

STUDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK 2026 – 2027 SCHOOL YEAR

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Note: In the event that any changes are made, the revised terms and conditions of this handbook will be posted on the school's website. Student Leadership Academy may change, add, cancel, remove, or otherwise modify this document at any time without prior notice. Thank you.

SECTION 1: GETTING STARTED

SCHOOL HOURS - ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

1st Period Start time: 7:30 a.m. If the student arrives at school after the 7:30 bell has rung, the student will need to sign in and get a late pass.

For the safety of students, parents should ensure that their children do not arrive at school before **7:00 a.m.** Before 7:00am, there is not appropriate supervision available on campus.

Dismissal time: Bus dismissal: 2:00 p.m.

Parent pick-up dismissal: 2:05 p.m.

Walkers, bike riders, etc. dismissal: 2:15 p.m. (This is an approximate time, as these students are dismissed after the car line has ended.

Unless involved in a supervised activity, students must leave school grounds immediately upon dismissal. All students must be picked up no later than 2:30 pm.

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents/guardians must provide the school with current and accurate contact information, including the home, cell and work telephone numbers and home address. All information must be kept up-to-date. Parents are responsible for notifying the School Office immediately when there is a change.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Emergency contact information must be provided to the School at the beginning of the school year and must remain current at all times. In the event of an emergency, your child's emergency contact information may be critical when attempting to reach the family. Parents/guardians are required to notify the School Office immediately whenever there is a change to the emergency contact information.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is the responsibility of each student's parent/guardian to immediately notify the School Office of any changes of address, phone number, or child-custody status. It is extremely important that the School has accurate and up-to-date information, including information on the student emergency card, in order to facilitate communication between school and home.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records shall be available only to the student and parents/guardian, designated school employees, designated school district officials, or others as determined by a court of jurisdiction.

Parents may request a photocopy of their child's records. The school will provide the photocopies within a reasonable timeframe and, in accordance with Florida Statute, may charge a per page fee.

WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY OF VENICE

A parent who wishes to withdraw their student from Student Leadership Academy must notify the School Office prior to withdrawal and complete the withdrawal form. Please provide at least one week's notice prior to the student's last day. The School will forward the student's records to the new receiving school. Students will be required to return all textbooks, materials, and school equipment prior to withdrawal.

SECTION 2: ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Student Leadership Academy of Venice follows the guidelines for attendance and absences as established by the Sarasota County School District.

The educational program offered by Student Leadership Academy of Venice requires that students be present and participate in daily instruction. Students are expected to be in attendance during the days and hour's school is in session. School attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent.

All absences are considered unexcused until the school receives a written explanation from the parent/guardian within three days of the absence. The school principal will make the final determination whether or not an absence is excused. Excessive excused absences for illness may result in the student being required to provide a doctor's note or other substantiating documentation.

Teachers and staff will encourage regular attendance of students, maintain accurate attendance records, and follow reporting procedures as outlined by the school principal.

Attendance is reported by period at the middle school level. In order to be considered present for the school day, the student must attend four (4) periods of the day.

Excused absences include:

- Student illness or accident (if documented by parent/guardian or medical doctor)
- Medical appointment with documentation
- Death in the student's immediate family
- A major personal or family crisis
- Observance of a religious holiday or service that is recognized as such by members of the student's faith
- Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance
- A breakdown of the school bus (or failure to pick up the student)
- Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student, as determined and approved by the principal or principal's designee

Unexcused absences include:

- Absences caused by truancy of the student
- Absences caused by an out-of-school suspension
- Absences caused by a family vacation without principals' approval (please see page 7)

A student that has fifteen (15) unexcused absences within 90 calendar days is considered a habitual truant under Florida law, and the student may be dealt with as a child in need of services under Chapter 984, Florida Statutes. Additionally, the parent/guardian may be subject to criminal prosecution under Chapter 1003.24, Florida Statutes.

TARDINESS, LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DISMISSAL

Students are expected to be in attendance throughout the school day in order to benefit fully from Student Leadership Academy of Venice's educational program. However, from time to time, circumstances may require that a student arrive after school begins or be dismissed before the end of the school day. The parent/guardian is expected to notify the School Office in advance and provide the reason for the late arrival or early dismissal. When students arrive to school or leave school early without an adequate excuse, the tardy or early dismissal will be unexcused.

Remember: Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and has a negative impact on student achievement. Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide an explanation, in writing, when the student is absent. Additionally, whenever possible, the parent/guardian should notify the School Office in person or by telephone, on the day of the absence. Upon return to school, a written note explaining the absence is required in order for the student to be considered excused. Written notes must be provided within three (3) school days after the student returns. Additional documentation, as determined by the school principal, may be required. Parents may be asked to provide written medical documentation when excused absences for illness are excessive. Over five absences for illness per semester or ten for illness in a school year is considered excessive.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

During school hours the principal or designee shall permit a child to leave school only in the custody of one of the following adults:

- Parent/guardian of the student with photo ID.
- Person listed on Emergency Contact Card, with photo ID.
- A law enforcement officer.
- An authorized worker from the Department of Children and Families.

At the end of the school day, students are released at a specified time and place and are expected to go directly home. Parents must notify the School Office regarding any change in the student's normal transportation. Car riders should be picked up immediately in the school's designated area. Students riding buses are expected to unload from the bus at their designated stop. Students must enter and exit at their assigned bus stop.

SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES (PRE-APPROVED AND EMERGENCY)

Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave without permission from the principal or designee. Students who must leave school during school hours are required to have their parent make a request for release by phone or in person to the School Office in order to obtain pre-approval.

Excused sign-outs include:

- Medical or dental appointments (doctor's statement may be required).
- Emergency situations acceptable to the principal or designee.
- Court appearance (subpoena required).
- Deaths or funerals.
- Personal reasons acceptable to the principal or designee.

Unexcused sign-outs include:

- Forgotten items (for instance: books, lunch, money, homework, projects, tardy or absence excuse).
- Violation of dress code (to obtain appropriate dress).
- Non-educational appointments.

FAMILY VACATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Family vacations and other activities are not excused absences. Pre-approval must be granted by the principal. Arrangements for make-up work must be prearranged through the principal and the student's teachers. The school will follow the guidelines as set forth by the Sarasota County School District regarding family vacations and other activities in which the student is not present in school.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be expected to make-up all assignments and tests missed during a period of an excused or unexcused absence. The student is responsible for making arrangements with the teacher when he/she returns to school. Make-up work will be due after the same number of days missed from school. For example, if a student misses three days, he/she will have three school days in which to complete and submit the assigned work. The student will not receive an academic penalty unless the work is not made-up within a reasonable amount of time.

A student who is suspended from school will be allowed to make up his/her assignments and tests once they have returned from suspension. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the teacher when he/she returns to school.

FIELD TRIPS

From time to time, students may have the opportunity to participate in curricular and/or extracurricular field trips and travel. Although the School recognizes the importance of learning opportunities associated with field trips, student safety is valued above all other considerations.

IMPORTANT: Before a parent/guardian authorizes a student to participate in a school-related field trip or travel, please consider the following:

- The current world situation has placed parents in a position of increased responsibility. It is important that parents analyze each situation before granting permission for a student trip.
- The School shall not assume financial liability in the event that a trip is cancelled. The student's family must assume financial responsibility for any monetary loss and may wish to investigate the feasibility of purchasing cancellation/interruption insurance to cover advance payments, when available.
- When considering a student's participation in a field trip, it is important to carefully review the parental consent forms to ensure a clear understanding of the School's role and each family's responsibility.
- Students transported to and from any field trip destination in school district buses and/or chartered buses have the responsibility to act in the appropriate and safe manner. Any inappropriate behavior will be reported by the bus driver to the principal for action.

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES: ELIGIBILITY

Participation in athletic activities as an extracurricular activity is a privilege, not a student's right under the law. Athletic eligibility will be granted only if the student meets all standards adopted by Student Leadership Academy of Venice and the Sarasota County School District.

Students participating in athletic events are required to follow the Code of Student Conduct.

Student Leadership Academy of Venice is a member of the Florida Suncoast League. Eligible students may participate in flag football, volleyball, basketball, soccer and cross country.

For additional Information on school athletic activities, please visit the school's website at:

www.studentleadershipacademyvenice.org

TRANSPORTATION

School Bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. This privilege can be denied for unacceptable behavior on the bus or at bus stops.

Bus riders have a RESPONSIBILITY to:

- Abide by the Sarasota County School District's school bus policies while at bus stops and on the bus.
- Obey the bus driver's instructions.
- Arrive at the assigned stop five minutes before pickup time, stand away from the road, board the bus when it has stopped and the doors have opened. The bus will not wait for students who are tardy.
- Cross the roadway in the proper manner.
- Ride the assigned bus and not board or depart the bus at any stop other than the assigned stop, unless authorized by the school principal. Sit in the assigned seat; standing or trying to change seats while the bus is in motion is dangerous and is not allowed.
- Remain seated and facing forward at all times when the bus is moving. Keep all portions of the body inside the bus.
- Remain absolutely quiet at railroad crossings, for the safety of all on board.
- Refrain from blocking the aisles or emergency exits with objects.
- Refrain from displaying posters or signs from the bus windows.
- Student may not bring animals or anything in a glass container on the bus, or any articles that could be disruptive to the safe operation of the school bus. This includes science specimens and experiments.
- Bulky or objectionable articles, including scooters, skateboards or large musical instruments that cannot be held in the student's lap will not be permitted on the bus.

The following are examples of behavior or actions that will not be allowed on the bus:

- Fighting on the bus.
- Bullying/Harassment
- Obscene language or gestures.
- Throwing any objects from the windows of the bus.

- Littering or throwing objects inside the bus or at the bus.
- Spraying and/or applying scented perfumes/sprays/lotions while on the bus or just before boarding the bus is not permissible.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for the control and direction of students at the bus stop. All students are responsible for their behavior on the school bus and at the school bus stop.
- Parents/guardians and students may be held responsible for any unacceptable behavior by a student on the bus.
- Parents/guardians and students will be held responsible for all vandalism to the bus by students. Restitution will be required.
- SLA students will share busses with VHS students. SLA students will be assigned to the front of the bus and separated as much as possible.

<p>Any inappropriate behavior could result in a referral or suspension from the bus.</p>

Student Transportation by Private Vehicle

Students shall not be transported by private vehicle without written permission and only for the purpose of after-school activities.

School staff shall only transport a student upon approval of the principal and the parent/guardian.

Any private vehicles used to transport students must be currently registered in the state of Florida, insured for personal injury protection and property damage liability in at least the minimum amounts required by law, and is in good working order.

Students transported to and from school for any field trip destination or school-related activity school district buses and/or chartered buses are expected to act appropriately, responsibly and in a safe manner at all time. Any inappropriate behavior will be reported by the bus driver to the principal for disciplinary action.

SECTION 3: VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS SCHOOL VISITORS

All visitors, including parents, must sign in at the School Office and present a current state-issued form of identification (e.g. driver's license or state identification). The identification will be used to process the visitor through RAPTOR, a sexual offender/predator database. Once cleared through RAPTOR, the visitor will receive a self-adhesive nametag with his or her name, photo and location within the School where he or she will visit. While on school property, the nametag must be visible at all times. No individual may enter the School with prior clearance.

- 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 express permission in advance from the school principal.
- Students who are not enrolled at Student Leadership Academy may not visit the school without the permission of the school principal. Any student found in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.
- Any individual found on the campus without clearance is subject to a trespassing charge and possible arrest.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Any person wishing to serve as a volunteer (including mentors, tutors, field-trip chaperones, etc.) must be cleared through RAPTOR and must be registered as a School Based Volunteer through the Volunteer Partnership Office. The School Based Volunteer computer is located in the School Office. The School must receive notification that the volunteer has been cleared by the Sarasota County School District before an individual can be permitted to volunteer at the school or on a school-related activity. Please allow at least two weeks for the School Base Volunteer office to provide the school with clearance confirmation. *Volunteers must sign in and out at the School Office or at a school-related event.*

Important information for Volunteers:

- Volunteer hours will be tracked by School Office personnel.
- Volunteers must have the approval of the school principal.
- Volunteers serve only in an auxiliary capacity under the direction and supervision of professional school personnel.
- Volunteers provide supplemental and supportive services and are not a substitute for a member of the school staff.
- Volunteers do not have access to sensitive confidential records or files.
- The relationship between volunteers and the school staff must be one of mutual respect, confidence and consideration.
- Volunteers must always sign in and out and wear their Volunteer identification badge while on school property or at a school-related event.

SECTION 4: CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Student Leadership Academy of Venice has adopted the Sarasota County School District's Code of Student Conduct. Additional information is available on the Sarasota County School District's website at: <http://sarasotacountyschools.net/departments/academicintervention/>

DRESS CODE

The principal will determine the appropriateness of dress and appearance to ensure it meets school and community standards. As authorized by the Student Leadership of Venice Board of Directors, the principal's decision on the appropriateness of dress is final.

Dress and Grooming

In order to promote an orderly and successful learning environment while students are in school or on school-related activities, the Student Leadership Academy of Venice's Board of Directors has established the following guidelines for student dress.

- Students are required to wear SLA uniforms during normal school days and field trips. Any exceptions shall be determined by the principal.
- Students are expected to be well groomed at all times.
- Appropriate footwear shall be worn at all times. Students are required to wear closed toe and heel shoes.
- Students' clothing shall be worn appropriately, e.g., pants must be worn securely at the waist. No abdomen skin or underwear is to be exposed. Ripped or torn clothing is not permitted.
- Hats or head coverings will not be permitted on the school campus during the regular school day unless previously approved for medical or religious reasons or special school activities as determined by the principal or designee.

- Jewelry shall be worn in a manner that does not present a safety or health hazard or cause a major disruption to the educational process. Facial piercings are not permitted.
- Decorations, symbols, mottos, or designs imprinted or attached to the body or clothing which are offensive to good taste or the maintenance of decorum, or which advertise tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or which identify them as members of secret antisocial groups or gangs shall not be worn to school or school functions.
- **Please see the SLA Uniform Policy guidelines on our website for further details.**

[Student Uniform Policy Guidelines & Disciplinary Action](#)

STUDENT CELL TELEPHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of electronic communication devices such as cell phones, smart watches, air pods/earbuds is strictly prohibited during school hours. Students may not use cell phones or other PEDs at school-sponsored activities to access and/or view Internet websites that are otherwise prohibited to students at school. The unauthorized recording and/or photographing of employees, volunteers and/or students is strictly prohibited and could result in disciplinary action and/or suspension.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the cell phone or PED. If the cell phone or PED is confiscated, it will be released/returned in accordance with procedures set by the school.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action as listed below:

First Offense - Cell phone/electronic device is confiscated, SAM given, and student is able to pick up their device in the front office after 2:00 PM.

Second Offense - Cell phone/electronic device is confiscated, student referral given (ISS), parent/guardian notified and required to pick up the device during school hours (7:00am - 3:00 pm).

Third Offense - Cell phone/electronic device is confiscated, student referral given (OSS), parent/guardian notified and required to pick up the device during school hours (7:00am - 3:00 pm). Student will be required to turn their cell phone/electronic device into the front office upon arrival each day and then retrieve their device upon departure for the next 90 days. Note: It is the student's responsibility to turn in their device upon arrival and pick up their device upon departure, administration will not remind or track down the student to do so. Any refusal to do so may result in further suspension and/or loss of school privilege. Any leftover violation days will carry over into the next school year.

*The principal may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity.

The student who possesses a cellular telephone or PED is responsible for its care. The School is not responsible for theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to cellular telephones or PEDs.

Parents/guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the School Office. Students are advised to use the front office phone or clinic phone when sick, in order to get in touch with their parent/guardian. At no time should students use their personal cell phone to contact their parent/guardian unless advised but staff personnel to do so.

During a critical incident at the school, cell phones are not to be used by students. If students use cell phones to attempt to contact a parent during an emergency, they could be putting themselves and their classmates in jeopardy. 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 could jeopardize their safety. Parents are asked to explain to their children the importance of not using cell phones during the emergency.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Technology is an integral part of a student's educational experience and must be used in a way that is consistent with the goals of The Student Leadership Academy of Venice and the Sarasota County School District. Technology includes, but is not limited to, computers, personal digital assistants, other electronic devices, software, e-mail, the Internet, other network resources, cell phones and cameras. Student use of technology is a privilege; students are responsible for using technology appropriately. This includes the use of school district equipment away from school grounds.

The following are inappropriate and/or illegal uses of technology:

- Photographing/Recording or using photographs/recordings of individuals without their knowledge or consent.
- Accessing or distributing offensive, inflammatory pornographic or obscene images, language or materials, including screen savers, backdrops, and/or pictures on school district-owned technology or on any other electronic device brought to school.
- Transmission of any material in violation of federal, state, or local law, or policy, regulation, or Code of Student Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material; threatening, obscene, or pornographic material; vandalizing data, test questions and/or answers; student work products; trade secrets; and computer viruses, "worms" or "trojans".
- Utilizing technology for commercial activities unless explicitly permitted by the Board of Directors.
- Downloading and/or printing music, games, videos or inappropriate files during school hours.
- Modifying the School's original pre-set software or hardware, including, but not limited to: loading software applications not authorized by the School or School District; changing the computer name; changing or removing operating system and extensions; altering security/filtering software; altering the pre-loaded operating system or application; or taking apart the computer for access to internal parts, accessing or altering password; using e-mail, instant messaging, web pages, or other technology operations to threaten, disrupt, or interfere with the safety and welfare of the school community.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to the School or School District network, computer servers, or data files.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to non-district networks, computer servers, or data files utilizing district equipment.
- Using profanity, obscenity, other language that may be offensive to another user or reposting and copying personal communications without the author's prior consent, when using computer network access.
- Attempting to log on to the district's network using another person's identity.
- Bypassing or attempting to bypass the district's filtering software.
- Using computers, networks, and online telecommunication systems unrelated to students' educational systems. This includes the prohibition of plagiarism, reproduction of state-or teacher-made tests, textbooks, teaching materials, non-authored text, cheating and theft of ideas.
- Accessing or distributing offensive, obscene, inflammatory or pornographic material.
- Using network access to destroy information that belongs to others.
- Copying personal communication to others without the original author's permission.

- Copying software or other copyright-protected materials in violation of copyright laws.
- Using the network for any illegal activity or private business purposes or accessing inappropriate Internet sites.
- “Hacking” into the school’s computer systems or unauthorized modification of computer settings. These acts will be considered vandalism and disruption of a school function and will be treated as such.
- Using technology to threaten, harass or bully other students or staff.
- Using a computer, video, camera or program in any manner.
- Using a computer, video, camera or program in any manner other than for appropriate educational purposes.

Violations will result in serious disciplinary actions, which may include an arrest if any criminal law is broken. Examples of such violations would be computer hacking or trespassing, harassment, or threats via computer or computer fraud.

VANDALISM AND MALICIOUS MISCHIEF

“Vandalism” means the action involving deliberate destruction of or damage to public or private property. The term also includes criminal damage such as graffiti and defacement directed towards any property without permission of the owner.

- A student who willfully damages school property shall be disciplined and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian, if the student is a minor, shall be requested, in writing, to restore or to replace any damaged property in accordance with the true value as determined by the principal or in extreme cases the School Board. In extreme cases of vandalism, a student shall be subject to suspension or expulsion from school under the charge of serious misconduct. The Code of Student Conduct shall identify disciplinary procedures for the students who abuse school property.
- A civil action against the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian may be instituted by the School in an appropriate action to recover damages in an amount not to exceed the limit set by Florida Statutes if vandalism or theft of school property is known to have been committed by a minor and the parent(s) or legal guardian refuses to restore or replace the property.
- In any case of willful or negligent damage to school property by a person other than a student, the user or the person responsible for the damage shall replace the property or pay the damages in accordance with the true value as determined by the Principal/School Board.
- Any organization which is granted permission for the use of school grounds shall be responsible for any damages to the buildings, equipment, or grounds beyond that which would be considered normal wear and tear and shall pay for any such damage in accordance with the true value being determined by the Principal/School Board. Failure to comply with request for payment of such assessed damages shall result in individual, group, or organization being ineligible for further use of school property and such legal action as the Principal/School Board deems proper to recover the amount of damages.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Student Leadership Academy of Venice is committed to providing an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying for all of its students and employees. The School will not tolerate unlawful bullying and harassment of any type and shall strictly adhere to all Florida law prohibiting bullying and harassment.

Florida Statute 1006.147 defines bullying and harassment. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

- A. Bullying or harassment of any student is prohibited. This policy applies:
- during any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
 - during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
 - on a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution;
 - through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution; or
 - through the use of data or computer software that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the bullying substantially interferes with or limits the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school or substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school or department.

This policy does not require a school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

"Bullying" includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students and may involve. It includes unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to (1) create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; (2) cause discomfort or humiliation; or (3) unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance. Bullying and harassment may involve but is not limited to the following behavior:

- teasing;
- social exclusion;
- threats;
- intimidation;
- stalking;
- physical violence;
- theft;
- harassment based on race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex or gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or other self-defining characteristic;
- public or private humiliation; or
- destruction of property.

"Cyberbullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

“Cyberstalking” as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Bullying and harassment also encompasses perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying and harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student by incitement or coercion; accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the school system; and/or acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

For purposes of this policy, harassment means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student that

- places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Allegations of sexual harassment, including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that contributes to a hostile educational environment or that is made explicitly or implicitly a condition of a student’s academic achievement, or which the rejection of or submission to such conduct in any way impacts a student’s academic status or educational experience, are forms of prohibited discrimination covered by Policy 2.71.

B. “Harassment” means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Under Florida law, the definitions of “bullying” and “harassment” include:

- Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
- Perpetuation of conduct listed above by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - Incitement or coercion;
 - Accessing or knowingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system;
 - Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.
- Inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees.

- Unwanted written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause discomfort or humiliation.
- Unreasonably interference with the individual's school performance or participation.

May involve but is not limited to teasing; social exclusion; threat; intimidation; stalking; physical violence; theft; sexual, religious, or racial harassment; public humiliation; or destruction of property.

In May 2013, Governor Rick Scott signed a bill in law that targets bullying into law. The new law includes three major changes:

- Students can be bullied publicly or privately;
- Cyberbullying is defined as harassment using electronic means, such as email or impersonating someone online;
- Schools are allowed to become involved if off-campus bullying affects the targeted student's on-campus education.

The law also requires schools to educate staff and students on how to identify bullying and what to do if they see it. The law does not require schools and school districts to monitor off-campus activity.

Incidents of bullying or harassment should be reported to the principal immediately. The principal or designee will investigate all reports of bullying that have been deemed a violation of the policy. Upon receipt of the complaint, the principal or designee will notify the parents of the students involved and begin an investigation. Parent/guardian involvement and cooperation is required.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Student Leadership Academy of Venice discipline plan aligns with the discipline policies and procedures set forth by the Sarasota County School Board. Discipline is the process of changing a student's behavior from inappropriate to exemplary. Rather than merely stop poor behavior, we desire to teach the student to do what is right and continuously make good choices.

Each teacher will establish appropriate procedures for classroom management in his/her classroom based on these guidelines. Students are expected to respect the authority of teachers.

Violations of the Student Leadership Academy of Venice and the Sarasota County School District's Code of Student Conduct occur in varying degrees of severity. These behaviors are aligned with the Sarasota County School District's discipline policy, from least severe (Level 1) to most severe (Level 4). The range of consequences for offenses is described below.

Level 1 Behaviors

Attendance Incidents

- Tardiness, habitual
- Truancy/unexplained absence
- Out of assigned area
- Leaving school grounds without permission

Rules Violations Incidents

- Dress code violation
- Public display of affection
- Cheating
- Failure to comply with class/school rules
- Disobeying rules on the school bus

Disruptive Incidents

- Disruptive play
- Disruptive behavior
- Disrespectful language
- Bullying/harassment
- Confrontation
- Lying/misrepresentation
- Articles disruptive to school
- Prohibited items, non-criminal, and unauthorized use of medication
- Unauthorized sale/distribution of materials
- Inappropriate activity

Level 2 Behaviors

Disruptive/Physical/Verbal Incidents

- Bus disruption
- Disobedience/insubordination
- Profane/obscene language (includes any racial, religious, or gender slurs or gestures)
- Non-criminal threat
- Physical aggression (not involving law enforcement)
- Repetitive disruptive behaviors
- Repetitive disobedience/open defiance
- Insubordination
- Repetitive bullying, harassing, intimidating
- Hazing

Property Incidents

- Abuse of school property/minor vandalism
- Petty theft (under \$300)

Rules Violations and Other Serious Incidents

- Unserved lunch detention
- Unserved lunch detention (extended/multiple)
- Firecracker/poppers
- Forgery of a document or signature

Gambling

- Sexual Harassment
- Severe/repetitive inappropriate activity
- Menacing statements, non-criminal
- Public nudity

LEVEL 3 Behaviors

All Level 3 offenses will result in out-of-school suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion.
Level 3 offenses include:

Disruptive/Physical/Verbal Incidents

- Fighting
- Verbal assault on a student/person
- Verbal assault on school district employee
- Physical battery on a student/person (non-school district employee)
- Attempting criminal act against a person
- Extortion/blackmail/coercion
- Robbery
- Physical aggression (involving law enforcement)
- Intentional false accusations against staff members

Property Incidents

- Stealing more than \$300
- Vandalism more than \$1,000 (includes materials/labor)
- Breaking and entering/burglary
- Computer misuse
- Reckless vehicle use
- Motor vehicle theft
- Counterfeit/misrepresented documents

Drug Incidents

- Possession/use of tobacco products/electronic cigarettes
- Unauthorized possession or use of prescription medications
- Use of intoxicants
- Possession, use, or storage of drugs or imitation drugs represented as drugs

Disorderly Conduct/Weapons Incidents

- Disruption of a school/disorderly conduct
- Trespassing
- False fire alarm/911 call
- Bomb threat
- Inappropriate, lewd, or obscene act
- Sexual misconduct
- Sexual offenses
- Possession of a knife
- Possession of other potentially dangerous item
- Felony suspension act

LEVEL 4 Behaviors

Minimum mandatory punishment for Level 4 offenses include out-of-school suspension and recommendation for expulsion

Criminal incidents

- Making a threat by conveying, depicting or symbolizing an act of violence via a verbal, written or drawn message, or by electronic transmission
- Making a threat or false report involving a school or a school's personal property or school transportation, involving a school-sponsored activity
- Possession, use, or sale of any firearm, weapon or other prohibited articles
- Possession, use, sale, storage or distribution of an explosive device

- Possession, use, sale, intent to sell, or distribution of drugs, imitation drugs represented as drugs, or prescription medications
- Possession, use, manufacture, sale, storage, or distribution of alcohol or intoxicating beverages
- Aggravated battery
- Arson
- Armed robbery
- Battery or aggravated battery on a school district employee
- Criminal acts
- Kidnapping or abduction
- Homicide

Local law enforcement authorities shall be notified when any crime or delinquent act is committed on school property or school-sponsored transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity.

STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE

[Florida Statute 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 school 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, may be 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.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Florida Statute 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."

There is a mandatory minimum punishment of one (1) full year (365 days) of a disciplinary consequence for zero-tolerance offenses.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Florida Statutes 1003.44 requires that the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag be recited at the beginning of the day in every Florida public elementary, middle and high school. Each student has the right not to participate in reciting or standing for the pledge. If the student does not stand or recite the pledge without the school's receipt in writing of a parental opt-out request, the educator should counsel with the student privately and not single the student out in front of the class to verify a First Amendment basis for the student's position (such as religious or political).

If the student is not being materially disruptive during the recitation, the student will be allowed to quietly remain seated or decline to recite the pledge. However, if the student is being materially disruptive, discipline can be enforced for this disruptive behavior; but it should be made clear that the discipline is based on the materially disruptive actions and not for refusal to stand for the pledge.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Student Leadership Academy will utilize our school choice form that contains the same language as the school district's reassignment form. That language states that a reassignment will only be revoked based on attendance, behavior, or violation of the Parent/Student Contract. If behavior becomes an issue, the school will make every effort to work with the parent/guardians to help correct any behavior issues. If the parent/guardians refuse to work with the school to help correct the student's behavior, then the student will be sent back to their districted school.

Dismissal procedures shall be clearly defined in writing, shared with students and parents and provided to the Sponsor no later than two weeks prior to the opening of school each year. In case where dismissal is implemented, the parents will receive written notice of the dismissal including the reasons for dismissal and a summary of the actions taken to assist the student prior to dismissal. The Sponsor shall be provided a copy of the dismissal notice at the same time as the parent. The School shall work in conjunction with the parent(s) and the receiving school to assure that, to the greatest extent possible, such dismissals occurs at logical transition points in the school year (e.g. grading period or semester break) that minimize impact on the student grades and academic achievement.

The School shall annually provide to the sponsor a copy of its dismissal procedures prior to the opening of school. Following the adopted Code of Student Conduct, the School may refer students to other community programs or contracted services programs in lieu of suspension from the School. Students recommended for expulsion will be referred to the Sponsor for appropriate disposition.

SECTION 5: ACADEMICS

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity at all times. Each student is expected to do his or her own work, except where collaboration is permitted 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.

GRADING POLICIES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES

- Grade reporting periods are at least nine weeks in length.
- At the end of each grading period, a Progress Report (Report Card) indicating the grade earned in each class is provided to the parent.
- Middle school students (grades 6-8) receive grades in all academic areas, as well as work habits grades and effort grades that are separate from academic achievement grades.

Grading Scale:

Grading Scale	Letter Grade
90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
Below 60	F

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

To be promoted to the next grade level, sixth and seventh grade students must:

- Receive a passing grade in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

To be promoted to ninth grade, eighth grade students must:

- Successfully complete three middle school or higher-level courses in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies;
- Successfully complete at least a one semester civics education course; and
- Successfully complete a semester career planning course, or the equivalent integrated curriculum.

A student who has failed one or more of the middle grades core course requirements will be expected to participate in the summer course recovery program.

FLORIDA STANDARDS ASSESSMENT, EIGHTH GRADE SCIENCE, END OFCOURSE EXAMS, AND LOCAL END OF COURSE EXAMS

Much has been written about the New Florida Standards and its importance to a child's academic career, but standardized tests alone do not determine a child's academic potential. Parents may request test results and explanations; the more you know, the more you can help their child.

FAST writing is administered in grades 6-8 and part of English Language Arts (ELA) assessments. Math Florida Standards (MAFS) are required statewide assessments for students in grades 6, 7, and 8. FAST Science is administered to middle school students in grade 8.

End-of-Course Examinations (EOC) are administered to students enrolled in 7th grade Civics Education, Algebra 1 and Geometry.

Local End-of-Course exams will be administered also and will include different subjects on a yearly basis for grades 6-8.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a regular part of the instruction process. Teachers are responsible for assigning homework that is appropriate for the subject being taught and the maturity level and needs of individual students. Students are responsible for completing and submitting their homework within the timeframe designated by the teacher.

Homework that is submitted late may be accepted, but the final grade is subject to the teacher's discretion.

ELECTRONIC GRADE BOOK

Parents are provided electronic access to their child's academic and attendance information through Sarasota County Schools Cross Pointe Parent Portal. Cross Pointe does provide your student's schedule, attendance, and final quarterly grades. In addition, SLA provides each parent with a teacher ease access account for assignments, behavior log, on-going academic progress and academic email alerts. For information on setting up an account and sign-in, please go to:

<https://scsparentportal.sarasota.k12.fl.us/portal/>
<https://www.teacherease.com/common/login.aspx>

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued every quarter during the school year. The teacher's recorded grade is based on progress made toward mastery of the standards of the school's curriculum, which is aligned with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and the Florida Standards. Attendance and conduct information are also included. Student Leadership Academy of Venice has adopted the grading system of the Sarasota County School District.

If students or parents have questions about a grade, please contact the teacher for additional information.

STUDENT ACCELERATION

Students requesting to take a course offered by Florida Virtual School Flex must:

- Have parent/guardian approval.
- Must consult with the school counselor prior to applying to or enrolling in FLVS.
- Students must score at the highest proficiency level on statewide assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and/or Math.
- For core courses in the previous school year (science, math, social studies, and English Language Arts), students must have achieved at least a **90%** or above in those subjects.
- Students must also maintain at least a **90%** or above in their current core coursework.
- Students may only accelerate one level beyond what is currently offered at Student Leadership Academy in an approved area.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a student or his/her parent believes they have a grievance or complaint they should do the following:

1. Carefully analyze the problem – be sure you have ALL the FACTS.
2. Ascertain that you have a rational attitude about the problem.
3. Seek to resolve the problem with your student's teacher, if applicable.
4. If the problem or concern cannot be resolved with the teacher, make an appointment to speak with the principal by calling, emailing or stopping by the School Office.
5. If there is not a satisfactory resolution with the principal, contact the Student Leadership Academy of Venice governing board parent representative. Please stop by the School Office for information on contacting the representative.
6. Parents may address a concern to the Student Leadership Academy of Venice governing board at a regularly scheduled public meeting.

SECTION 6: HEALTH

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Emergency Cards

You will receive an emergency card for your child the first week of school.

Please complete both sides and return to his/her teacher. It is very important that you keep this information current so we can contact you during the school day if needed.

If a student does not pass one of the above screenings we will re-screen him/her in two weeks. If at that time he/she still does not pass the screening, a letter will be sent home to the parent/guardian so you can follow up with your pediatrician. Please note that these are only screenings, not a diagnosis. If you do not want your child to participate in the above screenings, please notify the principal in writing.

Medications at School

All medications, including over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, must have written authorization from the parent and the physician. THIS IS A STATE LAW. Please do not ask us to violate this law by bringing in medications without the necessary forms completed. Medication will not be given without the proper documentation. Parents must drop off all medications to the School Office. Students are not allowed to carry any type of medication during school hours unless specifically prescribed by the physician.

Illness

Please do not send your child to school when he/she is sick. If your child has a fever or vomiting/diarrhea they should stay home. If a child is sent home from school with a fever, please note that they should be fever-free for 24 hours before they are sent back to school. This is for the wellbeing of your child and the other students at the school.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY SPECIAL NEEDS OR MEDICAL ISSUES, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

All students must be properly immunized for the grade they are attending. This information is on the Florida Department of Health/Florida Certification of Immunization form DH 680 ("Blue Card"). These records are reviewed throughout the school year and must be current.

If a student is found to be non-compliant the parent will be notified that updated immunization is needed. If the immunization information is not presented within one week the student may be excluded from school until proper documentation is provided to the School.

Florida Statute 1003.22 requires that students attending a Florida school must have the following documentation on file in their school health records:

Immunizations

A Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) with all immunization dates/or disease date(s) must be completed and/or updated by a Florida health care provider. Students entering the designated grade levels are required to show proof of these vaccines or a valid Florida Medical/Religious Exemption before entry into school. The Florida Medical Exemption must be signed by a physician listing the vaccine or vaccines that are exempt and the reason for the exemption. The Religious Exemption must be obtained from the Sarasota County Health Department.

STUDENT IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS for 2013-2014

KG through 5th grade - 2 doses of varicella

6th grade through 12th grade - 1 dose of varicella

7th grade through 11th grade - Tdap (tetanus-diphtheria- acellular pertussis vaccine)

* **Note:** Varicella vaccine is recommended for any child over age 1 year who has not had chicken pox disease. Children who are 13 years or older should receive a 2-dose series. For children who have had the disease, documentation by their medical provider of the year of the disease is required.

Hepatitis B

If a student has not received the Hepatitis B Vaccine, it is required for 6th - 12th grades. It is a 3-dose series. However, it is available in either a 2-dose or 3-dose series for ages 11-15 only. Please discuss with your medical provider.

An authorized school official may issue a temporary exemption, for up to 30 school days, to permit a student who transfers into a new county to attend class until his or her records can be obtained.

For information on the latest immunization requirements for school age children, please visit the Florida Department of Health at:

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease_ctrl/immune/children/schedules/school-requirements.html

Information on immunization requirements is also available on the Sarasota County Health Department website at: *<http://www.sarasotahealth.org/services/immunizations.htm>*

The Sarasota County Health Department, through the federally funded Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, offers immunizations to eligible children at no cost. For more information, contact your health care provider or the Sarasota County Health Department's Office of School Health at 941-927-9000, ext. 32101. For a complete shot schedule, visit the Sarasota School District's health website, *<http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth>*.

(Immunizations: Florida Statutes 1003.22 and 402.305, Florida Administrative Code Rule 64D-3.011)

Please take all immunization records with you to the doctor or clinic of your choice. This will help to avoid delays or unnecessary repeating of vaccinations. Proof of a physical exam and/or a Florida immunization certificate must be presented to the School Office. All records must be the original forms.

Physical Examination

All students are required to have a physical exam and documentation of the physical exam must be on file with the school. Additional information can be found on the Florida Department of Health/School Inspection Report form DH 3040 ("Yellow Card"). The parent will be notified if verification of a physical exam is not on file and will be required to obtain and provide a DH 3040 form from the student's physician.

Physical Exam Form (Form DH 3040)

COMPLETED and SIGNED by a licensed physician (Medical Doctor, Doctor of Osteopathy, and Doctor of Chiropractic), a registered Nurse Practitioner or a Physician’s Assistant. (A Physician’s Assistant must be licensed specifically in the state of Florida). The exam must be within the 12 months prior to your child enrolling in a Florida school and must have a review of components (complete body systems review). Children are not admitted to school without the necessary physical exam form. Contact your medical provider (doctor/clinic) for a school physical exam.

Form DH 3040 and guidelines to completing DH 3040 are available on the Florida Department of Health website.

Go to: <http://www.orchd.com/personalhealth/schoolHealth/enrollment/forms/SchoolEntryExam06-02.pdf>

SCREENINGS

The following screening will be completed during the current school year:

<u>Type of Screening</u>	<u>Grade Level</u>
Vision	6
Hearing	6
Height/Weight/Body Mass Index (BMI)	6
Scoliosis Screening	