



2026-2027

STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY CHARTER ACADEMY, INC.

MISSION STATEMENT

SouthTech Preparatory Academy's core mission is to graduate students prepared to matriculate into a career academy program of study, which will prepare them for work, higher education, and productive citizenship.

GOVERNING BOARD OFFICERS	SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS
Russell Feldman <i>Chairperson</i>	Carla Lovett <i>SouthTech Schools Executive Director</i>	Roger Dunson, Sr.
Suzanne Nicolini <i>Vice Chairperson</i>	Pamela Galarza <i>Principal</i>	Diane Heinz
Ayesha Edmond <i>Secretary</i>	Tricia Clarke <i>Assistant Principal</i>	Dan Heller
	Faten Atway <i>Assistant Principal</i>	Tony Robinson <i>Chairperson</i>
		Erika Rotbart

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Statement

SouthTech Schools, a state-approved LEA, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic prohibited by law in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its hiring or employment practices. Complaints regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to: HR Manager, 6161 W. Woolbright Rd., Boynton Beach, Florida 33437; (561) 369-7042

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2026-2027

JULY 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1 School Closed	2 School Closed HOLIDAY	3 School Closed
6	7	8	9	10
School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed
13	14	15	16	17
End 220-A, L, IS, NI				School Closed 4 Day Week
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31
	New Student Orientation 8th Gr.	New Student Orientation 7th & 8th	Pre-School Teacher Work Day FACH STA	School Closed 4 Day Week

OCTOBER 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1 A	2 B
5 A	6 B	7 A	8 B	9 A
		Midweek Breakout (All Parents Welcome)		END QUARTER 1
12	13 B	14 A	15 B	16 A
No Students Teacher Work Day FACH/PLC/ESP	BEGIN QUARTER 2			
19 B	20 A	21 B	22 A	23 B
26 A	27 B	28 A	29 B	30 A

JANUARY 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1 HOLIDAY
4	5 B	6 A	7 B	8 A
No Students Teacher Work Day FACH/PLC/ESP	BEGIN QUARTER 3			
11 B	12 A	13 B	14 A	15 B
18	19 A	20 B	21 A	22 B
HOLIDAY				
25 A	26 B	27 A	28 B	29 A

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2026-2027

APRIL 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1 A	2 B
5 A	6 B	7 A	8 B	9 A
12 B	13 A	14 B	15 A	16 B
19 A	20 B	21 A	22 B	23 A
26 B	27 A	28 B	29 A	30 B

SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY ACADEMY

AUGUST 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3 Pre-School FACH STA	4 Pre-School	5 Pre-School	6 Pre-School	7 Pre-School
10 A	11 B	12 A	13 B	14 A
STUDENTY LIST BEGIN 1ST SEMESTER BEGIN QUARTER 1				
17 B	18 A	19 B	20 A	21 B
24 A	25 B	26 A	27 B	28 A
31 B				

NOVEMBER 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2 B	3 No Students Teacher Work Day FACH/PLC/ESP	4 A	5 B	6 A
9 B	10 A	11 HOLIDAY	12 B	13 A
16 B	17 A	18 B	19 A	20 B
23	24 HOLIDAY	25 HOLIDAY	26 HOLIDAY	27 HOLIDAY
30 A				

FEBRUARY 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1 B	2 A	3 B	4 A	5 B
8 A	9 B	10 A	11 B	12 A
15	16 B	17 A	18 B	19 A
No Students Teacher Work Day FACH/PLC/ESP	BLACK HISTORY SPRING PARENT MEETING			
22 B	23 A	24 B	25 A	26 B

SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY ACADEMY

MAY 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3 A	4 B	5 A	6 B	7 A
10 B	11 A	12 B	13 A	14 B
17 A	18 B	19 A	20 B	21 A
24 B	25 A	26 B	27 A	28
31				
HOLIDAY				

BOARD APPROVED: 1/16/2025

SEPTEMBER 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	1 A	2 B	3 A	4 B
			MEET THE TEACHER (PARENT NIGHT) TITLE 1 - FACH / ESP	
7	8 A	9 B	10 A	11 B
HOLIDAY				
14 A	15 B	16 A	17 B	18 A
21	22 B	23 A	24 B	25 A
HOLIDAY				
28 B	29 A	30 B		

DECEMBER 2026				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	1 B	2 A	3 B	4 A
7 B	8 A	9 B	10 A	11 B
				Early Dismissal
14 A	15 B	16 A	17 B	18 A
		Final Exam 01 Early Dismissal FACH	Final Exam 01 Early Dismissal	Final Exam 01 Early Dismissal END QUARTER 2 END QUARTER 3
21	22	23	24	25
HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY
28	29	30	31	
HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	

MARCH 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1 A	2 B	3 A	4 B	5 A
8 B	9 A	10	11 B	12 A
		HOLIDAY		
15 B	16 A	17 B	18 A	19 B
				END QUARTER 3
22	23	24	25	26
HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY	HOLIDAY
29	30 A	31 B		
No Students Teacher Work Day FACH/PLC/ESP	BEGIN QUARTER 4			

BOARD APPROVED: 1/16/2025

JUNE 2027				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	1	2	3	4
				End 210-L, NI
7	8	9	10	11
			End 220-A, L, IS, NI	School Closed 4 Day Week
14	15	16	17	18
School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed
21	22	23	24	25
School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed	School Closed
28	29	30		
School Closed	School Closed	School Closed		

Grade 6-8 Grades School Hours 8:45 AM to 3:15 PM

HOLIDAYS				
Date	Holiday	A/NI	IS	I
July 02, 2026	Independence Day	X	X	X
Sep 07, 2026	Labor Day	PD	PD	PD
Sep 21, 2026	Fall Holiday	X	X	X
Nov 11, 2026	Fall Holiday	X	X	X
Nov 23-27, 2026	Thanksgiving Break	1 PD	1 PD	1 PD
Dec 21-31, 2026	Winter Break	1 PD	1 PD	1 PD
Jan 1, 2027	Winter Break	1 PD	1 PD	1 PD
Jan 18, 2027	M.L. King's Jr. Day	PD	PD	PD
Mar 10, 2027	Spring Holiday	X	X	X
Mar 22 - 26, 2027	Spring Break	X	X	X
May 31, 2027	Memorial Day	PD	PD	PD
June 17, 2027	Juneteenth (Observed)	X	X	X
Employee Group	Begin Date	End Date	# of Days	
Administration (A)	Jul 13, 2026	Jun 10, 2027	220 Days	
Non-Instructional (NI)	Jul 13, 2026	Jun 10, 2027	220 Days	
Instructional Support (IS)	Jul 13, 2026	Jun 10, 2027	220 Days	
Instructional (I)	Jul 20, 2026 July 30, 2026	Jun 4, 2027 May 27, 2027	210 Days 196 Days	

Teacher Work Days - Pre/Post School

July 30, 2026	July 30 - August 07, 2026 (Pre-School)
Oct 12, 2026	
Nov 03, 2026	
Jan 04, 2027	
Feb 15, 2027	
Mar 29, 2027	

Scheduled Meetings

PLC Professional Learning Community @ 8:00 AM
ESP Educator Support Program ~ Meeting with Administration
Department Head Meeting @ 4:00PM ~ with Administration
Faculty Meeting @ 4:00PM ~ with Instr. Staff, Guidance and Administration
Recruitment Open House / Parent Night ~ times vary with All Employees

STP ~ Student Attendance Days

Period	Begins	Ends	# of Days
Q1	Aug 10, 2026	Oct 9, 2026	43
Q2	Oct 13, 2026	Dec 18, 2026	42
Q3	Jan 5, 2027	Mar 19, 2027	51
Q4	Mar 30, 2027	May 27, 2027	43

STP ~ Report Card Distribution Dates

Grading Period	Distribution Dates
Q1	10/16/26
Q2	01/08/27
Q3	04/05/27
Q4	TBA

EMD - Emergency Make-Up Days

Emergency Make-Up days (EMD) will be at the discretion of the Executive Director in accordance with the state statute for student instructional time.

Employees work 10 Hr Days M-Th and Friday school is closed

LAST UPDATED ON: 6/4/2026



SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY ACADEMY

BELL SCHEDULE



Teacher Duty Day 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

A Day Schedule			B Day Schedule		
BREAKFAST 8:15 - 8:45 (30 minutes)			BREAKFAST 8:15 - 8:45 (30 minutes)		
1st PERIOD (SLL) 8:45 - 9:55 (70 minutes)			1st PERIOD (SLL) 8:45 - 9:55 (70 minutes)		
3rd PERIOD 10:00 - 11:30 (90 minutes)			2nd PERIOD 10:00 - 11:30 (90 minutes)		
5th PERIOD 11:35 - 1:40 (125 minutes)			4th PERIOD 11:35 - 1:40 (125 minutes)		
Lunch One	Specific Classes	11:40 - 12:10	Lunch One	Specific Classes	11:40 - 12:10
Lunch Two	Specific Classes	12:10 - 12:40	Lunch Two	Specific Classes	12:10 - 12:40
Lunch Three	Specific Classes	12:40 - 1:10	Lunch Three	Specific Classes	12:40 - 1:10
Lunch Four	Specific Classes	1:10 - 1:40	Lunch Four	Specific Classes	1:10 - 1:40
7th PERIOD 1:45 - 3:15 (90 minutes)			6th PERIOD 1:45 - 3:15 (90 minutes)		
Please pick up your students two minutes before lunch ends.			Please pick up your students two minutes before lunch ends.		

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GENERAL INFORMATION

SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD

The SouthTech Preparatory Academy Governing Board establishes policies and governing operations of SouthTech Preparatory Academy and provides opportunities for all involved to have input into SouthTech Preparatory Academy's success. It also promotes and increases teamwork between school, students, and parents. Please call 561-364-7929 for more information.

STUDENT RESIDENCE ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

- "Residence" and/or "address" shall mean the home location where the student and a parent (if applicable) are primarily living. Residence does not refer to citizenship or proof of residence that would require a permanent resident card (green card) or any immigration documentation. Primary residence and/or address means the home in which the student and a parent (if applicable) lives most of the time.
- "Parent" is defined as either or both biological or adoptive parent(s) of the student, the student's legal guardian, a person in a parental relationship to the student, or a person exercising supervisory authority over the student in place of the parent, pursuant to Fla. Stat. 1000.21(5).
- The school selection, enrollment, and placement of students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth are governed by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, and School Board 5.74 shall be referred to when enrolling students experiencing homelessness, unaccompanied youth, and students awaiting placement in foster care.
- Parents are required to immediately notify the school in writing of a student's change in address and updated emergency contact phone numbers.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

SouthTech Preparatory Academy applications are found on our website at www.southtechschools.org. We offer assistance over the phone or in-person to prospective applicants. Upon acceptance, parents and guardians will receive the registration documents via mail, email, or in-person delivery. Please call the office at (561)318-8087 with any questions. Please be advised that all students new to the county must present proof of a physical exam not more than one-year-old within 30 (thirty) days of registration. The following information needs to be submitted to SouthTech Preparatory Academy:

- Physical examination (Form DH3040): Students failing to submit this document within 30 (thirty) days will not be permitted to attend SouthTech Preparatory Academy. The form must be signed by the parent on page 2 to be valid.
- Immunization: Parents must produce documentation on the prescribed Florida Blue DH680 form or DH681 exemption from appropriate immunizations.
- Proof of Birth: Birth certificate, baptism certificate, insurance that has been in place for two years or more, passport (shown in person), or school record.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IMMUNIZATIONS

(P-5.322) and (F.S. 1003.22(9)) (P-5.06) and (F.S. 1003.22(1))

Students who have, or are suspected of having, a communicable disease or infestation that may be transmitted to others may be excluded from school, as determined by the Department of Health. Students may return to school only after they have been successfully treated and/or provide documentation from a physician stating that they are no longer contagious.

STUDENT HEALTH

If a student becomes sick at school, they will request permission from their teacher or administrator to visit the health room or front desk to call their parent/guardian. Only parents/guardians/formal designees who are pre-approved and listed on the Pick Up and Drop Off form may sign out and pick-up an ill student via the Main Office. Should the school be unable to reach the parents/guardians, a formal designee is expected to pick up the student.

MEDICATION NEEDS

A student under the care of a physician and needing to take medication must obtain written permission from the parent/guardian and physician. Parents or guardians must obtain the “**Physician Authorization for Student Medication** and or **Physician Authorization for Student Treatment**” form from the doctor’s office and have it completed by the physician and the parent/guardian. Completed forms must be turned in to the school. The medication itself should be presented to the office in the original unopened container issued by the pharmacy. The school nurse or Health Room designee will monitor the administration of the medicine.

Over The Counter Medications, (other than FDA approved OTC Headache Medicine)

Over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be received in the original, unopened container and labeled with the student’s name, and accompanied by a Physician Authorization for Medication Administration. Carrying medications on self: Students may be permitted to carry medication only if a completed Physician Authorization Form states to carry on self and self-administer is submitted to the School with both the parent/guardian's and the physician's signatures.

CONSENT FOR STUDENT USE OF OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION

Pursuant to F.S. 1002.20(3)(p), A student may possess and use a medication to relieve headaches while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity, without a physician's note or prescription, if the medication is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use to treat headaches. If the over-the-counter medication is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration to treat headaches, the student shall be exempt from the requirement of a Physician's Authorization for Student Medication/Treatment form for use of the medication to relieve headaches if the parent/guardian provides at the beginning of each academic

school year, written consent for the student to self-administer the medication. The medication must be in an original container and labeled with the student's name by the parent/guardian.

The student is solely responsible for safely administering and transporting the over-the-counter headache medication to and from school each day. Any incidence of student dispensation of the over-the-counter medication used to treat headaches to other students, or the student being in possession of a medication that is not regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration, may result in disciplinary action against the student in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and may result in suspension, expulsion, or referral to law enforcement, when appropriate.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

As conditions warrant, students injured on school premises will be evaluated by school personnel and depending on the severity of the injury, parents may be contacted or students may be transported to an area hospital. The supervising teacher or staff member will submit an incident report.

ACADEMICS

CLASS OR SCHEDULE CHANGE

A student wishing to withdraw from a class or have a schedule change must complete a form which is obtained from their Guidance Counselor in order to have the request considered. Students must continue to attend all classes until they are officially withdrawn or until their schedule has been officially changed. Schedule changes must be justified and will be approved on a limited basis. Unless special circumstances exist, schedule changes after the second week of a class will not be approved.

GRADING PERIOD AND REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION

Report cards are generated every nine weeks. The report card will reflect the academic status and attendance for each student. Progress reports will be issued to each student approximately four and a half weeks into each nine week marking period.

Quarter One: August 10th - October 9th
Progress Reports, September 11th

Quarter Two: October 13th - December 18th
Progress Reports, November 13th

Quarter Three: January 5th - March 19th
Progress Reports, February 12th

Quarter Four: March 30th - May 27th
Progress Reports, April 30th

GENERAL RULES FOR GRADING

Grades will be input weekly. All assigned work must be completed by its due date to receive a grade. Repeated failure or refusal to make-up work will result in disciplinary action and placement upon a student academic contract. In order to enable parents and guardians to stay informed about their child's academic progress, we provide mid-quarter progress reports through Student Info System S/S. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to log in to the system and access the report. We encourage parents and guardians to review these reports carefully and to communicate with their child's teachers if they have any questions or concerns.

GRADING SCALE

- A = Outstanding progress (90% - 100%)
- B = Above average progress (80% - 89%)
- C = Average progress (70% - 79%)
- D = Lowest acceptable progress (60% - 69%)
- F = Failure (below 59%)
- W = Withdrawn
- I = Incomplete

STUDENT CONDUCT GRADING

- 4 = Student's behavior very constructive to learning
- 3 = Student's behavior generally supportive of learning
- 2 = Student's behavior detrimental to his/her own learning
- 1 = Student's behavior detrimental to his/her own learning and to the learning of others

ACADEMIC CONTRACT POLICY

Students who are not meeting academic expectations may be placed on an Academic Contract. The Academic Contract outlines specific goals, support strategies, and timelines to help the student to return to good academic standing.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents and/or students eighteen years of age or older shall have the right to inspect, review and obtain copies of any and all official records, files, and data directly related to the student. These records may be obtained through the guidance office. Copies of education records shall be provided upon request according to Florida Statutes D.5.05 (Public Law 93380).

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE AND EXCUSE REQUIREMENTS

In general. Except as provided in Fla. Stat. § 1003.24 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09513, all students are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time for classes in order to benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. Each student is required to attend school regularly during the entire school term. Students who exhibit a pattern of nonattendance may be referred to the School Based Team and interventions implemented

pursuant to School Board Policy 5.09 and F.S. §1003.26 to enforce the requirement of school attendance.

Parental Notification of Absence to School

Parents and guardians are responsible for notifying the school and providing documentation, if required, when a child will be absent and for informing the school of the reason for the absence within twenty-four (24) hours of the student's absence. If notification was not provided prior to the absence, the parent or guardian shall be required to notify and provide written documentation, if requested by the school, to justify the reason for the student's absence.

Tracking of Absences

The school shall track students' excused and unexcused absences and attendance in the computer student information system.

Makeup of Assignments

For excused and unexcused absences, including suspensions, the student will be afforded the opportunity to make up work without academic penalty. For in-school suspensions, students will receive assignments daily. For out-of-school suspensions, students will receive assignments in a timely manner. The number of days allowed to make up the work shall be the same as the number of days the student was not present. Upon return to school, it is the student's responsibility to contact his or her teacher(s) about the makeup assignments and to complete all makeup work within the allowed time frame.

Reporting on Student Report Cards

Attendance, including absences and tardiness, shall be reported on student report cards, as required by Fla. Stat. § 1003.33(1)(c) and (2).

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DISMISSAL

The school recognizes that from time to time compelling circumstances require that a student be late to school or dismissed before the end of the school day. Parents or guardians must follow the same process to obtain an excuse for tardiness or early dismissal as they do to obtain an excuse for an absence. A pattern of non-attendance for instructional activities is also established by repeated tardiness, early dismissals, or absences for all or any part of the day.

Students reporting late to school/class when the day/class period begins are considered tardy. Excessive tardiness or early dismissals shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is a pattern of non-attendance. Unless excused under the provisions of this Policy 5.09, accumulated tardiness or early dismissals will be recorded as unexcused absences consistent with Fla. Stat. § 1003.02(1) (b) and this Policy 5.09. When a secondary student misses fifty (50) percent

or more of the identified instructional class period due to unexcused late arrival or tardiness early dismissals, the student shall be considered absent.

STUDENT PICKUP

For the safety of your child(ren), no student will be released to any person not on the Registration Form PBSD 0636 or an STCA/SPAI Student Demographic form. Those persons authorized to pick up a student must show proper photo identification. There will be no exceptions. Parent/guardians may alter the student contact/pick-up list only by completing in person/in writing, the additional student pick-up information section of the Student Demographic Information Form. An original signature is required. No early release after 2:45pm.

CAMPUS ACCESS

Students are required to remain on campus, and may not leave campus. Once on campus, students are permitted in approved areas. Students are not permitted to be in parking lots or any other outdoor areas without supervision. Students are prohibited from receiving personal deliveries from off campus - this includes food items. When moving throughout the campus, students are required to log into and use Minga to document and receive permission to transition. Students are required to be wearing their school identification and it should be visible.

All visitors - parents, contractors, agency personnel, etc. must sign-in and sign-out at the front desk, be cleared through the background security system, and wear the school issued visitor badge/stickers at all times while on campus.

School Arrival and School Dismissal

For safety, parents must ensure that their children do not arrive at school until the official starting time and do not remain on school grounds after the official closing time, supervision is not provided.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION **COVERAGE OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

At various times during the course of the school year, several activities require the use of the student's photograph, video image, art work, writing, annual yearbooks, graduation programs, web sites and approved news gatherings, etc. Please note the language found within the annual Student Registration Form:

Parental Consent for Release of Student Photograph and Information

I hereby give permission for the School or District to use my child's photograph, video image, writing, voice recording, name, grade level, school name, participation in officially recognized activities and sport, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, diplomas and awards received, date and place of birth, and most recent previous school attended, in annual yearbooks, graduation programs, playbills, school productions, web sites, etc. and/or similar School or District sponsored publications or in School or District approved news media interviews, releases, articles,

and photographs. I also provide permission for the release by the School or District to the media and governmental entities of my child's name, grade, school name and honors my child has received for public announcement of recognition of my student's accomplishments. I understand that without checking the permission box my child's name and photograph cannot and will not be included in any publications or presentation, including a school yearbook.

If you do not want your child to be included in the school photographs please contact us at 561-318-8087 or email Mr. Argueta at andy.argueta@pbcharterschools.org

PARENT CONFERENCES

At any time during the school year, parents are encouraged and invited to confer with teachers, counselors or administration. This can be done by calling the guidance department at (561) 318-8087, or sending Ms. Colas or Mr. John an email at patricia.colas@pbcharterschools.org or john.meredith@pbcharterschools.org.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The capability to contact parents during emergency situations is essential. Students cannot receive emergency non-life threatening medical care without parental/guardian approval. Parents must ensure that emergency contact information listing the address and phone numbers where they can be reached during the day are on file and current. Please contact the office if any emergency information changes.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of dangerous weather conditions or emergencies, the school principal or representative of SouthTech Schools, will close the school. SouthTech school closings will coincide with the Palm Beach County School District's closings unless the closing is due to a problem unique only to one or more of the SouthTech schools. Closings may be announced via email, phone, local radio stations, television stations, social media, or through automated messages. If local district schools are announced as being closed, SouthTech schools will be closed as well.

STUDENT SAFETY

SouthTech Preparatory Academy conducts the following safety drills:

- Fire Drills
- Tornado Drills
- Active Assailant Drills
- Lockdown Drills
- Lockout Drills
- Code Blue Drills

Evacuation routes are posted inside each classroom. The signal to evacuate will be either an alarm or an announcement over the P.A. system. Students are to quickly evacuate to their designated areas, remain calm and follow directions as they are given.

Setting off, damaging, defacing, or in any way disturbing fire alarms, fire-fighting equipment, or any safety equipment will result in a mandatory ten (10) day out of school suspension and possibly legal action.

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults

LOST OR MISSING ITEMS

Southtech Preparatory Academy is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items. Students are urged to not bring valuable items or cash to school. Personal items found and turned in will be stored in the lost and found. School staff will not disrupt classroom instruction to search for lost or personal items, which include; cell phones, other electronics, jewelry, or other personal items. The school does not assume responsibility for lost, broken or stolen articles. Students are urged not to bring valuable items or large sums of money to school. Personal items or books found will be stored in the main office lost and found bin.

TEXTBOOKS, MATERIALS & RESOURCES

The student is responsible for any and all material assigned to them, until they are returned. If materials are returned damaged in any way, or lost, the student will pay a fine or replacement fee.

STUDENT LIFE

Southtech Preparatory Academy's Student Services Team works with students and parents/guardians to understand the expectations and guidelines of the school. The Student Services Team participates in guiding the faculty and staff in implementing Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) and implementing disciplinary consequences.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

The educational process of SouthTech Preparatory Academy is to provide a safe environment that fosters student conduct that is socially acceptable and conducive to the learning and teaching processes. It is the intent of this policy to align SouthTech Preparatory Academy's Universal Guidelines, PBIS, consequences, and support for students attending SouthTech Academy.

SouthTech Academy exercises these responsibilities and expectations:

- During the time a student is in route to and from school.
- During the time a student is attending school.
- During the time a student is physically on campus and the property - which is owned or operated under the jurisdiction of SouthTech Schools or the Palm Beach County School District.
- During the time a student is attending any function sponsored by SouthTech Preparatory Academy or the Palm Beach County School District.
- While a student is using any and all forms of technology.

All students at SouthTech Preparatory Academy are expected to reflect its high standards by conducting themselves in a manner that is conducive to the orderly operation of the school. Students should be in class on time and change from class to class in an orderly fashion. Students are expected to adhere to SouthTech Preparatory Academy's Universal Guidelines, and refrain from any behavior that may cause a disruption. Students are expected to show respect and consideration for their peers and all members of the SouthTech Preparatory Academy staff; including bus drivers and visitors to campus. Both on the school campus and off the school campus, students are expected to

exhibit desirable behaviors and keep from manifesting behavior unbecoming of a SouthTech Preparatory Academy community member.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support is a framework for using data to integrate strategies to support positive behaviors. The PBIS team is the group that plans activities related to rewards and incentives. The PBIS team works to:

- Promote a Positive School Culture
- Increase Academic Achievement
- Maintain Excellent Student Attendance
- Encourage Students to Be on Time
- Nurture and Foster Desires Student Etiquette & Behaviors

UNIFORM POLICY

As a career and technical education school, Southtech Preparatory Academy strives to prepare students to be successful in their field of study and post secondary school. Student attire or grooming that substantially or potentially disrupts the educational environment or school program, creates a distraction, interferes with the educational process or classroom activity, or presents a health or safety hazard to the students or school community is not permitted. The determination of what constitutes a safety or health hazard, or what constitutes a distraction of students from a classroom activity, or what constitutes a disruption of a school program or excessive maintenance of school property shall be made by the principal or designee. The principal or designee shall have final authority to decide if a student's attire complies with the uniform policy below.

- When on campus, students will wear the appropriate SouthTech Preparatory Academy uniform and STPA school identification. This uniform must be properly worn and visible at all times.
- Students are expected to wear only STPA outerwear - STPA zippered jackets. No other hoodies, jackets, sweaters, or blankets may be worn.
- Students will wear their assigned grade level polo shirts - Burgundy, Heather Gray, and Charcoal Gray.
- Black, navy blue, or khaki/beige shorts, skirts and pants must be uniform, chino, or khaki style only. Students may not wear leggings, athleticwear, leisurewear, sweatpants, jeans, jeggings, cargo style, or five pocket styles.
- Students are expected to wear their uniform bottoms at their natural waistline. In addition, there should be no exposed undergarments or skin.
- Female students may wear uniform only style skirts that fall no more than two inches above the knee. Pencil skirts, athletic skirts, and mini skirts are not permitted.
- All clothing must be free of rips, tares, stains, holes, or unfinished edges.
- All uniforms must cover midriffs.

- STPA uniforms are required to be worn in their original state, and may not be tied up, rolled up, or altered.
- Bandanas, caps, large headcoverings, headscarves, or other headwear deemed inappropriate by administration are not permitted.
- Uniform shoes must be flat, have backs, closed-toed, and have rubber soles. Crocs, slides, flip flops, sandals, or bedroom type of footwear are not permitted.
- Wallet chains, dog collars, studded belts/jewelry or other non-jewelry chains are prohibited.
- For Physical Education, students are required to wear athletic sneakers that are laced up with an STPA PE shirt and plain athletic shorts. Bike shorts and Yoga pants are not permitted.
- Southtech Preparatory Academy reserves the right to deny any student the privilege of wearing anything deemed to be disruptive to the educational process.
- Clothing, bags, and accessories may not contain vulgar language, inappropriate images, promote illegal activities, or promote inappropriate activities or ideas for a CTE middle school student.
- Clothing that is sexually suggestive or revealing (examples include but are not limited to clothing which exposes the midriff, exposes one's undergarments, has plunging necklines, muscle tops, backless clothing, or is constructed of see-through materials) is not allowed.
- Students may carry a small personal bag, no larger than the size of a hand.
- Students are expected to arrive at STPA already dressed for success, meaning arriving in their full school approved uniforms. Failure to comply with these uniform requirements will result in consequences that may include disciplinary actions.
- All decisions regarding adherence to the uniform policy are at the sole discretion of the Southtech Preparatory's Administration.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Failure to comply with these code policies will result in the following consequences:

Violation of dress code students will result in parent contact to notify about the uniform violation and ask to drop off proper clothing.

- Students that are not compliant with dress code will wait in the Student Services office until proper attire can be obtained.
- Repeated violations will result in a referral for insubordination and require further disciplinary actions.

IDENTIFICATION BADGE

While on campus and some school sponsored activities, students are required to wear their Southtech Preparatory ID Badge. Badges are to be worn around the neck on a lanyard or clipped to the student's front collar, with the crisis hotline on the back visible. The entire student ID must remain

visible, and students may not cover any part of their STPA ID with Stickers. Failure to wear your ID badge is a violation of school policy. Students that do not have a visible school ID will receive a new ID and \$5.00 will be charged to their school account. Prior to promotion or withdrawal, all fees are expected to be paid in full.

DISCIPLINE ACTION PLAN

In addition to supporting students by providing interventions, failure to comply with Southtech Preparatory Academy's Student Code of Conduct, will result in consequences that may include a combination of consequences.

DISCIPLINE MATRIX OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

According to SouthTech Preparatory Academy's Student Code of Conduct 5.18, SouthTech Preparatory Academy will use and follow the codes set forth in the Palm Beach County School District's discipline matrix to determine reasons and consequences for discipline infractions. In addition, SouthTech Preparatory Academy implements a Positive Behavior Interventions & Support program. SouthTech Preparatory Academy has developed three universal guidelines for behavior and a matrix for school wide behavior expectations:

 Universal Guidelines 		
	All Settings	Classrooms
Be Respectful	• Be respectful to all adults and peers. • Use appropriate language. • Clean up messes created. • Honor authority figures. • Adhere to the STPA Student Handbook. • Keep your hands to yourself.	• Use good manners. • Refer to instructor by their last name (Dr., Mr. or Mrs./Ms.). • Use appropriate vocabulary & gestures. • Use Voice Level zero - two. • Follow directions the first time.
Be Responsible	• Follow dress code. • Be accountable for physical movements. • Report any problems on campus to a staff member. • Electronics & bluetooth devices are not permitted.	• Be present for school. • Attend all classes. • Remain where in the area expected. • Be on time. • Be accountable for actions. • Food is not permitted in the class.
Be Ready To Learn	• Adhere to the bell schedule. • Arrive with necessary supplies. • Use appropriate Voice Level. • Put forth your best effort. • Be accountable for your actions • Have a growth mindset.	• Remain active, engaged and appropriate. • When needed, ask for help. • Appreciate the opinions of others. • Be accountable for your actions. • Be prepared with proper materials. • Work cooperatively with others. • Remain on topic
The Bulldog Way - Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn		

SouthTech Preparatory Academy's Voice Levels

Level 0	No Conversation (No talking, no sound)
Level 1	Whisper (Only the person next to you can hear you)
Level 2	Talking Voice – Quiet Conversation (Only the person next to you can hear you)
Level 3	Presentation Voice (Everyone in the room should be able to hear you)
Level 4	Outside Voice (You can be heard across the pavilion, cheering at a pep rally, etc.)

HALLWAY TRANSITIONS

Students should create an orderly flow of traffic in the hallways by practicing hands down, eyes forward, low speed, low volume, and walk on the right side of hallways following the posted flow of traffic. All students should be respectful of others. No public displays of affection will be tolerated.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SPORTS

SouthTech Prep Academy does not offer any interscholastic sports activities. SouthTech's charter agreement with Palm Beach County District specifies that any SouthTech student in good standing may participate in interscholastic sports or other FHSAA activities at their boundary school. In addition, pursuant to SouthTech Academy 2.05, SouthTech Prep Academy does offer after school intramural sports activities as well as various clubs and other activities in which students may participate.

FIELD TRIP AND ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Students at STPA have the opportunity to participate in a number of educational and extracurricular in and out of school activities and field trips throughout each school year. It is the goal of our school's administration and faculty to include as many students as possible in these school-sponsored trips and activities. It is also important to understand that extracurricular activities are a privilege and students must meet certain criteria in order to participate. The following criteria are general school-wide policies for all school sponsored field trips and activities. These guidelines, as well as any

additional guidelines established by the group sponsor, will be used in determining whether a student may participate in the activity or trip.

1. Student may have no more than three (3) discipline referrals (including dress code and tardy referrals).
2. Student may have no more than, or the equivalent of, two (2) days of In-School Detention.
3. Student may have no more than one bus referral suspension.
4. Student may not have any out-of-school suspensions.
5. Student may not have excessive tardies or absences.
6. Student may not have Ds or Fs.
7. Student must have all required forms on file in the front office: current emergency contact card, a signed Student Code of Conduct form, signed academic or behavior contract, handbook receipt of acknowledgement, permission slip complete including teacher signatures, etc.
8. At administration's discretion, a parent or guardian may be required to chaperone their child.
9. If the student signed up for a field trip and committed an infraction between that time and the time of the trip that prohibits them from going, no refunds will be made.

It is our hope that in establishing field trip criteria early, students and parents will read this together and discuss the expectations here at STPA. We appreciate good behavior and academic excellence and hope to see all of our students enjoy our planned activities.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation for students living more than two miles from school is governed by the State and provided by South Tech Schools. For information regarding bus pick-ups and drop-offs or any other transportation questions, please contact the School's transportation liaison. Riding the bus is a privilege. Students may be suspended from riding the bus if their conduct presents a safety concern.

All students riding the bus are subject to the authority and discipline of the bus driver at all times while on the bus. School bus misconduct or vandalism is reported to school administrators on student discipline referral form by the driver. Any student receiving a referral form will be subject to disciplinary action according to the Palm Beach County School District discipline matrix. SouthTech Prep Academy may suspend any student from riding the bus for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. Repeat offenders may be expelled from bus privileges. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of such a decision within 24 hours of said suspension. If a student is suspended from the bus, the bus driver will not allow the student to enter the bus.

BUS RULES

Students are required to ride their assigned bus. The school bus driver is in charge of the bus and the passengers. The driver is responsible for the safety of students and for their conduct on the bus. Riders are subject to the authority of the bus driver and may be suspended from riding the bus for violation of bus rules. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied if a pupil's behavior creates a problem on the school bus or at the bus stop. Safety is the number one consideration. In addition to the disciplinary rules stated in this handbook, the following rules must be observed:

- Students are expected to respect their neighbors and the property of their neighbors while waiting for the bus or while en route to or from the bus stop. Students are expected to behave in a way that promotes safety and good manners. Students must stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Students preparing to board the bus should cross the roadway immediately in front of the bus, BUT NOT UNTIL THE BUS DRIVER HAS GIVEN THE SIGNAL TO CROSS AND IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.
- Students riding buses must arrive at the bus stop on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
- Electronic devices are not permitted to be used on the school buses.
- Students must remain in their seats at all times when the bus is in motion.
- All riders must keep their arms and heads inside the bus at all times. Nothing may be thrown from the bus.
- Riders should not engage in unnecessary conversation with the driver because this creates a dangerous situation. Students are to observe classroom conduct, except for ordinary conversation.
- Students must treat the bus property respectfully and carefully. Vandalism will not be tolerated.
- Eating, drinking, smoking or vaping on the bus is absolutely forbidden. Smoking or vaping and possession of tobacco products/e-cigarettes and vaping products is prohibited at the bus stop or while waiting for the bus.
- The driver has the right to assign students to certain seats if necessary in order to promote order and safety on the bus.
- Students must get on and off the bus at their assigned school bus stop. No one is entitled to ride any bus other than the one to which they are assigned.
- Parents/adults other than official personnel are not to board or approach the bus for any reason without prior approval from administration.

If a student's bus privileges are suspended, the student's parents are responsible to ensure that the student is attending school.

SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER BLADES, SCOOTERS, SPORTS EQUIPMENT

Skateboards, roller blades, sports equipment and/or scooters are not permitted on school grounds without pre-approval from administration and they must be kept in the Student Services Department during the school day.

TECHNOLOGY

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

([SouthTech Schools Board Policies](#))

Students will be held financially accountable for damage to Chromebooks or any other SouthTech Preparatory property.

Florida House Bill 1105

Student Cell Phone Use Restricted During the School Day

Beginning July 1, 2025, Florida House Bill 1105 placed limits on when students can use cell phones and other wireless devices:

- Elementary and Middle School Students are not permitted to use phones at all during the school day.

The new law is designed to minimize distractions and enhance student focus. For more information, please review [Florida Senate Session Bill 1105](#).

At STPA, there will be no unauthorized use of electronic devices while at the school bus stop, on the school bus, on the school campus, during instructional time, or while at any school sponsored event or activity. If the electronic device becomes disruptive, it will be confiscated. The school shall not be held liable for any personal devices on campus. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to cellular phones, bluetooth devices, smart watches, smart glasses, cameras, and more.

Students are prohibited from accessing social media platforms, except when expressly directed by a teacher for an educational purpose. Additionally, the use of TikTok and any successor platforms is prohibited on school grounds. Any unauthorized or inappropriate use of an electronic device will result in confiscation.

Failure to comply with the Technology Acceptable Use Policy will result in the following action:

- 1st Offense – Items will be confiscated and the student may retrieve the item at the end of the day.
- 2nd Offense – Return of the confiscated item will require the parent/guardian to come to the Student Services Department and pick up the item.
- 3rd Offense - Confiscated items will not be given back to the student or parents until the end of the semester, as defined by the Palm Beach County School District Discipline Matrix.

All consequences are at the discretion of the STPA administration.

Refusal to turn over a device to a SouthTech Preparatory faculty or staff member when requested will result in a referral for insubordination.

School technology systems will include measures to prevent hacking or unauthorized access by students to data or information that they should not have access to, and to prohibit other unlawful online activities by students.

Continuous Offenses: Items will be confiscated and the student will receive a referral for insubordination. Disciplinary action will be taken as outlined in the [Palm Beach County School District Discipline Matrix](#).

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ACCEPTABLE USE

The purpose of this is to ensure that AI technologies are used safely, ethically, and responsibly to support teaching, learning, and student development.

- AI technologies may only be used for educational purposes and activities approved by teachers or school administrators.
- Students must adhere to all school rules and guidelines while using AI technologies, both on school premises and during school-sponsored events or activities.
- Students are expected to use AI technologies responsibly and respectfully, treating others with kindness and consideration at all times.
- Students must ensure that any content created or shared using AI technologies is appropriate for an educational setting and complies with school policies on acceptable content. Content must not be plagiarized and must follow copyright laws.
- Content that is offensive, inappropriate, or violates copyright laws is strictly prohibited.
- Cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation of others using AI technologies is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.
- Students should report any instances of cyberbullying or harassment to a teacher or school administrator immediately.
- Teachers and school staff may monitor the use of AI technologies to ensure compliance with this and promote a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Violations of this Acceptable Use may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to loss of access to AI technologies, parental notification, and suspension or expulsion from school.

PROCEDURES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT **STUDENT WELFARE POLICY**

SouthTech Schools is committed to supporting student well-being while respecting parental rights. Parents will be notified of any changes to their child's mental, emotional, or physical health services provided by the school. Staff cannot withhold important health-related information from parents unless there is a risk of abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity is not allowed in grades 6–8 and must follow state guidelines for grades 9–12. If parents have

concerns about student welfare or instruction, they can submit a written complaint to the principal. If the issue is not resolved, parents may escalate the matter to the Executive Director and if not resolved to the SouthTech Schools Board of Directors. If necessary, parents may request a special magistrate or seek legal action. At the beginning of the school year, SouthTech Schools will notify parents of each health care service offered at the School and the option to withhold consent or decline any specific service. Parental consent to a health care service does not waive the parent's right to access his or her student's educational or health records or to be notified about a change in his or her student's services or monitoring as provided by this paragraph.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

SouthTech Preparatory Academy is committed to providing all stakeholders with a safe and positive educational environment. The support of parents/guardians/relatives/friends helps to ensure a safe and respectful environment. Therefore, all parents/guardians/relatives/friends are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the values of integrity, respect, and open communication.

Parents/Guardians/Relatives/Friends are expected to:

- Recognize that the education of children is a shared responsibility.
- Ensure students attend school regularly.
- Encourage students to adhere to STPA's expectations.
- Demonstrate a positive and collaborative attitude towards STPA and all staff.
- Comply with and support all STPA school safety policies.
- Communicate effectively and respectfully with all STPA staff - written, spoken or body language.
- Respect all children and members of the STPA school community.
- When on campus, dress appropriately for a school atmosphere.
- In the car line, follow instructions of STPA school staff.
- Refrain from using any substances including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, or drugs.
- Raise all concerns following the correct procedures, channels and personnel.
- Refrain from using social media to voice grievances about or related to the school.

FORTIFY FL

Fortify FL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows students and the community to relay information anonymously concerning unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous, violent, or criminal activities, or the threat of these activities, to appropriate public agencies and school officials. Reports can be made at www.getfortifyfl.com. In addition, the Fortify FL App is available for download in the Apple App Store or Google Play. Knowingly submitting a false tip through the [FortifyFL app](#) is illegal and carries severe criminal penalties, including third-degree felony charges.

Parents and guardians are urged to have candid conversations with their children regarding the seriousness of making threats and the expected consequences that may follow thereafter. All threats will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate action will be taken toward those who make threats,

including but not limited to notification of the person(s) making or posing the threat, criminal charges, and disciplinary consequences as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct (SCOC).

WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS FROM SCHOOL

The following **MUST** be completed in order for a student to withdraw or transfer from SouthTech Prep Academy:

- Parents/guardians must accompany the student to the Guidance Office and authorize the withdrawal.
- Turn in all books/assigned materials and clear all financial obligations.
- Complete the required withdrawal form.
- Return the completed withdrawal form to the Guidance Department.

PARENT/STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

- SouthTech Schools prides itself on the quality of the teaching and care provided to its students.
- All members of the School community should contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment.
- Staff, student, or parent/guardians can raise concerns about any issues that affect a student's well-being and/or academic performance and work together to resolve them. In rare cases where the issue cannot be resolved informally, an official written complaint can be registered by a parent with the School management.
- Although no member of the School community shall be denied the right to petition the Governing Board for redress of a grievance, the complaints will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Governing Board. Exceptions are complaints that concern Governing Board actions or operations.
- The Board advises the School community that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:
 1. Teachers
 2. Dean of Students
 3. Assistant Principal
 4. Principal
 5. Executive Director
 6. Parent Liaison
 7. Governing Board

Any complaint about school personnel will be investigated by the Administration before consideration and action by the Board of Directors.

SOUTHTECH PREPARATORY ACADEMY

PARENT/GUARDIAN/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Everyone at the school, students, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff, plays an important role. To keep things running smoothly, all students must follow the rules outlined in this handbook. These rules apply at school, during school activities off campus, and while using school transportation.

Parents/guardians are responsible for being aware of these rules and the consequences if they are not followed. They must stay involved in their child's education, keep contact information up to date, and inform the school of any important information (such as medical conditions) that may affect their child.

Please pay special attention to sections about attendance, dress code, tardiness, cell phone use, and student behavior.

The school requires confirmation that both students and parents/guardians have received and understood this handbook. By signing, you agree to follow all school policies during school hours, transportation, and school-related activities.

Your signature confirms that you reviewed and understand the rules, expectations, and procedures for students at SouthTech Preparatory Academy outlined in this handbook.

PRINT NAME PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____ **DATE:** _____

PRINT NAME STUDENT: _____ **DATE:** _____

Parent emergency phone number: _____ **Student Grade Level:** _____