



**2011-2012**

## **Introduction**

The faculty and administration would like to welcome you to South Seneca High School for the 2011-2012 school year. We are looking forward to assisting you in fulfilling your educational goals. South Seneca has a history of fine academic and extracurricular accomplishments. We expect you to meet the goals which have been set, to carry on the tradition, and to make this a better place. You can benefit from everything South Seneca has to offer by being actively involved in your classes and the programs offered. If you encounter difficulties, seek out any of our trained professionals, and we will do our best to help you. We are here to make your years in school as successful, yet educationally challenging, as possible. We welcome the opportunity to help you as you proceed through your school career. This Handbook is designed for your benefit to serve as a reference for the many programs, services and activities that are available.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

<b>Warning Bell</b>	<b>7:40</b>
Block 1	7:45 -- 9:03
Block 2	9:07 – 10:21
Block 3	10:25 – 11:39
A	Lunch 10:25 – 11:00
B	Class 11:04 – 11:39
Block 4	11:43 – 12:57
A	Lunch 11:43 – 12:18
B	Class 12:22 – 12:57
Block 5	1:01 – 2:15

## Information and Policies

**Participation in the graduation ceremony is contingent upon the satisfactory completion of all diploma requirements.**

**A. Grade level criteria:** it is the responsibility of the building principal to determine student placement in grade levels. A student will be promoted to the next grade level based on the accumulation of Carnegie units as follows: For placement in 10th grade: 5.5 units; for placement in 11th grade: 12 units; for placement in 12th grade: 17.5 units and enrolled in a sufficient number of courses to qualify for graduation in either January or June of the current school year.

To receive credit for any course in grades 9-12, a student must:

1. Have an average of 65 and pass the Regents' exam for Regents' credit.
2. Take a final exam regardless of his/her average.

**B. Honor Roll:** the high school has established two levels of recognition, high honors (average of 90 percent or above) and honors (average of 85 to 89 percent), for noteworthy academic achievement. Such achievement will be recognized four times a year in conjunction with the quarterly report card grades.

Recognition for academic achievement will be given to a student who:

1. Is enrolled in a minimum of courses equivalent to six credits plus the physical Education, during the marking period.
2. Has received no grade of incomplete on the quarterly report card.
3. Has maintained the specified averages as noted for recognition without benefit of rounding.

**C. Drop/Add Courses:** A student desiring to drop a course may **not** initiate a request to be dropped from enrollment:

**For 20-week courses:** Before the start of the second week or after the beginning of the second marking period without administrative approval.

**For 40-week courses:** Before the start of the second week or after the beginning of the third marking period without administrative approval.

Students may not add a course after the second week of the semester in which the course begins.

**In addition, a student must have a signed note from a parent/guardian granting permission to drop a course.**

## **Academic Eligibility Policy**

The Board of Education has established a policy for participation in school-sponsored clubs, activities, athletics and trips. The expectation of this policy is that participation in school related events such as dances (prom), clubs and interscholastic sports activities is achieved by:

1. Being a bona fide student, i.e. enrolled in a minimum of 6 credits of study, plus Phys. Ed., in each semester.
2. Maintaining acceptable level of attendance for these classes.

A failure or incomplete in 2 or more classes will result in the student being placed on the academic warning list requiring the student's participation in after school study sessions. Failure to participate in after school study sessions will result in a student being placed on the academic ineligibility list. Any student on the Academic Ineligibility List may not attend or participate in any extracurricular activity.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

In a school of this size, certain procedures must be established for the benefit of the school and student body. State law requires some of these procedures; others are Board of Education policies. All are designed to help the school run smoothly. A school is a place of learning. Learning involves the expansion of knowledge as well as acting in a manner considerate of the rights and feelings of others. Students learn from each other, thus students must be conscious that younger students follow the leadership example of upper classmen. Such examples, it is hoped, should enhance the school environment and that a relationship of respect - student to student as well as student to faculty - will create a harmonious school community dedicated to the gaining and mastery of new knowledge. It is expected that all who are affected by the existence of these procedures will have a voice in whatever revisions seem necessary as we progress through the current school year.

### **A. School and Class Attendance**

**The instructional day begins at 7:45 am.** At this time Block 1 will begin. **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ON TIME.**

**Tardiness:** A student is classified as tardy to school if such student arrives after the start of first Block (7:45 am). Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. must report directly to the nurse's/attendance office to sign in to school and to receive a pass to class. Students who are tardy to school or class without a written excuse or

pass are subject to disciplinary action and will be referred as per the "Student Code of Conduct."

**Early Dismissal:** Students needing to be dismissed early will present to the school nurse/attendance clerk a written request from their parent/guardian which clearly state the time and reason in advance of being excused. Verbal and/or e-mail requests cannot be accepted due to legal issues. Students may not leave the building after arrival, before the close of the school day, without an exit pass issued by the nurse/attendance clerk or a building administrator. Students with exit passes must sign out and leave the building promptly. If the student returns to school that day, s/he MUST sign back in to school and be issued a pass to class.

**Absences:** Achievement at the high school level is clearly related to attendance. Students are expected to be in attendance each day that school is in session unless they are excused by their parent or guardian in accordance to school board policy. Excused absences are as follows: illness, (a certification from a physician may be required), illness or death of a close family member, impassable roads, religious observances, health treatment, court appearance, or dismissal by the nurse or administrator. Students who are absent must present a written excuse from their parent/guardian within three days of return or the absence will be classified as unexcused. Written excuses must be signed by a parent or guardian. E-mails cannot be accepted due to legal issues.

Students are given the opportunity to make up all work missed because of any excused absences. If a student is aware that an absence is likely to be for a number of days, the guidance office should be contacted so that assignments may be provided. In the event of a long-term absence as a result of illness, accident, etc., home tutoring may be requested. This request should be directed to the Principal through the appropriate school counselor. It is the responsibility of the student to make-up missed assignments as per the course requirement statement provided by their teacher. Should assignments not be completed, the teacher may give a grade of "Incomplete" if the student did not have sufficient time to complete the work.

Truancy is the unlawful absence or irregular attendance upon instruction by a student. In addition to disciplinary actions as outlined in the "Student Code of Conduct," a student who is considered truant from class (es) may not be given the opportunity to make up the class work that was missed and may receive a grade of zero (0).

**Written Excuses:** It is required by law that students present a written excuse for absences, tardiness and/or dismissal. Excuses must clearly state the date(s) and

reason(s) and must be signed by a parent or legal guardian. State Attendance Regulations require a stated reason for absence. Any excuses without an identified reason for absence will not be accepted. Excuses for absences, tardiness and/or dismissal must be kept by the school and may be used for legal purposes.

**Minimum Attendance Requirement:** Students are required to be in attendance 85% of the scheduled class of a course of study to be eligible for course credit. A student will not be eligible for course credit if they are absent (excused and unexcused) 14 absences for a full year course, 20 absences for courses meeting on a 3 day schedule or 7 absences for a semester course/half year or single block schedule based on an AC or BD schedule and is failing the class. Students will be considered absent from a class if they are absent for more than 15 minutes of a scheduled class period or 8 minutes for a half block class. The district reserves the right to withdraw students from their BOCES program when their absences exceed 85 %. For extenuating circumstances **only**, a parent/guardian may file a written appeal for review by the High School Attendance Committee. The written appeal, including all supporting documentation, must be received by the building principal no later than five (5) school days after the receipt of the loss of the credit notification. Copies of the minimum attendance requirement may be obtained in the main office.

**Field trips**, tours and athletic events are privileges. Students with poor attendance, frequent tardiness and class cuts may not be permitted to take part in these kinds of activities. Participation is left to the discretion of the teacher and Principal.

**B. Closed Campus:** The South Seneca School District operates a closed campus. This means that once a student boards a school bus, or arrives on school grounds, that student becomes the responsibility of the school district. S/he must stay on school grounds (or under the supervision of school staff) for the remainder of the normal school day unless excused or released from school in accordance with this policy. No school employee shall release a student without authorization from the Main Office or Nurse's/ Attendance Office.

**Signing-In and/or Signing-Out:** All students are required to report to the attendance office upon entering the building late or leaving the building early. **Under no circumstances may a student leave the high school grounds at any time during a school day, unless such student:**

1. Has been properly excused by submitting a note nurse's/attendance clerk and has signed out.
2. Is in the company of a parent/legal guardian and has signed out.

3. Has been excused by the School Nurse, Dean of Students or Principal and has signed out.

It is not permissible to sign-out and provide a note of excuse **after the fact** *unless approved by the Principal or designee*.

Failure to follow this expectation will result in a disciplinary action as outlined in the "Student Code of Conduct."

**C. Visitors/Guests:** Parents/ and guest speakers are welcome to visit the school. Prior arrangements for visits or conferences with teachers must be made through the office. Student visitors are not allowed as they are often disruptive to the educational atmosphere of the school. Students from other schools who are considering a verifiable transfer to South Seneca may visit the school with prior arrangements through the guidance counselor. **All approved visitors** must report to the main office, sign in, and obtain a visitor's pass.

**D. Media Center:** The media center is a place of privilege. It is expected that students using these areas will follow the rules and procedures posted. Students that demonstrate an inability to follow these procedures will be denied the privilege of using these resources and may incur further disciplinary action. The media center is open 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM. No materials may leave the media center until media center personnel have checked them out. Materials should be returned promptly. A charge will be levied for lost or damaged materials.

**E. Care of the Building and Grounds:** Maintaining the appearance of the school building and grounds is a responsibility shared by all of us. Intentional damage done to any part of the school building or grounds is unacceptable. Students identified as causing such damage will be referred as per the "Student Code of Conduct." In addition, such students will be held financially responsible for the damage and may be subject to legal action.

**F. Student Vehicles:** Parking on school grounds is a privilege and reflect a level of responsibility on the part of the student. In that available spaces are limited, parking will be on a "permit only" basis. The school district assumes no responsibility for theft, damages or vandalism. In order to maintain that privilege, students must park in the designated student parking areas only, and operate their vehicle safely on school property. Those students, who demonstrate an inability to handle this privilege will lose the privilege, incur further disciplinary action and may be towed at his/her personal expense. Students must apply for parking permits **before** driving to school. ***Students may not drive to BOCES unless written permission is given by Principal or designee.***

**G. Cafeteria/Lunch Periods:** It is expected that all students will do their best to demonstrate good manners during lunch. This non-structured time must not

interfere with, or be disruptive to, the learning process of the on-going classes that are meeting during the lunch periods. Students requesting to take a class instead of lunch period will be required to provide parental permission **in writing**.

**H. Personal Property:** Any personal property brought on school grounds may be subject to search if, in the judgment of the administration, there is a compelling reason. The school district assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen property.

**I. Lockers:** Hall lockers are the property of the school district and are made available to students for school-related storage purposes. To ensure privacy and safety of personal belongings, students are provided hall lockers with combination locks.

**Students are requested to:**

1. Keep their lockers neat and free from marks and comments,
2. **KEEP THEIR LOCKER COMBINATION TO THEMSELVES.**
3. Keep their lockers closed and locked, and use care in opening and closing their locker
4. Kicking and screaming have yet to make a locker operate more efficiently.
5. Keep their book bags in their hallway locker.

Students should understand that New York State courts have recognized that maintaining and preserving the health and safety of students, as well as order in the schools, may require a personal search of a student, as well as a search of his/her locker. The Principal may determine, with reasonable cause, that a student is in possession of contraband. In such instances, a search of the student's locker and/or person may take place.

**J. School Property:** All issued books, equipment, and materials are the responsibility of the student. Lost or damaged books, equipment, or library materials will be billed to the student and s/he will be required to pay for this loss or damage. Notices of obligations, for loss or damage, will be provided to students at the end of the semester or school year. Failure to clear the obligation of debt will result in a denial of the use of additional school materials or equipment, including library use/borrowing privileges, and the withholding of report card. For seniors this also includes withholding of the diploma and final transcript until the obligation is cleared.

**K. Student Dress:** In keeping with the New York Commissioner of Education's ruling that student's clothing may not be distracting, students will use discretion

in their choice of dress. Head coverings and sunglasses, other than those pertaining to religious practices, or medical reasons are not to be worn inside the school building. Clothing printed with sexual innuendo, vulgarities, or advocating alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances, or violence is not appropriate. Clothing must completely cover the midriff, back and buttock areas, and are not to be see-through. Cleavage should not be seen. No underclothing should be visible under normal circumstances. Tank tops with large armholes are not appropriate and shoulder straps must be at least 1 1/2 inches wide. Strapless tops and/or dresses are not allowed. The hem on skirts and shorts must reach the fingertips when the arms are extended down the leg. Clothing must be clean and may not be dangerous or hazardous. Appropriate footwear that protects the foot from possible injury must be worn at all times. Students dressed inappropriately will be asked to change their clothing. Continued infractions of this policy will be dealt with as per the "Student Code of Conduct".

**L. Electronic Devices:** South Seneca School District recognizes the necessity for safety and communication; however, cell phone and pager use during the school day causes a distraction and a disruption to the educational process. Students may possess cell phones and other electronic communication devices while in school or on school property, but **the devices must remain concealed, in the off mode and be used only before and after school.** Programming to vibrate rather than ring does not fulfill the "off" requirement. Electronic communication devices that are seen, heard, or in use will be confiscated. Electronic devices that are confiscated will be held for two (2) school days. Repeated offenses will result in additional consequences as per the Code of Conduct. For students needing to contact parents, a phone is provided in the high school free of charge. Parents needing to contact their child can call the school and a message will be delivered to the student notifying them that he/she should contact the parent. Approval for special purposes must be obtained in writing from an administrator. Radios and tape/CD players with earphones may be used during study halls and lunch at teacher's discretion. Such devices may be confiscated by staff members, when used inappropriately, and will be returned at the discretion of the administration. The use of digital cameras, camera phones, digital video or other type of recording devices without permission from the individual being recorded is prohibited except in instances involving threats to health, safety or security. Any recording or photography in a classroom requires the expressed prior approval of the instructor. The use of camera phones or other devices to record or transmit behavior that violates this Code of Conduct will also be considered a violation of the code. All of the above is subject to disciplinary consequences.

**M. Skateboards:** Due to issues of safety and to prevent disruption to the learning in classrooms, skateboards are prohibited from use on school property at all times.

**N. Accidents/Health:** Any accident or illness should be reported to the teacher in charge of the activity and the nurse's office immediately. Students are not allowed to possess any type of medication. Any medication prescribed by a physician must be left in the health office. No other medication is permitted on campus. (See the nurse for details.)

**O. Study Hall:** Students will use the study hall to complete homework, work on remedial assignments, or work on enrichment activities. Students must have a pre-signed pass, or an honor pass to leave a study hall. Students must sign out of the study hall indicating their destination. All study halls are to be quiet so as not to interfere with the opportunity for other students to work.

**P. Honor Passes:** Sophomores, juniors and seniors who achieve high honor roll will receive a special pass which allows the student, after first reporting to the study hall teacher, to utilize the media center, computer room, guidance office/main office, or to seek teacher assistance during his/her guided study block. The student must have the pass in his/her possession at all times. The honor pass may be suspended as a result of a disciplinary referral or academic restriction.

**Q. Bus Transportation:** Any student wishing to ride a school bus to any destination other than their normal pickup or drop-off point, must provide a written note from their parent or guardian. This note must be handed in to the high school office at least two hours prior to riding the bus home. Any student wishing to ride the late bus must provide the bus driver with a pass signed by the teacher with whom they stayed after.

**R. Participation in Extracurricular Activities:**

Participation in the Extracurricular Programs is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the members of the extracurricular activity, to the student body, and to the community. When a student accepts this privilege, he or she must also live up to the Code of Conduct and assume responsibility as an ambassador for the South Seneca Central Schools. This responsibility applies whether the student is on campus, off campus, or participating at another school and also applies any time during the school year. While all students at South Seneca Central Schools are expected to conform to the school's Code of Conduct, students involved in extracurricular activities, because of their visibility, have an additional responsibility to maintain good behavior. Therefore, students who are involved in extracurricular activities in which they are representing South Seneca

at a school-sanctioned activity, performance, or event, are subject to the sanctions below.

Students who willingly remain at events where alcohol or drugs are used in violation of state or local law, ***whether or not the student consumes said substances***, are deemed to be in illegal possession by association and will be subject to the sanctions listed below. The level of discipline will vary based on the cumulative number of times that a student is deemed to be in possession by association or is in possession of alcohol or an illegal substance. Penalties for violation:

First Offense: suspension from all extracurricular activities for a period of 10 school days and participation in the mandatory diversion program.

Second Offense: suspension from all extracurricular activities for a period of 20 school days

Third Offense: suspension from all extracurricular activities for one academic year.

**S. Cyber-bullying:** Any action using an electronic device or the Internet that involves harassment, intimidation or threats is considered bullying and may be subject to disciplinary action. This may include incidents that did not take place at school but led to confrontations or other problems at school.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

In compliance with Chapter 740 of the Education Law of the State, school boards are required to adopt rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on school property. The Board of Education of the South Seneca School District has done so. The district's policies are in effect and each school is expected to generate rules and codes of conduct of its own which are consistent with those regulations.

**Rights:** All students of this district shall have the right afforded under the provisions of the federal and state constitutions, the laws and regulations of New York State and the policies of the Board of Education of the South Seneca School District. Included in these rights is the right to a safe, secure and orderly environment conducive to learning.

**Responsibilities:** In a school of this size, certain procedures have been established for the purpose of creating a safe, secure and orderly environment conducive to learning. These include:

1. Students are required by law to be in regular attendance at school and in class.

2. Students will be responsible for regulating their own behavior in accordance with school rules.
3. Students will be responsible for contributing to the maintenance of an environment that is conducive to learning.
4. Students will bear responsibility for maintaining public health and safety on school property.
5. Students have the responsibility to make constructive contributions to their school and to report fairly the circumstances of school related issues.
6. Students are expected to show respect for faculty and other members of the school community.

### **Student Discipline Code**

Each student must make a conscientious effort to observe the following code of conduct that exists for the individual's welfare as well as the welfare of all the students in the school. The building principal will have the authority to suspend students for infractions of the rules of conduct for periods not to exceed five consecutive school days.

Students may be suspended from instruction or subjected to other disciplinary action when the student:

#### **A. Engages in conduct which is:**

**Disorderly** - intentionally causing public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm, harassment or recklessly creating a risk thereof, by fighting, assault, or engaging in violent behavior, making unreasonable noise, suggestive comments or behaviors, using abusive obscene language or gestures, obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic, and creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act which serves no legitimate purpose; or

**Insubordinate** - failing to comply with the lawful directions of a teacher, school administrator or other school employee in charge of the student.

**B. Endangers:** the safety, morals, or welfare of others by act, including but not limited to: selling, using or possessing alcohol, tobacco, drugs or its imitation and drug paraphernalia, selling using or possessing weapons, fireworks, knives, lighters, matches, or other dangerous instruments or contraband; selling, using or possessing obscene materials; using profane, vulgar, or abusive language (including ethnic slurs); gambling; bullying, hazing, engaging in harassing, intimidating, retaliating or lewd behavior. *Bullying*, includes any hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression and/or creates terror. Bullying may be premeditated or a sudden activity. *Hazing*, includes committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of emotional, physical or psychological

harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose.

*Harassment* is defined as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or mental, emotional, or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The harassing behavior may be based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.

*Intimidation* includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm. . *Retaliation* is an act against any complainants and/or those who participate in the investigation of any complaint in conformity with state law and district policies, and who have acted reasonably and in good faith.

In addition to the expectations of appropriate student behaviors that are identified in the Student Discipline Code, the Board of Education has adopted policies prohibiting certain actions. Violations of these policies will result in a student's suspension from instruction and are as follows:

**Weapons:** In accordance with the Gun Free School Act of 1994, the punishment for any student who is determined to have brought a firearm (as defined under section 921 of Title 18, U.S. Code) to a school shall be a suspension from school for not less than one year.

**Alcohol/Drugs:** The use, possession, or sale of alcohol and/or drugs, or drug implements, on school grounds, property or at a school function IS PROHIBITED. Violators will attend a disciplinary hearing that may result in a long-term suspension of up to 45 school days. In addition, they may be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

**Tobacco/Tobacco Products:** In accordance with federal law, the use and possession of tobacco products of any kind is forbidden at anytime including all events or activities held in the building. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the "High School Discipline Plan" and may be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

**C.** Has a physical or mental condition that endangers the health, safety or morals of him/herself or of other pupils.

**D.** Engages in any of the following forms of academic misconduct; tardiness to or truant from school or class or leaving school or class without permission;

cheating (including but not limited to copying, using unauthorized help sheets and the like, illegally obtaining tests in advance, substituting for a test taker, and other forms of unauthorized collusion); plagiarism (not giving the source for all quotes, facts and ideas that are not yours).

**E.** Engages in conduct that violates the rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on school property.

### **Consequences**

The range of penalties which may be imposed for the conduct set forth in Section I is as follows:

- a. Verbal warning,
- b. Written warning,
- c. Written notification to parent,
- d. Instructional Support Team,
- e. Behavior Plan
- f. Detention,
- g. Suspension from transportation,
- h. Suspension from athletic participation,
- i. Suspension from social or extra-curricular activities,
- j. Suspension of other privileges,
- k. Exclusion from a particular class,
- l. In-house suspension,
- m. Probation,
- n. Involuntary transfer,
- o. Suspension

The building principal or his designee shall determine the type and extent of punishment. Such disciplinary measures shall be appropriate to the seriousness of the offense and, where applicable, to the previous disciplinary record of the student. Any suspension from attendance upon instruction may be imposed only in accordance with Education Law #3214. According to New York State Education Law, a student can be suspended up to five days by the principal for unacceptable behavior. The superintendent can suspend for a longer period.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

September 7	First Day of Classes
September 15	Picture Day
October 7-8	Homecoming
October 10	Columbus Day – No School
October 13	High School Open House – 6:30 pm
October 18	Teacher Conference Day – ½ Day
November 11	Veteran’s Day – No School
November 15	Parent/Teacher Conference Day – ½ Day
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Break – No School
November 29	Parent/Teacher Conference Day – ½ Day
December 14	High School Holiday Concert – 7:00 PM
December 26-30	Holiday Recess – No School
January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School
February 14	Teacher Conference Day ½ Day
February 20-24	Winter Recess - No School
March 9-11	Spring Musical/Play presented
March 23	Superintendent’s Conference Day–9-12 No Classes
March 28	POPS Concert – 7:30 PM
April 9-13	Spring Recess – No School
April 24	Teacher Conference Day – ½ Day
May 1	Teacher Conference Day – ½ Day
May 8	National Honor Society Induction – 6:00 PM
May 22	Undergraduate Awards – 6:30 PM
May 27&28	Memorial Day Observance - No School
June 4	High School Spring Concert – 7:00 PM
June 5	Senior Awards Night – 6:30
June 12	Last Day of Classes
June 13-21	<b>REGENTS &amp; FINAL EXAMS</b>
June 23	Graduation – 10:30 AM