

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

A guide for Charter Arts students, parents, families, and faculty members.

PA Student Assistance Program

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program (SAP) was initiated in 1984. Statewide, the program aims to assist school personnel in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and other mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of the Student Assistance Program is to help a student overcome these barriers so that they may achieve, remain in school, and advance. <http://www.sap.state.pa.us/>

What is the Student Assistance Program (SAP)?

The Charter Arts Student Assistance Program is comprised of a team of faculty members including administrators, school counselors, the school nurse and teachers, as well as a liaison(s) from a community agency who meet on a weekly basis to discuss students who have been referred to the program and are in need of support. All of the team members have been professionally trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problems lie within the scope of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent/guardian. The primary goal of SAP is to help students overcome the barriers they are facing in order to achieve success.

What Happens After A Student Has Been Referred?

- The SAP Team, comprised of administration, teachers, the school nurse, and school counselors, meets on a weekly basis.
- The SAP Team receives referrals as they are made, reviews referrals, and mails consent paperwork home. A parent/guardian must consent first for the SAP process to continue. *All referrals must state witnessed, or reported, observable behaviors, not opinions or suspicions.*
- Once consent is received, the SAP Team will gather observational information about the student's performance, and behavior in school from all school staff that work with the student. The nature of the referral is not shared with staff. A case manager will then be assigned.
- Once teacher feedback is reviewed, an individual meeting will be held with the student, and their case manager. A discussion of why the student was referred, teacher feedback, and any parent/guardian feedback received through the consent process will be discussed.
- The case manager will follow-up with the student's parent/guardian to further discuss the referral reason, teacher feedback, discussion with student, and any parent concerns/feedback.
- Recommendations for support will be made, if appropriate. Support services could include assistance in both the school setting and/or from a community agency.

The SAP Team Does Not and Cannot:

- ❖ Discipline students
- ❖ Diagnose
- ❖ Provide medical, drug/alcohol or mental health treatment

Observing any of the following would be a reason to make a SAP referral:

- Academic decline
- Chronic attendance / tardiness issues
- Disciplinary problems
- Expressions of anger, sadness
- Distinct behavior change or a change of friends
- Laughing inappropriately, poor anger management, disrespect to parents, teachers, authority figures
- Drastic change in appearance
- Overheard (firsthand) conversations about feeling very sad or depressed
- Someone expressing concerns or fears about a fellow student's use of mood altering substances
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Odors on clothes or belongings that are similar to those associated with the use of alcohols, or other drug, or inhalant abuse

Student Assistance Program referrals forms can be found through the main office and/or on the Charter Arts website.

For more information, contact the **SAP Team Coordinator**,
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Brief Overview of Charter Arts SAP Process

1. After consent and parent feedback is received, a SAP case manager is assigned, and a feedback form is sent to the student's teachers.
 - a. The feedback form asks teachers to note observable behaviors; the reason for referral is not shared with the student's academic team.
2. Once feedback is received the case manager will set up an individual meeting with the student to review the referral, teacher feedback, and discuss areas of need.
3. Next, the case manager, and/or member of the SAP Team, will communicate with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss with the referral, teacher feedback, individual meeting with the student, concerns or questions that the parent(s)/guardian(s) may have, and any appropriate recommendations for additional support.