

Cornerstone Academy

Student/Family Handbook 2025-2026



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Principal

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[Cornerstone Academy](http://CornerstoneAcademy.com)

CSA Bell Schedule 2025-2026			
Periods		Start	End
1st		8:00 AM	8:45 AM
2nd		8:50 AM	9:35 AM
3rd		9:40 AM	10:25 AM
Core A/B		10:30 AM	12:25 PM
6 Lunch	7/8 FLEX	12:25 PM	1:00 PM
6 FLEX	7/8 Lunch	1:00 PM	1:35 PM
Core A/B		1:40 PM	3:30 PM

*Please note that the bell to begin school rings at 7:55 a.m. Students are marked tardy to 1st period at 8:00 a.m. *

Any questions about any procedures or processes not covered in this handbook should be directed to CSA Administration by calling the front office or emailing Angel Purdy and/or Laura Ramos .

AAC (Advanced Academic Courses)

Cornerstone is an all AAC learning community and does not offer grade-level courses. Students are expected to maintain a grade of 75 or above in all classes. If a student falls behind and/or cannot recover and maintain grades in his/her classes, the student will be placed on academic probation, and an action plan will be developed. If the action plan does not work, our only alternative is for the student to withdraw and return to his/her home campus to enroll in academic level classes in order to get the appropriate level of coursework. Therefore, it is important that students attend classes, ask for help when needed, and complete all assignments. Parents **must** monitor their child's academic standing.

CSA Way

We fully commit to the SBISD Core Values and Core Characteristics of a T-2-4 ready graduate. In addition, we believe strongly in the CSA Way. These are our core campus values that are the foundation of our student recognition programs and the basis for our day-to-day expectations. **We hold ourselves (and each other) to a higher standard, and we leave things better than how we found them.**

The CSA Way consists of three major components:

- **Learning first** – At CSA, we definitely like to have fun and play, but our actions and decisions are centered on the idea that learning is the crux of what we do and each student's learning should be prioritized in all situations.
- **Kindness** – Kindness costs nothing and goes a long way. You never know what someone else could be dealing with, so kindness at CSA is not a suggestion...it's an expectation, and it's just what we do. So, hold the door open, show empathy, go out of your way to help, volunteer, pick up a mess that wasn't yours, and be a good citizen.
- **Integrity** – This one is about self-accountability. Students know right from wrong, and we believe strongly that they want to be good, honest people. Our integrity is how we get others to see that character and the potential that we have. All work should be our own. Our words should be true, and our actions reflect our character.

Academic Dishonesty

Because we hold ourselves to a high academic standard at Cornerstone, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. We cannot adequately prepare students without being able to trust that the work they submit is their own. Academic dishonesty applies to all forms of cheating, including (but not limited to) use of AI, copying, and plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty is the only disciplinary offense at CSA that we do not reset from year to year. The FIRST time a student is caught cheating on a major grade in his/her 6th grade year, the student will be required to re-do the assignment but can only earn up to a 70. If the FIRST cheating offense occurs in 7th grade, the student can only earn up to a 50 and will re-do the assignment, and if the FIRST offense occurs in 8th grade, the maximum grade is a 30 and will re-do the assignment.

After the first offense (in the student's entire time at CSA), if the student is caught cheating again on a major grade, he/she will be required to re-do the assignment, but the grade will be a zero.

Cheating on a minor or application grade will result in a zero every time in all grades, and the student will be required to re-do the assignment.

After School Procedures

Our regular day ends at 3:30. Your child will immediately go to the buses, Parent Drive, or to a teacher they have pre-arranged to meet for tutorials, learning lab, or a club. Students should be picked up from Parent Drive no later than 3:45 p.m.

- **Club Day:** meet Mondays until 4:15
- **Tutorials,** this year, will be handled through our new FLEX time built into the school day. If your child needs additional tutorials, that requires an arrangement with a teacher.

Attendance Information

When a student returns to school after an absence, he/she must bring a signed and dated note from the parent or email julie.dougher@springbranchisd.com regarding the absence. The note/email must state the reason the student was absent and the dates he/she was absent.

After an absence, students are responsible for obtaining an admit slip to class. Admit slips must be obtained before school from the ADA Specialist. The student is responsible for presenting the admit slip to each teacher for his/her initials and then giving it to the office at the end of the day.

- The student has two days to bring the note after an absence. If the student fails to bring a note within 2 days, the absence will be considered unexcused.
- The student is responsible for making up any missed assignments. One day is given for each day of the absence. This does not apply to major assignments that were assigned over a longer period of time. (For example, if a project is due on Tuesday, and the student is absent on Tuesday, the project will be due on Wednesday when the student returns.)
- Assignments for absent students can be provided in advance if the student is expected to be out at least three days. Twenty-four hour notice is necessary to obtain the assignments.
- If a student is absent for five (5) consecutive days a note from a health care provider must be provided.
- If a student is absent ten (10) days or parts of 10 days in a six-month period, school personnel are required by law to notify the Spring Branch ISD Police Department.
- Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. should bring a note, signed by a parent or email julie.dougher@springbranchisd.com stating the specific reason for being late and report directly to the office for an admit to enter class. If students are absent without the knowledge of their parents, they are considered truant.

Appointments for Students

When a student knows that he/she will need to leave during the school day for an appointment, the student is expected to **bring a note to the office before 8:00 a.m. or parents should email**. The note should indicate the time the student is to be picked up by a parent or other adult authorized by the parent (as indicated on the student information card). Parents can also email julie.dougher@springbranchisd.com. Julie will write an early dismissal slip for the student to present to the teacher when it is time to leave. The student and parent (or authorized adult) will meet in the office so that the parent can sign the student out. Upon return, the student must bring a note from the office of the appointment in order for it to be classified as a medical excuse. If you do not bring a note from the doctor, it cannot be considered a medical excuse and will be classified as an excused absence instead.

Bullying

Cornerstone serves a diverse population. Tolerance and acceptance are an expectation. Bullying is not acceptable and is not tolerated.

All students must sign the CSA Anti-Bullying Contract and strict adherence is expected.

Students are encouraged to reach out to Mrs. Purdy or Dr. Ramos to report bullying, or they can use the “Anonymous Reporting” link found on the campus website.

What is Bullying? A person is being bullied when he/she is exposed, **repeatedly and over time**, to negative actions on the part of one or more other person(s) that exploit an imbalance of power. Negative actions are when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person, through physical contact, through words, or in other ways.

Cafeteria/Lunch/Breakfast

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) allows for Spring Branch ISD schools with high percentages of qualifying children the option to serve breakfast and lunch meals at no cost to all students on a specific campus. Cornerstone, as part of SBEC, qualifies as a CEP school. This means the regular breakfast and lunch are free for our students. A student must still pay for extras like ice-cream, chips, Gatorade... or an extra lunch or breakfast.

- Breakfast is available in the cafeteria each morning from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- Lunch is available from 12:25 to 1:00 for 6th grade students and 1:00 to 1:35 for 7th and 8th grade students.

Parents may make online payments into student accounts and monitor student spending at <https://www.parentonline.net/Public/login.aspx>

CESITS

Cornerstone offers a variety of elective classes called CESITS, and most of those classes rotate each six weeks. Students participate in CESIT sign-up prior to the next session by indicating their preferences for each available period and getting a parent signature. The order for CESIT sign up is rotated by grade level. Any student who does not have a parent signature on his/her sign-up form will move to the end of the line. The sign-up forms are typically sent out a day or two prior to sign-up day on paper and will be attached to Mrs. Purdy's weekly newsletters as well.

Parents are encouraged to sign up to help with CESITS through Dr. Ramos.

Chromebooks

Each student will be assigned a Chromebook to use at school and home for a \$25 device fee. Students are responsible for bringing their charged Chromebook to and from school each day and using it responsibly.

Here are some important things to remember about student Chromebooks:

- The \$25 charge at the beginning of each year is not an insurance policy. It is a device service fee.
- The \$25 fee must be made before a device will be issued. We will create a payment arrangement schedule to assist any families in need.
- The Chromebook is the student's responsibility, so he/she should avoid lending it to anyone else.
- The first repair/replacement will be covered by the campus as long as the damage is not intentional or negligent.
- Any future damage, regardless of reason, will be billed to the parents.

Here are some common examples of situations that result in damage. Please talk with your child about not doing these things:

- Banging on the keys (which usually happens when frustrated or when playing video games instead of doing schoolwork)
- Slamming the device closed
- Putting the device in a backpack and then slamming the backpack on the floor
- Leaving the device unattended for pets or younger siblings to "play"
- Spilling...lots of liquids in lots of ways that could have been avoided
- Carrying the device while open or carrying the device by the screen

Clinic

A school nurse is on duty five days a week to take care of injuries that occur during the school day and to give professional attention to ill students.

- A student must have a pass to enter and leave the clinic.
- A student may not remain in the clinic unless the nurse decides that the student is ill enough to go home and is waiting for a parent.
- All prescription and non-prescription medication must be brought to the clinic *by a parent* with the proper medication release form (obtained at the clinic or online.)
- All medication (prescription and over the counter) must be kept in the clinic, appropriately labeled, and in its original container.
- Students must never be in possession of any medication, including over-the-counter items such as Tylenol or ibuprofen. Please contact the nurse if you have any questions about the medication policy of SBISD.
- Parents must sign out with the main office when taking students home from the clinic, unless otherwise directed by Nurse Moreton.

Communication

Mrs. Purdy will send a weekly email regarding current events and upcoming dates. This email will typically be sent Friday afternoons. Additionally, the PTA delivers news via newsletter on Sunday to inform parents of upcoming events, news, and campus needs.

Your child's teacher is the best person to contact regarding questions or concerns about classwork and/or projects. If you need to talk with one of your child's teachers, please email the teacher or call the office. The teacher will contact you and schedule a meeting, if requested. We expect teachers to respond within 24 hours.

Dances

The Student Council (normally) sponsors three dances during the year – Halloween, Valentine's Day, and the May Luau. In order to attend a school dance, students must be present at school on the day of the dance. More information about dances will be communicated through Mrs. Purdy's weekly newsletter.

Discipline

Cornerstone is guided by the CSA Way, and we expect students to put **learning first**, consistently show **kindness** and consideration to others, and demonstrate **integrity** in their actions.

We believe discipline should follow as a natural consequence of poor behavior or choices. We will ask students to solve the problems they have created and will offer options and advice when needed. Each student and incident will be treated individually based on the child's intent, the specific situation, and other relevant information. We will be consistent in seeing that problems and misbehavior are addressed and consequences are assigned with equity. Parents will always be notified when a student receives a school consequence.

If a student consistently fails to meet behavioral expectations (which occurs when a student has four or more referrals in a school year), a conference will be held with the student and parent, and a support plan (behavior contract) will be created and signed by parent(s), student, and CSA administration. If the student fails to uphold his/her behavior contract, or, if a student is assigned to DAEP for any reason, the student will not be invited to return to CSA the following school year.

Dress Code 2025-2026

Cornerstone Academy embraces the individuality of our students and staff. At the same time, we must ensure that each student is able to grow and learn in a safe, non-distracting educational environment.

Clothes that we *know* will cause a problem include (but are not limited to):

- Short shorts and/or short skirts (If the shorts barely cover the bottom, they are too short.)
- Pajama pants (except on designated spirit days)
- Clothes that depict or allude to (or the use of): violence, sex, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Clothes that reveal “the 3 Bs”, which is a student’s bottom, breasts, and/or belly during normal activities (For example, if a pair of shorts *can* be pulled down to be a school-appropriate length when standing...but that same pair of shorts ride up when the student climbs stairs or sits in a desk to reveal his/her bottom...those shorts are not school-appropriate.)
- Visible undergarments

If there is a concern with a student’s attire, the student must fix the problem, which may include calling home for a change of clothes. If the student cannot or will not fix the problem, the student will receive an office referral. Then, the student, with the help of an administrator, *will* fix the problem. Fixing the problem may include borrowing appropriate clothing items from the clinic. Repeated dress code issues will be addressed with the parent, and consequences may be administered.

Our current dress code is much more lenient than other middle schools. It will stay that way as long as students do not abuse the privilege.

Electronic Devices

(i.e. phones, smart watches, earbuds connected to a phone, Chromebooks for non-instructional purposes)

Per SBISD Board Policy and recent Texas legislation, middle school students are NOT allowed to use electronic devices during the instructional day. At CSA, the instructional day begins when a student is dropped off by a parent or school bus and ends with the dismissal bell at 3:30.

The one exception we have made is that students are allowed to use their Chromebooks only from 7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m. and during lunch unless told not to by a staff member.

- Teachers will not allow students to use telecommunication devices (including phones, phone features of smart watches, earbuds connected to a phone) during class.
- All students must only use a campus-issued device unless specified in their individualized education plan (IEP).
- Students are prohibited from using a personal wireless service (hotspot).
- **All devices will be secured in the student’s backpack (not on his/her person) and turned off during the school day.**
- If a device is confiscated (first offense), the device will be kept in the office, a parent will be notified, and *the student* can collect the device at the end of the

instructional day.

- If a device is confiscated (second offense), the device will be kept in the office, a parent will be notified, and a parent will collect the device at the end of the instructional day.
- If a device is confiscated (third or more offense), the student will no longer be allowed to have a device on campus . (If the parent wishes for a student to have a device, it will need to be kept in the office from the time the student arrives until the end of each instructional day.) Additional consequences (detention, ISS, or OSS) will apply for insubordination and failure to follow directions.

FLEX time

Focused Learning and EXtensions, or FLEX for short, will be used to support students. This time during the school day will take the place of after-school tutorials because everyone is a captive audience.

- **6th grade** will have lunch from 12:25 to 1:00, and, from 1:00 to 1:35, they will have FLEX time. On Mondays, this time will mainly be used for teaching middle school skills and/or advisory lessons. On Tuesdays-Fridays, this is tutorial and/or extension time for students to get what they need.
- **7th & 8th grade** will have their FLEX time from 12:25 to 1:00 and have lunch from 1:00 to 1:35. After the first six weeks (starting Friday, September 29), 7th and 8th graders will have some control over their time. IF students are caught up in all classes, not missing work, have grades over 80, and are not requested by a teacher for tutorials...they can choose to either work quietly in class (study hall) from 12:25 to 1:00 OR go to the courtyard from 12:25 to 1:00.

Grades & Academic Probation

At CSA, we hold students accountable to a higher standard of performance. We also realize that the pace and rigor of an all AAC (advanced academic coursework) schedule is not what is best-suited for all students...and that is okay.

Our students are expected to maintain a minimum grade of 75 in each core content area. If a student's grade(s) fall below 75 at the end of a nine-week period, a conference will be held with student and parent to place the student on academic probation. A support plan will be developed and implemented. However, continued failure to meet academic requirements will result in the student returning to his/her zoned middle school for the following school year.

Grading Percentages

This year, SBISD secondary schools are all using the same three grading categories – Major, Application, & Minor. In an effort to be consistent within a grade level, each grade level was asked to consider the types of assignments they give and assign a percentage (weight) to each of these categories. This way, all percentages are the same for a student

across each of his/her grade level classes. The CSA percentages for each category/grade are listed below. A brief, general description for each category is also provided. If you have any specific questions about which assignments fall in what category, please contact your child’s teachers.

- Major* – tests, major projects, final drafts (eligible for retest)
- Application* – assignments completed in class that ask students to apply their learning
- Minor* – smaller assignments completed in or outside of class

	Major	Application	Minor
6th – 8th	50%	35%	15%

Homework

The purpose of homework is to promote higher quality student learning. Students will be provided with sufficient information and direction to complete the assignment independently. It is our belief that homework should support student engagement and authentic learning. We do not assign homework for the sake of giving homework. Per district guidelines, we do not assign homework over Thanksgiving break, winter break, spring break, and religious holy days. Parents will be notified in the event that a student develops a pattern of not being able to complete assigned work within the required time period. If you have concerns about homework, parents should reach out to their child’s teacher.

IDs

Per district policy and as a matter of safety, students are required to wear their school-issued identification for the entire school day. School-issued IDs must be visible at all times.

Students who forget their ID must acquire a printed badge from the front office prior to 8:00 AM that day. Students who consistently forget their ID, but report it prior to 8:00 AM, will be required to meet with an administrator to address the issue, and disciplinary consequences may apply.

Students who have lost their ID will be required to purchase a new ID (First ID: \$5, Thereafter: \$10).

Any student who does not get a printed badge prior to 8 AM will earn a strike. For every three strikes, the student will be assigned an after school detention. Repeated detentions may result in further disciplinary action.

Library

The Spring Branch Education Center Library’s hours are from 7:30 a.m. through 3:30 p.m. A wide variety of materials such as books, magazines and audio books are available for

use and check out. Most items are due back in two weeks. No fines are charged for late items, however students may not check out additional library items if they have any overdue materials.

Lost and Found

We are always amazed at the quantity of items that students leave behind and rarely seek to find. The “lost and found” closet is located on the 1st floor next to the office. All unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each semester.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are an important part of your child’s education. Conferences may be requested by parents or teachers in order to keep communication open and accurate. To request a conference, call or email one of your child’s teachers or contact the front office.

Twice a year (fall and spring), CSA also hosts student-led conferences in which students present their recent data, grades, teacher observations, and student reflections to their parent(s). Teachers, administrators, and counselors are also available to answer questions during these conferences. It is a CSA expectation that ALL parents (at least one per family) attend both student-led conferences.

Parent Contact Information

It is important that the campus be able to reach you in case of an emergency and that you are able to receive campus mail-outs such as report cards. Parents must provide the school with current home, work, cellular, emergency phone numbers and email address. If at any time during the school year your physical address or phone number changes, please contact the school promptly.

Parent Involvement Policy

Parents are expected to participate in their child’s education. A minimum of FIVE volunteer hours a year is required. This obligation can be met through a variety of opportunities such as: parent conferences, teaching CESIT classes, donations when requested, attending and supporting PTA meetings and activities, chaperoning/setting up/ cleaning up after special events, and even volunteering your time at home may be arranged.

Lots of volunteer opportunities will be presented throughout the year in Mrs. Purdy’s newsletter and the PTA newsletter.

PTA

Cornerstone Academy benefits immensely from a strong and supportive PTA. The campus works closely with PTA to support our students and staff members. There are

many ways to become involved in the Cornerstone PTA, but that starts with joining. All memberships and donations directly impact your child's learning at CSA. We need your support to make this work.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports are available on Skyward twice in our nine-week grading period. Report cards are also available digitally and are sent home (with a signature requirement) for students whose grades have fallen below 75. Progress reports and report cards can be accessed online through Family Access.

Retest Policy

Retests are required on major grades. Prior to a retest, the student must show new learning, which could be additional instruction with the teacher, completion of test corrections, and/or performance of skill-based tasks as directed by the teacher. At the minimum, students should be allowed to retest and earn a grade up to 75. However, the specific retest information for your child can be found on the grade-level syllabus. Major grade assignments that earn a 0 based on academic dishonesty will not be eligible to retest.

Spirit Days

- Mad Cap Monday – Every Monday, students and staff are allowed to wear caps! Ball caps must be in accordance with district dress code requirements.
- Additionally, CSA Student Council sponsors a number of activities throughout the school year that encourage students to dress up and participate. These days will be communicated in the weekly newsletter and through social media.

Social Media

We encourage families to follow CSA on social media as another way to stay connected. The CSA Twitter account is @CSASBISD, and we also have Facebook under the name Cornerstone Academy.

State/National Testing

We participate in the STAAR testing program. We also participate in the PSAT 8/9 through the College Board for 8th grade only and MAP testing through NWEA for all grade levels at the beginning, middle and end of the year. For more information on STAAR, MAP, or PSAT, please contact Tiffany Lovell, our campus testing coordinator, at tiffany.lovell@springbranchisd.com

Student Recognition

Please use the link below to access information about our updated student recognition programs, including Cougar of the Month and end of year awards.

 CSA Student Recognition – adopted June 2024

Tardies

In order for classes to run smoothly and without disruption, it is important for students to be on time. A student is considered tardy to class if the tardy bell rings and students are not inside the classroom. Students are to report to class for roll check before participating in any special event. If a student happens to be detained in the office or by a teacher, a tardy excuse will be issued and should be presented to the teacher upon entering the class. Parents will be notified when a pattern of tardiness is identified for a student.

Note: When a student is more than 15 minutes late for a class period without explanation, he/she can be considered truant, and disciplinary consequences will apply. Excessive absences can jeopardize a student's ability to earn credit in high school courses.

Transportation

- **Bus:** School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Students must comply with all rules and regulations for school bus behavior as described in the SBISD Student Handbook. The transportation department or school administration may suspend students from riding on any school bus for violations of the Student Handbook rules and regulations.

Bus drivers are responsible for supervising students while they are on the bus. They do not have control for what happens prior to the bus arriving. The campus is responsible for supervising students while the bus is loading and unloading on campus.

Students must ride the bus they are assigned and fill out a registration form provided by the bus driver. Students who need to ride another bus for childcare purposes must bring a note to the school office in the morning, so the campus can coordinate with transportation to prevent overcrowding and provide the student a CSA Transportation Pass. Students who fail to obtain the necessary permission from the school office will be expected to ride their assigned bus.

- **Parent Drop-off/ Pick-up** --- For the safety of your children, we ask that you **only use Parent Drive** and do not use any other area to drop off or pick up your child. Parent Drive is located at the front of the school. The beginning of parent drive, during busy times, is down by the tax office and forms a line that winds in front of the large trees to the east of the campus. If you have any questions about Parent Drive, please ask the front office staff.

Students should not be asked to leave campus to walk to the DAEP, Grob Stadium, or Bear Boulevard parking lots so they can be picked up there. If staff members see this happening, the student will be redirected back to campus, and the parent will be called and asked to follow the rules and drive through Parent Drive for pick-up.

If you are picking up your child early, please park and come into the main office to sign out your child. If you are planning on picking up your child early, please **arrive before 3:00**. If you arrive after 3:00, you will be asked to wait until dismissal at 3:30.

Rules of Parent Drive:

1. Right lane turns right; Left lane turns left.
2. Don't block traffic on Westview.
3. Don't cut other drivers off. It's school pickup, and it's not that serious. Plus, we expect kindness from the kids, so we should model that as adults.
4. Watch for children - no distracted driving.

Visitors

All visitors are required to check in at the front office and wear their ID at all times. CSA Administration reserves the right to restrict visitors at any time in accordance with SBISD safety procedures.

Volunteers

We love our volunteers and welcome you to campus! Thank you for giving your time and energy to support our students. Please refer to [SBISD volunteer procedures](#) for additional information or to register to become an SBISD volunteer.

All CSA families are required to volunteer five hours each school year as a condition of their child's enrollment. Be sure to track your hours using the link on the PTA website.