraprofessionals: Allison Richman, Sheridan Vincent

All campuses:

PE/Special Education: **Ryan Jordan\***  
Music, Robotics, Testing Coordinator: Alicia Hernandez  
Floating Specials and Robotics: Karla O'Keeffe

## TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

### Attendance and Leave

Teacher hours are Monday-Friday 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. School begins at 8:00 a.m. Please note that a minimum of two staff members must be on duty to unload and direct students each morning. Each site may rotate this responsibility among its staff.

Classroom teachers are expected to stay on campus throughout the day. Should an emergency occur, and the staff member find it necessary to leave campus, notification to the lead teacher at the site needs to happen immediately. Next, a text or email (preferably text) needs to be sent by either the staff member leaving or the lead teacher to Renee, notifying that the staff member is leaving for the day. **Renee's cell 713-819-2487.**

If an absence is planned, the lead teacher and Renee must be notified at least five days prior to the absence. This should be done through email, and the subject line must read "Personal Day." If you are sick and need to miss work, send a text to the lead teacher, and Renee, or email and with the subject line "Out Sick." Text message is preferred. (This same procedure applies if you are staying home with a sick child). All staff must receive prior approval from administration if they plan to miss the day before or after a scheduled school holiday.

**Failure to do so may result in the staff member losing compensation for that day.**

It is your responsibility to enter absences into the MySam employee system at [www.shsu.edu](http://www.shsu.edu).

### **Substitute Teacher System**

At this time, substitutes will be arranged through the lead teacher. You must notify the lead teacher and Renee at your site if you are going to be absent.

### **Communication**

We are setting the example and creating an image for ourselves. Always be professional. The best way for us to recruit new students and families is to consistently be our best in every situation. Remember that email never goes away. Be careful what you say in haste or frustration, and always maintain strict confidentiality of your students.

You are expected to send a weekly newsletter to your families updating them with the latest classroom happenings, objectives that will be taught during the upcoming week, and how the parent can help the child at home. **This is a non-negotiable.** Please carbon copy Dr. Knox and Renee in case one of us gets a phone call asking questions. We are public officials representing the Charter School and the University, and we must always be prepared.

All staff should have Dr. Knox and Renee's phone numbers programmed into their cell phone.

### **Conference/Planning Time**

Teachers will have a designated conference time every day. Conference times should be utilized for parent conferences, team/site meetings, lesson planning, and/or preparation for instruction. **All teachers must have at least one conference with each parent every semester, regardless of how the student is performing academically.** Each site should designate one day a week for a PLC/team meeting. Notify Dr. Knox, Renee, and Joseph of the scheduled day and time. All team members are expected to attend PLC/planning meetings and contribute to the discussion.

## **Staff Meetings and Socials**

Staff meetings will be held at SHSU The Woodlands Center, or Cypress Trails once a month for professional development. The calendar of events for each semester will be distributed at the beginning of the semester. Each meeting/professional development session will begin at 4:30pm and end at 6:00pm. Lead teacher meetings will occur after school.

As much as possible, due to COVID-19 staff meetings will be held virtually. Staff is expected to participate via zoom from their assigned campus.

## **Dress Code**

Professional attire is required at all times unless lessons for the day include outside projects or activities that last the entire class day. In this instance modest shorts are acceptable. For the months of July and August when it will be incredibly warm, you are allowed to wear school appropriate shorts. Additional dress code requirements and restrictions are as follows:

- Jeans are allowable on Friday with an SHSU Spirit shirt unless the site has a special event.
- Wednesdays are designated to wear the SHSU polo shirt and jeans if you choose to do so.
- No sweat pants, warm-ups, work out pants, or leggings worn as pants.
- School appropriate sandals are acceptable.
- Your SHSU nametag is to be worn every day.

\*If you look in the mirror and have to ask “is this school appropriate?” then it probably isn’t.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES AND CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

### **Lunch and Recess Duty**

The lead teacher at each site will develop a schedule for lunch and recess duty. Arrival and dismissal of students should be on a rotating schedule.

### **Pledges and Minute of Silence**

It is required by the state of Texas that each morning students recite the American pledge, the Texas pledge, and conduct a minute of silence. Since we do not have intercom systems at our sites, this will be the responsibility of the teacher.

### **TEKS Resource, Lesson Plans**

**Lesson plans are due each week by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, or Tuesday if Monday is a holiday.** This is a non-negotiable. Lesson plans should be submitted to Dr. Knox and Renee. The format for lesson plans is the teacher's choice, but it must include the TEKS being taught, activities and assessment. You should include all TEKS for each nine weeks as identified on TEKS Resource within the designated nine weeks. In addition, the plans for remote learning students should also be included in lesson plans.

### **Parent Conferences**

**A minimum of one face-to-face conference with each parent per semester is required.** Notes of the conferences should be kept and stored in the classroom. If you are requesting that an administrator sit in on the conference with you, please give at least three days' notice in order for Dr. Knox or Renee to make arrangements to attend. The lead teacher at each site can also sit in on parent conferences if needed. Due to current COVID-19 concerns, parent conferences shall be held via zoom meeting.

### **Homework**

Reading nightly is expected. Do not send home worksheets and busy work. Homework expectations should be established at each site and approved by Dr. Knox and Renee before being sent home to parents/families. STAAR grade levels should provide homework that expose students to the testing format. A homework grade is included on the report card.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks and instructional materials are very expensive. It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to secure the textbooks in their classroom. If at any time you have concerns regarding materials being used or disturbed after Charter School hours, notify Dr. Knox and Renee immediately.



## **Supplies**

A supply list for the amount of \$200 should be submitted to Joseph at the beginning of the school year. If additional supplies are needed, see your lead teacher for guidance. Teachers may request additional supplies from students by sending a letter or email to parents/guardians. When a student withdraws, any remaining personal supplies should be sent with the student.

If furniture requests are necessary, send the request to your lead teacher and the request will be routed to Dr. Knox and Renee. Please keep social distancing guidelines in mind when considering adding furniture to your classroom.

## **Building, Site, and Classroom Needs**

If you have a “work order” need for your classroom or site, submit the necessary information to the lead teacher and the request will be routed to Dr. Knox and Renee.

## **Field Trips**

The expectation is to coordinate at least one field trip for the school year. Date, time and location needs to be approved by Renee. At this time, due to COVID-19 field trips are on hold.

## **Birthdays**

Student birthdays may be celebrated at the end of the instructional day. This **MUST** take place **AFTER** the scheduled lunch time. Individually wrapped treats may be shared not cupcakes, or other goods that are not individually wrapped. **This is not a party with snacks, a meal, or games.** You will need to make this very clear at your parent information night.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Teacher Laptops

The laptops issued to teachers by SHSU are for work purposes only. However, it should be with you after school hours. Do not leave it in the classroom overnight or on the weekends as the classroom could potentially be occupied by the before- and after-school childcare programs. Do not leave your laptop in a hot vehicle.

### View Sonics

This item will be on rollers. Make sure it is moved out of the way and turned towards the wall at the end of the day to discourage the before- and after-school programs from using it if your room is used after school.

### iPads and Chrome book and Carts

iPad and Chrome book carts need to be stored and locked away each day. Make sure all iPads and Chrome books are accounted for and in the cart before leaving for the day.

### Wifi

Wi-Fi will be available at all locations. Contact the site director for log in information. If the wifi is not working properly, please make your lead teacher, Dr. Knox and the site manager aware.

## SKYWARD STUDENT DATABASE

### Grading, Attendance, Absences, Tardies, Withdrawals, Cumulative Folders

All student folders, including, but not limited to, cumulative, special education, and 504, will be housed in the Charter School offices in Huntsville.

Instruction guides for attendance, gradebook, etcetera, will be given to teachers to keep in the classroom.

Any questions regarding Skyward or student records should be directed to Rebecca.

## HEALTH AND SECURITY

### Medication

All medication will be administered and recorded by the classroom teacher at each site. Medication will be kept in a locked storage cabinet. There is also a designated area in the refrigerator for medication that must be kept cold. Under no circumstances will medication be given without a doctor's note. Children should never carry medication in their backpacks or lunch kits. Medication should always be checked-in by the classroom teacher from the parent.

### Child Protective Services (CPS) and Counseling

If you suspect abuse, it is your legal responsibility to report it. It is not your responsibility to investigate. You are not required to notify administrators, but it is helpful if we are aware of the situation, especially if we receive parent phone calls. Anytime a CPS worker comes in to visit with a child, you must allow that visit. It is not your responsibility to notify the parent of the CPS visit.

In the event you have a student that you think needs counseling services, contact your lead teacher and she will speak with Dr. Knox and/or Renee.

If a CPS caseworker shows up to interview a student, we must provide a private place for that to occur. The lead teacher needs to make a copy of the CPS worker's ID and driver's license. Have the caseworker sign in with time and date. Renee needs to be notified immediately of any CPS visits.

### Campus Security, Release of Students, and Custody Issues

It is your responsibility to know your student's emergency information. It will be available to you through Skyward, and you will also have a hard copy. It is imperative that you are aware of custody issues and who is and is not allowed to pick up a student. If you have questions or concerns **ALWAYS CALL** Dr. Knox, Renee, or Joseph. It is crucial that you are confident in knowing who is picking up each student. Simply let the parent or visitor know that you are protecting the safety of the student and to please be patient while you verify the student's account information. Pay special attention to holidays, as custody typically alternates between parents during these times.

If you have a situation where a student is being picked up late on a regular basis, please notify Renee.

### Fire and Weather Alerts (Active Assault Drills)

Lead teachers should work with the childcare director/owner to establish a fire route exit and an alternate exit. Fire drills should be conducted once a month and recorded on the official Fire Marshal record sheet. It is best to coordinate the drills with the site. Students

should be prepared and know the procedures to follow when tornado or weather alerts occur. The students should be away from windows and secure from flying objects.

### COVID Guidelines:

#### **PREVENT: Practices to Prevent the Virus from Entering the School**

##### ***Screening Questions for COVID-19 Before Campus Access***

1. The SHSU Charter School will require teachers and staff to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming onto campus each day. The self-screening should include teachers and staff taking their own temperature. Teachers and staff must report to the SHSU Charter School administration if they themselves have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below. Additionally, they must report to the SHSU Charter School administration if they have had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, must remain off campus until the 14-day incubation period has passed.

2. Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and instead should opt to receive remote instruction until the below conditions for re-entry are met. Parents may also opt to have their students receive remote instruction if their child has had close contact with an individual who is lab-confirmed with COVID-19 until the 14-day incubation period has passed

3. Before volunteers are allowed onto campuses, the SHSU Charter School will screen all volunteers to determine if they have COVID-19 symptoms or are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, and, if so, they must remain off campus until they meet the criteria for re-entry as noted below.

##### ***Individuals Confirmed or Suspected with COVID-19***

1. Any individuals who themselves either: (a) are lab-confirmed to have COVID-19; or (b) experience the symptoms of COVID-19 must stay at home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to campus until the SHSU Charter School staff screens the individual to determine all of the below conditions for campus re-entry have been met:

**o In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria are met:**

i. at least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);

ii. the individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath);

iii. at least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

**o In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, such individual is assumed to have COVID-19, and the**

**individual may not return to the campus until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.**

o If the individual has symptoms that could be COVID-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) receive two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

#### ***Identifying Possible COVID-19 Cases on Campus***

o The SHSU Charter School will immediately separate any student who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.

o The SHSU Charter School will clean the areas used by the individual who shows COVID-19 symptoms while at school (student, teacher, or staff) as soon as is feasible.

o Students who report feeling feverish will be given an immediate temperature check to determine if they are symptomatic for COVID-19.

#### **RESPOND: Practices to Respond to a Lab-Confirmed Case in the School**

##### ***Required Actions if Individuals with Lab-Confirmed Cases Have Been in a School***

1. If an individual who has been in a school is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19, the SHSU Charter School will notify its local health department, in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including confidentiality requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

2. The SHSU Charter School will close off areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case (student, teacher, or staff) until the non-porous surfaces in those areas can be disinfected, unless more than 3 days have already passed since that person was on campus.

3. Consistent with school notification requirements for other communicable diseases, and consistent with legal confidentiality requirements, the SHSU Charter School will notify all teachers, staff, and families of all students in a school if a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case is identified among students, teachers or staff who participate on any on campus activities.

#### **COVID-19 Symptoms**

In evaluating whether an individual has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, consider the following questions:

##### ***Have they recently begun experiencing any of the following in a way that is not normal for them?***

o Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit

- o Loss of taste or smell or Cough
- o Difficulty breathing o Shortness of breath o Headache

- o Chills
- o Sore throat
- o Shaking or exaggerated shivering o Significant muscle pain or ache
- o Diarrhea

**Close Contact**

This document refers to “close contact” with an individual who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19. Close contact is determined by an appropriate public health agency. For clarity, close contact is defined as:

1. being directly exposed to infectious secretions (e.g., being coughed on while not wearing a mask or face shield)
2. being within 6 feet for a cumulative duration of 15 minutes, while not wearing a mask or face shield

If either occurred at any time in the last 14 days at the same time the infected individual was infectious.

Individuals are presumed infectious at least two days prior to symptom onset or, in the case of asymptomatic individuals who are lab-confirmed with COVID-19, two days prior to the confirming lab test.

## REFERENCE GUIDE

Please use the following list as a reference guide when seeking the right person for help:

Dr. Knox

- Special Education
- 504
- Building and Classroom Needs
- Human Resources
- Designated Asbestos Manager
- Emergency Management Coordinator
- Instructional Materials Coordinator

Renee

- Discipline/Code-of-Conduct
- LPAC
- Textbooks
- Assessments
- Lesson Plans
- TEKS Resource
- Robotics (Brighton)
- Absences/Substitutes
- Professional Development
- Staff Meetings

Rebecca

- Attendance/Withdrawals
- Gradebook and Report Cards
- Human Resources
- Skyward
- Student Records
- Enrollment

Joseph

- Purchasing and Ordering
- Timesheets/Absences, tardies
- Travel

