

# **Middle School Student Handbook 2009 – 10**

The San Francisco School  
300 Gaven Street  
San Francisco, CA 94134  
415 239-5065  
[www.sfschool.org](http://www.sfschool.org)

## Table of Contents

### **About The San Francisco School:**

Mission, Learning Expectations, and Values	3
Teachers	3 - 4
Attendance	4
Carpool	5
Telephones and Messages	5
Medications	5

### **Community Guidelines:**

If a Student Gets into Trouble	6
Identifying and Reporting Intolerance, Discrimination and Harassment	7
Bullying	7
Drug Policy	7
If a Student Brings _____ to School?	7
Appropriate Dress from Head to Toe	8
Likely Consequences	8 - 9
Expulsion	9

### **Academic:**

Homework	10
Grades and Progress Reports	10
Advisory	10
Service Learning	10
Library	10
Technology	11
School Materials	11

### **Non-academic:**

Lockers	12
Lunch	12
Snack Shack	12
Visitors to School	12
Parties and Social Gatherings	12
Clubs	13
Our Neighborhood	13

## ABOUT THE SAN FRANCISCO SCHOOL

### Mission Statement

The San Francisco School cultivates and celebrates the intellectual, imaginative, and humanitarian promise of each student in a community that practices mutual respect, embraces diversity, and inspires a passion for learning.

### School-Wide Learning Expectations

The School seeks to assure that each student:

- Develops an understanding of self in relation to others
- Demonstrates a passion for learning
- Knows how to learn
- Can demonstrate a high level of competence in each area of the curriculum
- Thinks creatively and can express self
- Becomes a responsible citizen who participates actively in the community

### Values

- Courage
- Respect
- Creativity

### Middle School Teachers

#### 6th Grade

Advisors: **Melissa Doezema, Ruth Corley, and Julie Galles/Tiffany Fong (co-advisors)**

Humanities: **Ruth Corley**

Math and Science: **Melissa Doezema**

Spanish: **Josefina Bolton, Paloma Herman, Annalise Porres**

#### 7th Grade

Advisors: **Brian Donovan, Dallas Glenn and Erin Pensinger/Annalise Porras (co-advisors)**

Humanities: **Dallas Glenn**

Math: **Glenn Kenyon**

Science: **Brian Donovan**

Spanish: **Josefina Bolton, Paloma Herman, Annalise Porras**

#### 8th Grade advisors)

Advisors: **Glenn Kenyon, Michelle Peterson and Josefina Bolton/Steve Morris (co-**

Humanities: **Michelle Peterson**

Math: **Glenn Kenyon**

Science: **Brian Donovan**

Spanish: **Josefina Bolton, Paloma Herman, Annalise Porras**

## For the whole Middle School:

- Art: **Ruth Cardillo**
- Director of Technology: **Steve Rubin**
- Extended Care Director: **Gilbert Bagaman**
- Health Educators: **Tiffany Fong, Erin Pensinger, Julie Galles**
- High School Placement: **Nancy McCallister**
- Learning Specialist: **Nancy McCallister**
- Librarian: **Solveig Dimon**
- Music: **Doug Goodkin, James Harding, Sofia Lopez-Ibor**
- Physical Education: **Tiffany Fong**
- School Counselor: **Erin Pensinger**
- Student Council Liaisons: **Tiffany Fong**

## Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential for the academic and emotional growth of all students.

<b>6th-8th</b> grades schedule	8:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (except Thursday) 8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. (Thursday)
--------------------------------	---

Please be aware of the following attendance policies:

- **Late arrivals:** Students arriving after the start of the school day must sign in at the front desk before going to class.
- **Tardiness:** All tardiness is considered unexcused except when a student must attend a previously excused medical or dental appointment. The school tracks tardies and will notify parents when a student has developed a pattern of tardiness. After receiving a significant amount of tardies, students may lose privileges or have other academic or disciplinary action.
- **Absences:** Parents must call the school and leave a message at the front desk if a student will be absent.
- **Planned absences:** If a family knows in advance that their child will miss 2 or more days of school, parents should email the Middle School Head and the child's advisor. It is the student's responsibility to check in with the teachers, who may assign homework at that time.
- **Extended absences:** If a student misses more than 15 full days for any reason in one school year, the school may decide to withhold class credit, ask the student to repeat the grade, or have her/his enrollment in the school called into question.
- **Illness and Poor Health:** Students should be healthy enough to arrive for first period and stay the entire day. Students who come to school ill may be asked to return home immediately. Athletes, performers, and those participating in school activities are expected to attend school on the day of those activities. **Students and performers may not participate in games or performances if they have not arrived at school by 10 a.m. and/or if they miss more than half of their classes.**
- **Health appointments:** Please try to schedule medical and dental appointments during vacations or after school hours.
- **Family Vacations:** Family vacations should begin and end during the official school vacation periods.

## Carpool

Drop-off: The main entrance to The San Francisco School is the gate next to the Middle School building. This gate is the primary entrance for students and families, visitors, and deliveries. During carpool drop-off, Middle School students should enter the campus through this gate.

Pick-up: When students depart, they must check out with carpool staff. **Students taking the bus, walking, or riding bikes home are allowed to leave the campus unsupervised as long as they have written parent consent filed at the front desk, and they check out with the carpool staff.** If students are in a carpool or waiting for a ride, they should wait on the sidewalk in front of the preschool doors. Carpool supervisors will tell students when their ride has arrived. If their ride has not arrived by 3:25 pm, students check in with the Extended Care program.

No students are permitted to walk down the line to a distant waiting car. **If a child is not present and ready to be picked up in the appropriate carpool area, drivers will be asked to return to the end of the carpool line (or park legally and enter the campus to find their child).**

## Telephones and Messages

Students should make plans with parents and/or friends for after school activities *before* school begins each day. If plans change during the day, a student may politely ask to use the phone at the Front Desk to make a call during recess, lunch, or after school. (Classroom phones are not for student use.) Students must sign the log near the phone before they make a call. The Front Desk phone should **only** be used to make arrangements that cannot be made in any other way. Calls should be limited to one or two minutes so that lines to the School can remain open in case of emergency. If a student leaves a message or page, they should inform the Front Desk Receptionist so that a return call can be properly handled. During the school day, messages from parents will be given to a teacher.

Any cell phones brought to school *must be kept out of sight and "OFF"*. An exception will be made between 3:15-3:30 to arrange for after-school pick up. Cell phones will be confiscated if seen or used before this time period and turned in to the Middle School Head. It is up to the student to retrieve the phone from the Middle School Head and this may come with a consequence.

## Medications

The San Francisco School recognizes that some students might have serious medical conditions. While we will do everything in our ability to supervise the administration of medications, please keep in mind that there is no medical staff at the school, and we cannot guarantee that every medical need can be met. If students need medication administered to them, parents must complete the Student Medication Authorization.

## COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

The SFS is a place where all people are safe to express their individuality, creativity, and curiosity. We expect that all students will strive to follow the Community Guidelines and contribute responsibly to our School. These Community Guidelines apply to all school-related functions including field trips, traveling to and from the park and extended trips away from school, such as the Mexico trip.

### Be Respectful

- Respect others' opinions, ideas, feelings, beliefs, and ways they want to be treated
- Help others
- Include others in activities
- Never physically harm anyone
- Respect others' belongings
- Treat visitors well
- Speak your thoughts in a respectful way
- Speak in turn without interrupting
- Listen and try to understand each other
- Discuss, don't argue
- Communicate assertively when there is a problem

### Be Responsible

- Notify appropriate adults about where you're going
- Consider safety at all times, wherever you are
- Take your learning seriously
- Be prepared and on time
- Work together when asked
- Share work equally
- Learn, make mistakes, and ask questions
- Apologize sincerely if you hurt someone
- Give your full effort

### Make Wise Choices

- Hang out, play, and have fun at the appropriate times
- Take care of yourself
- Bring appropriate materials to school
- Respect materials
- Put things back where you found them
- Leave a space as clean as you found it (or cleaner)
- Tell a staff member if something is dangerous, dirty, or broken
- Use indoor voices when indoors
- Work quietly during defined quiet work times and spaces
- Be honest

### If a Student Gets Into Trouble

When a student gets into trouble, it is an opportunity to learn. If a student behaves in a disrespectful or irresponsible manner, his or her advisor will be notified and the advisor will work with his/her advisee to make better decisions in the future. The Middle School Head is kept informed of middle school behavior and works closely with advisors, the School Counselor and students and their families as individual situations warrant.

All SFS Rules and Regulations mentioned herein apply to all events hosted by other schools in which invitations were extended to SFS students. Such events include, but are not limited to: other school sponsored trips, social events (i.e. dances), sporting events, assemblies, etc.

## Identifying and Reporting Intolerance, Discrimination and Harassment

The San Francisco School is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons, adults and children, can work and play together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment and discrimination, including name-calling, teasing, bullying, intimidation, and exploitation. The San Francisco School prohibits any language or behavior that discriminates against or harasses others due to real or perceived race, language, heritage, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, ability, learning style, relative power, or for any other reason, including the association with others with these characteristics. Even when intended in jest, such comments and actions create an unsafe community and teach a tolerance for a language of disrespect. The San Francisco School strives to prevent such harassment and discrimination through education, intends to intercede swiftly in every instance, and will take appropriate disciplinary action if such issues arise.

A copy of the complete Discrimination & Harassment and Ally & Advocate policies may be obtained from the Assistant to the Head of School. The consequences for violating such policies may include exclusion from school activities, or complete dismissal from The San Francisco School.

## Bullying

Bullying is causing another person harm/hurt verbally, physically and/or emotionally once or several times. Bullying may take the form of intimidation, an indirect use of social power such as spreading rumors, exclusion from groups, or mistreating or manipulating others to mistreat another student. Bullying can be based on student's real or perceived race, ethnicity, religion (creed), color, national origin, family structure, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, lack of power or on the basis of other perceived characteristics. Bullying can also be based on the association with others identified as members of the categories named above.

## Drug Policy

The possession or use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol is forbidden. Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug at school, at any school function, or on any school trip are grounds for expulsion from The San Francisco School. SFS reserves the right to prosecute violators of this rule to the fullest extent of the law.

## What if a Student Brings \_\_\_\_\_ to School?

Below are some additional items that students may be thinking about bringing to school, along with the corresponding SFS policies. In general, students should use common sense about what to bring to school, avoiding items that are distracting, expensive and/or a possible safety hazard.

<b>Cell phones</b>	Please refer to the "Telephones and Messages" section on p.5
<b>IPOD, CD or other MP3 players</b>	If a student brings one of these items to school, it needs to spend the day in his or her locker or backpack; the student may not use it on campus at all (before, during, or after school). Students may only use SFS music players with a teacher's explicit permission.
<b>CD's/Tapes/ Downloaded Music</b>	Students may only listen to these on campus (before, during, and after school) with a teacher's explicit permission. If students bring these items to school, the items must be stored away. Any music played at school needs to be school-appropriate—for instance, no profanity or hateful language.
<b>Electronic games</b>	Students may only use these on campus (before, during, and after school) if students have a teacher's explicit permission. If students bring these items to school, the items must be stored away.
<b>Software</b>	Personal computer software is to be used only if students have explicit teacher permission and supervision.
<b>Laptops</b>	Personal laptops are allowed only for specific learning needs and with the permission of the Middle School Head. Computers are for academic purposes only.

## Appropriate Dress from Head to Toe

### Headwear:

- Hats, hoods, sun visors, and sunglasses are allowed outside of buildings only and not indoors.

### Shirts:

- Messages on t-shirts should be appropriate for a preschool through eighth grade setting. For example, shirts with marijuana leaves, cigarettes, alcohol logos, profanity, or rude or inappropriate logos should not be worn.
- Tops should not be inappropriately tight fitting or revealing. With normal movement, the bottom of the shirt should meet the top of the pants, shorts, or skirt.

### Pants, Shorts, and Skirts:

- No tight-fitting or excessively baggy pants or shorts are allowed. Clothes must allow a full range of motion. Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than the middle of your thigh (including slits).
- Underclothing should not be visible.

### For Music, PE, Recess, and Active Classes:

- Jewelry, footwear, and clothing should allow a full range of motion.
- Sleeves should allow a full range of motion for writing and art activities too.

### General Guidelines:

- Wear opaque clothing that is not distracting or risqué and which does not cause a distraction to members of the school community.
- Attend regularly to personal hygiene.

If it is determined by a teacher or administrator that a student's clothing is not appropriate for school, the student will be given a school t-shirt to wear. The shirt should be washed and returned to the Middle School Head with a signed Dress Code form. Repeated violations of the dress code will be handled as a discipline issue.

## Likely Consequences

The chart below describes the Middle School's likely response when consequences need to be enforced. For a first offense, the consequence may include any or all of the sanctions listed. For students who have already committed a first offense, the breaking of any major rule will be considered a second offense. Note: Counseling is almost always a consequence of a disciplinary event. In some cases it is required and in others it is recommended. All situations are evaluated on a case by case basis.

	<u>First Offense</u>	<u>Second Offense</u>
<b>Abusive, Vulgar Language or Conduct</b>	Conference Counseling Probation Suspension	On-going Counseling Probation Suspension or Expulsion
<b>Alcohol/Drugs</b>	Substance Abuse Counseling Suspension or Expulsion	Expulsion
<b>Cheating/ Plagiarism</b>	"F" on Assignment Conference Educational Counseling Probation/Suspension	"F" on Assignment Probation Suspension or Expulsion

<b>Lying</b>	Conference Counseling Probation	Suspension
<b>Fighting</b>	Conference Counseling Probation Suspension	Suspension or Expulsion
<b>Theft of School or Personal Property</b>	Suspension Conference Counseling	Probation Suspension or Expulsion
<b>Weapons at School</b>	Suspension Conference Counseling Expulsion	Expulsion
<b>Internet Abuse</b>	Conference Probation or suspension from use of computers Suspension	Permanent suspension of computer use Suspension or Expulsion

## **Expulsion**

The San Francisco School may dismiss or expel a student at any time and for any reason. The staff will try to protect the confidentiality of information relating to expulsion decisions. Therefore, many in the community will not have access to the information upon which many of these decisions are based. The Head of School (or in his absence the Acting Head of School) has final authority to decide all expulsions from The San Francisco School.

## ACADEMICS

### Homework

Homework matters! Students are responsible for recording, completing, and turning in assignments on time. Homework is online ([inside.sfschool.org](http://inside.sfschool.org)) for core academic subjects and will be listed by individual class. **However, assignments are subject to change, and students must remember that the assignment that they are given in class is what they should ALWAYS complete.** Furthermore, students are still expected to write down all of their assignments when they are given to them in class.

To ensure good homework practice, students should:

- Establish a system of recording homework in an assignment book (The School will provide one at the start of the year). Students and parents should always be able to find a reliable list of assignments-to-do and those completed.
- Write each assignment down with the due date.
- **Check the homework website ([inside.sfschool.org](http://inside.sfschool.org)) and/or call a classmate when absent from class.**
- Students should speak with their advisor if they are overwhelmed or consistently spending more than three hours a night on homework.
- Please do not call the front desk for homework.
- If a student is absent on the day an assignment is due, it is expected that the assignment will be turned in upon his/her return. Students are responsible for assignments given during their absence; that work should be turned in within the same number of days as their total absent time. (For example: if a student misses two days of classes, then assignments due during those days are due within two days of her/his return to school.) If a student misses school for more than three days due to illness, parents may request assignments through their child's lead teacher or advisor. If assignments are wanted for reasons other than illness, please notify teachers/advisors well in advance; assignments will be provided at the teachers' discretion.

### Grades and Progress Reports

Teachers will assess individual student work throughout the school year, with more formal reports sent home four times a year at each semester's halfway point and end.

Teachers give feedback and grades to students on daily homework and class work, tests, group and individual projects, the student portfolios, and the practices of an effective learner each student utilizes (i.e. preparation for class, regularity and punctuality of assignments, participation in the learning process). Teachers gather all data and report progress in the form of letter grades, comments and conferences, depending on the time of year. In between the grading periods, teachers may send a Mid Quarter Notice if student work or behavior has significantly changed or if a student is receiving a C or below in any class.

**The School expects all students to maintain at least a C average in all classes. Students who fail to maintain a C may be asked to retake the course in summer school (public or private) and obtain a C or better grade.**

### Advisory

The Middle School Advisory Program is designed to guide and support students socially, emotionally, and academically in Middle School. Each grade level has three advisories and one or two advisory meetings each week. The advisors serve as the main point of contact for about ten students. Advisory meetings may take place in advisory groups, grade level groups, single gender groups, or other configurations as needed throughout the year.

### Service Learning

Tied to the Advisory Program, Middle School students participate in service learning projects within the middle school community and within advisory groups. Students, with the help of their advisors, determine exactly what their projects will be. Middle School students may also be asked to take responsibility for caring for a particular area of the school, either indoors or outdoors, with their advisories.

## Library

The SFS Library collection is fully electronically cataloged. Student should check with the librarian for check out procedures and should return library material in a timely fashion. Students may also use the link to our library's catalog through the San Francisco School web site at [www.sfschool.org](http://www.sfschool.org). The School encourages all students to have a public library card and a sense of the closest branch library's location and hours. The San Francisco Public Library's catalog is available at [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org), so students can find out without leaving home or school if the library has the book that you need.

## Technology

Computers are used extensively in the Middle School classrooms, and laptops are available in the science room and all three Humanities rooms. The San Francisco School technology curriculum provides students with the foundation for using computers in an academic setting. Our goal is to build technology skills that will allow students to understand when and how to use technology in a creative and intuitive way. Most courses use an integrated studies approach as the basis for student projects. Students learn skills as they create projects, which are integral parts of their studies in other subjects.

For further details, including the school's "Acceptable Technology Use Guidelines for Students," go to [www.sfschool.org/programs](http://www.sfschool.org/programs) and click on "Middle."

## School Materials

Students may receive school owned books/texts/uniforms/locks to use during specific school years (i.e. foreign language and math textbooks, or required novels for humanities). Books and other materials that belong to the school will be signed out to students and collected at the end of the year. These books/materials must be returned and be in good condition. **Failure to return textbooks/materials/uniforms/locks in acceptable condition will result in a fine for the cost of the book/material, and grades and yearbooks may be held at the end of the year.**

## NON-ACADEMIC

### Lockers

Lockers will be assigned to students at the start of the year and must be returned in June. A padlock will not deter a determined thief, so we highly recommend that students avoid leaving expensive items in their locker. Any pictures are to be taped to the inside only. At the end of each year, students are responsible for leaving their lockers clean and decoration-free for the next person to use. **When a student is not carrying his/her backpack to/from class, it should be hung neatly on a hook or placed safely away from walking areas (i.e. not blocking a breezeway or staircase). Backpacks and/or other materials may be taken to the front office or lost and found if they are not properly stored. Further consequences may ensue if students repeatedly fail to properly store their materials.**

### Lunch

Students should bring their own lunch and plan to eat outside on most days, weather permitting. In case of rain, students will be assigned to eat in indoor classrooms. If a student forgets lunch, sandwich or bagel supplies will be available in the Middle School Lunch area. **It is the students' responsibility to keep this food area clean. If it is not maintained, it will be shut down until further notice.** Students should prioritize good nutrition and minimal packaging when making their lunch. The following chart lists lunch guidelines.

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pack a nutritious and delicious lunch every day.</li><li>• Pack fresh and minimally processed foods.</li><li>• Pack enough to keep your mind and body energized for the rest of the day.</li><li>• Store food in reusable containers with a name marked on them.</li><li>• Use a sturdy lunch box or lunch bag clearly marked with a name.</li><li>• RECYCLE and COMPOST lunch waste whenever possible.</li><li>• Clean up responsibly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do NOT pack more than you need for lunch.</li><li>• DO NOT pack carbonated drinks.</li><li>• Do NOT pack food that needs to be refrigerated.</li><li>• Do NOT pack candy or other foods with high sugar content.</li><li>• Do NOT rely on parents to pack your lunch for you</li><li>• Do NOT beg, mooch, or steal food from other students.</li></ul>

The Student Council coordinates a weekly pizza program. Orders for pizza must be placed in advance.

### Snack Shack

The Middle School Student Council operates a snack bar for profit. Students may buy credit in advance and then make their purchases against their account. The Student Council decides what nutritious items will be available and does all of the purchasing. Proceeds benefit Middle School activities, including dances.

### Visitors to School

Students must obtain permission from their Advisor before bringing any visitors to school. Any student visiting the school will be expected to abide by all SFS rules and guidelines. If a visitor is a distraction or is misbehaving in any way, he/she will be asked to leave. If students see a stranger on campus without a visitor badge, they should notify an adult.

### Parties and Social Gatherings

The San Francisco School is a small community and cultivates inclusiveness. If a student is holding a social event that does not include the entire class, he or she should send invitations privately; invitations should not be distributed at school. We strongly suggest that if a student invites more than half the girls or half the boys to any event, that student should extend an invitation to all the girls and/or all the boys in the grade.

## **Clubs**

There are after school and lunch clubs to join. Look for announcements for the Yearbook, Student Council, Amnesty International and more.

## **Our Neighborhood**

Remember that consideration and friendliness go a long way with our neighbors. Our school makes a big impact on the neighborhood with all our cars, people, and parking issues. Students should strive to be good ambassadors to the neighborhood by waiting for rides inside our gate unless otherwise instructed, being especially polite and well-mannered to neighbors and pedestrians, and treading lightly when walking to bus stops or the park.