



Gardens School
OF TECHNOLOGY ARTS

Parent-Student Handbook

9153 Roan Lane
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33403
Phone: 561-290-7661
Fax: 866-449-3470
www.mysota.net
Email: info@mysota.net

Greetings GSOTA Families!

As we enter a new year at the Gardens School of Technology Arts, I'm reminded of these words accredited to William Butler Yeats, ***“Education is not the filling of a pail; but the lighting of a fire!”*** While Yeats ended that phrase with a period, I take grammatical license to use exclamation – because GSOTA is on fire!

Our GSOTA Experience will be measured by the dynamic instructional practices that your children will engage in, and defined by the 21st Century approaches that our teachers will utilize. To be brief, my focus for this school year will be three fold: (1) to infuse excitement into our school culture, the GSOTA Experience; (2) to continue setting high standards for teacher performance, and (3) to increase academic expectations for all students. Our collaboration, between home and school, will be the key component in assuring that we thrive as a GSOTA community and bring these objectives to fruition!

Our GSOTA Parent/Student Handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the policies and guidelines used to shape GSOTA. Please read this handbook and discuss appropriate items with your child. We anticipate revisions and corrections as we go, and the handbook will be updated periodically to reflect any changes.

Combining our remarkable staff, involved parents, and committed students, the GSOTA Experience is running strong! My door is always open and I encourage you to communicate with me at any time. If you have any questions regarding the Handbook, please do not hesitate to contact me, your child's teacher, or the school office.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin Kovacs

Director of Academics (Principal)
Gardens School of Technology Arts
Kevin.Kovacs@mysota.net
561-290-7661

Our Mission Statement

The mission at Gardens School of Technology Arts is to prepare young innovators, one student at a time, with the 21st century skills they need to succeed. We will achieve this by implementing:

- Solid academics
- Innovative teaching
- Engaging, relevant learning activities
- Responsible leadership
- Family involvement
- Community connections

Our Vision Statement

Our vision is to create a learning environment designed to foster innovation and creativity, with the goal of developing an inclusive community geared towards developing the gifts, talents and individual strengths of each one of our students. This will only be accomplished by partnering staff, students, parents, and the community.

With integrity, we seek to develop responsible K-8 students who are self-disciplined, self-motivated and socially responsible. Our school will respect diversity and we are committed to the cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of every child. We will deliver the highest quality educational experience by setting high goals and embracing challenge, striving to surpass our previous accomplishments.

Academics will be applied to authentic learning that promotes thinking that is original, critical, collaborative, innovative and reflective. We will embrace advanced enrichment opportunities in technology, the arts, science and languages. In so doing, we hope to harness the information age's driving force while encouraging creativity and imagination and in so doing, create a powerful relational connection with every member of our learning community. We are united in the belief that learning should be a lifelong, rewarding adventure!

Primary Objectives

The primary objectives of Gardens SOTA are congruent with the school's governing core values and support those of the School District of Palm Beach County as well as the fundamental premise at the core of the state's educational re-engineering strategy. Simply put, our intent is to raise student achievement to world-class levels by reaffirming high standards, performing relevant assessments and ensuring accountability. To do so, we will:

- Maintain responsible governance evidenced by a clear separation of duties between our Governing Board and the School Management.
- Provide a sound research- and evidence-based educational plan (emphasizing reading and technology arts).
- Demonstrate creative, cross-curricular technology arts connections with a focus on the acquisition of 21st century skills throughout every aspect of the school.
- Present a vibrant showcase of completed projects involving both arts and technology, with students maintaining personal portfolios of selected projects they've completed.
- Recruit qualified, motivated, certified and innovative teachers and facilitate ongoing staff professional development.
- Achieve academic success (overall average) that exceeds state and local district averages, while striving for 100% success in achieving adequate yearly progress as measured through State standardized tests.
- Ensure each student and their family has access to the progress being made in achieving their academic goals including whether or not the student is reading at grade level and whether he or she has gained a year's worth of learning over the given school year.
- Prescribe an action plan for any student whose performance falls below their grade-level benchmarks with particular attention on the action plans for low-performing students and reading.
- Provide every staff member, student, parent and community volunteer with an opportunity to apply their talents, abilities and gifts in service to the community and the school.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility through a successful annual audit and ensure financial stability from which to continue to build on, evidenced by a strategic financial plan, an emergency contingency plan and an ongoing fundraising and grant writing provision.
- Develop and maintain community connections designed to enhance the school, the learning experience and the well being of our community.
- Ensure all students participate in some form of physical exercise on a daily basis (in a group, organized environment as well as on an informal, individualized basis).
- Articulate our commitment to good stewardship of our planet and our community resources.
- Evaluate our charter and strategic plan annually to ensure we are adhering to the provisions of our charter and on track to meet and exceed the goals we've set for ourselves.

Gardens SOTA School Calendar 2017-2018

Holidays when school is closed for both teachers and students:

September 5	Monday	Labor Day
October 3	Monday	Fall Holiday
October 12	Wednesday	Fall Holiday
November 11	Friday	Veteran's Day
November 23-25	Wednesday-Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 26-January 6	Monday-Friday (2 weeks)	Winter Break
January 16	Monday	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
March 20-24	Monday-Friday	Spring Break
April 14	Friday	Spring Holiday
May 29	Monday	Memorial Day

Dates when there is no school due to teacher planning days:

October 21	Friday
November 8	Tuesday
December 23	Friday
January 26-27	Thursday-Friday
February 20	Monday
March 17	Friday

Early Release Days

June 1	Friday	11:30 a.m. dismissal
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Note: No lunch period on Early Release Days. Afterschool Program begins at 11:30 am for students registered for regular Afterschool attendance, and these students must bring a packed lunch.

School Hours

Early Care Drop-Off: Students must be registered for Early Care	7:00-8:15 am
Regular Drop-Off: School doors will open at 8:15 am	8:15-8:30 am
School Start Time: All students must be arrive by 8:30 am	8:30 am
Daily Dismissal	3:15-3:35 pm
Afterschool Care: Students must be registered for Afterschool Care to attend	3:15-6:00 pm

The school schedule is subject to change. Special event dates and times, meetings, field trips and other dates will be scheduled and communicated via email and on the school calendar at www.mysota.net throughout the year.

School Board, PTO, School Advisory Council Meeting Dates

Individual meeting dates are posted on the school website calendar.

Gardens SOTA Governing Board

We are grateful for the leadership and guidance of our Gardens SOTA Governing Board members:

- Debra Moore, President – debra.moore@mysota.net
- David Reyes, Vice President – david.reyes@mysota.net
- Gerald Hoening, Treasurer – gerald.hoenings@mysota.net
- Lisa Cole, Secretary and Parent Liaison – lisa.cole@mysota.net
- Jon Andio, Member – jon.andio@mysota.net
- Christine Farley, Member – christine.farley@mysota.net

Board Members may be contacted by email as above, by telephone message at **561-290-7661** with a return number, or by written mail to the school’s address to the attention of the specific Board Member. The school’s mailing address is: **9153 Roan Lane, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33403.**

Please follow the sequence of steps outlined in the Grievance Procedure (see alphabetic section of this Handbook) when contacting Board Members regarding a school grievance.

Gardens SOTA Administration

Our administration team includes:

- Dr. Kevin Kovacs, Principal (Director of Academics) – kevin.kovacs@mysota.net
- Mrs. Jeanne Benz, Director of Operations – jeanne.benz@mysota.net

For a current list of school staff and faculty along with contact emails and bios, visit the school website.

Student Assessment Data and School Performance

This information is provided in compliance with FL Statute Sec. 1002.33(21)(b)(2).

*As posted to the FLDOE annual accountability report at: <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>

2016-17 School Grades
 Legend for School Types: 01=Elementary; 02=Middle; 03=High; 04=Combination
 Additional info available in School Grades calculations guide at <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>.

District Number	District Name	School Number	School Name	ELA Achievement	ELA Learning Gains	ELA Learning Gains Lowest 25%	Math Achievement	Math Learning Gains	Math Learning Gains Lowest 25%	Science Achievement	Social Studies Achievement	Middle School Acceleration	Total Points Earned	Total Components	% Total Possible Points	Grade 2017	Grade 2016	Baseline Grade 2015	Grade 2014	Grade 2013	Grade 2012	Collocated, rule used?	Charter School	Title I	AL/ESSE Center School	School Type	% Minority	% Economically Disadvantaged	Region
50	PALM BEACH	3961	GARDENS SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY ARTS INC	65	69	60	52	61	68	56	100	64	595	9	66	99	A	C	A	C	C	N	YES	NO	N	04	62.4	58.1	3

The balance of the content of this handbook has been organized alphabetically.

After School Care (ASC)

The After School Care (ASC) program is a service we provide to our students for a fee. The ASC program begins at school dismissal and runs until 6:00 p.m. Students are provided a snack and a drink. Time is designated each day for students to begin homework, enrichment learning or reading. ASC staff may assist with homework but are not responsible for completion or review of your student’s work. Other

program activities may include outdoor time, sports, creative projects, computer tech time, movie days, and a variety of structured activities. ASC registration and payment information is posted on the school website.

Arrival

Regular drop off begins at 8:00 am and ALL students must be present in homeroom at 8:30 am. Students arriving in homeroom after 8:30 will be marked late.

All students must use the car line at drop off. The school office opens at 8:00 am and there **is no supervision before 8:00 am** for students **not** enrolled in Before School Care.

Attendance Policy

As students of a choice school, Gardens SOTA students are expected to arrive on time daily with all necessary materials for school and attend all of their scheduled classes. Frequent late arrival or early pickup and/or excessive absences (excused or unexcused) are not acceptable.

A student is tardy when he/she is not in homeroom at 8:30 am. Students should arrive prior to 8:30 am to allow sufficient time to walk to class. **Students arriving late must be signed in by a parent.**

Habitual or excessive tardiness and absence is a violation of the school's code of conduct. Students with weekly late arrivals, weekly early pickups, or absences (excused or unexcused) in excess of 12 days per semester are in violation of the Attendance Policy may be dismissed from Gardens SOTA.

Parents are responsible for communicating to the school office as well as to the student's teachers when a student is absent. The student will be responsible to complete assignments missed during the absence. Parents must provide a doctor's note if a student arrives late or leaves early due to a medical appointment.

A student attending school less than four (4) hours in a day will be marked absent. Students leaving early must be signed out by a parent or authorized adult at the school office. Parents will not be allowed to pick up their child directly from the classroom. There will be no early release after 3:00 pm.

Before School Care (BSC)

Before School Care (BSC) is a service provided to our students for a fee. BSC runs from 7:00-8:15 am on school days. Students must be signed in by a parent. Breakfast will be available from 7:00-8:00 am. No student will be permitted to enter BSC prior to 7:00 a.m.

Birthday Celebrations

Students are welcome to celebrate their birthday at school if arrangements are made **in advance** with the classroom teacher. Pre-packaged, modestly-sized snacks (cupcakes, cookies, treats) may be brought to school to share with the students in your child's homeroom. If there are any student food allergies within the class, please take that into consideration with your snack choice. No party bags, balloons or decorations are permitted. Siblings in other classes may not attend these celebrations as it would disrupt the sibling's learning time.

Bullying

Gardens SOTA takes bullying seriously and adheres to the Palm Beach County School District policies, which can be referred to at <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/policies/> Chapter 5 for detailed information. In 2009, the State of Florida enacted the Jeffrey Johnston Stand Up For All Students Act, which called for districts to enact anti-bullying policies that prohibited face-to-face mistreatment, as well as cyber-bullying and cyber-stalking (the use of technology to harass and bully.)

Unacceptable Behavior – Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress in person-to-person encounters and/or by means of electronic communication or technological devices on one or more students or school employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to: teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious, or racial/ethnic harassment, public humiliation, damaging or destruction of property, placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property, cyber-bullying, and cyber-stalking.

Action steps your child should take if he/she is being bullied (advise your child):

- You can empower your child by listening to and validating his/her feelings, by acknowledging that the harm he/she experienced is not right, and that he/she needs to get help in order to stop the mistreatment.
- Please do not encourage your child to fight or retaliate. Counter-aggression rarely works and often escalates the problem.
- Instead, encourage self-reporting, discuss the distinct difference between “tattling” (snitching, ratting, giving up, “narcing”) and “telling/reporting” with your child. Explain that “tattling” is when a person intentionally tries to get another student in trouble for something minor. “Telling” is completely different because it means informing an adult of the harmful, immoral, unethical, dangerous, destructive, hateful or threatening behavior that has hurt the individual or someone else. If telling adults seems hard for your child, encourage him/her to ask a friend to accompany him/her to a faculty member to report the issue.
- Help your child strengthen his/her assertiveness skills.
- If your child is able to write, encourage him/her to file a Bullying/Harassment Incident Report located in the front office or complete a Bullying/Harassment Anonymous Drop-Box Report and file it in the drop boxes placed at various locations on the campus.
- In the short run, encourage your child to walk with friends whenever possible.
- If your child is being bullied online or by text messaging, encourage him/her not to retaliate or reply, but rather to report the activity to school personnel.
- Encourage your child to join clubs or take part in activities where she/he can meet and/or make new friends.

If your child is engaging in bullying behavior:

- Make it clear that you take bullying seriously and you will not tolerate this behavior.
- Develop clear and consistent rules within your family for your child’s behavior.

- Spend more time with your child and carefully monitor his/her behavior.
- Build on your child's talents by encouraging him or her to get involved in pro-social activities.
- Talk with your child's teacher or administrator to approach this behavior as a team.
- If your child needs additional help, talk with a counselor or mental health professional.

What you should do if your child is bullied:

- Most importantly, focus on your child. Listen, be supportive and gather information and the facts related to the incident.
- Stay calm and report the incident(s) to your child's teacher or one of the school's administrators. Document all incidents of mistreatment, abuse, cruelty, and/or disrespectful acts toward your child and or perpetrated by your child.
- Complete and/or encourage your child to file a Bullying/Harassment Incident Report from the front office and/or the Bullying/Harassment Anonymous Drop Box Report placed throughout the school. Reporting is not tattling when the intention is to alert teacher and/or administration of any harmful acts of mistreatment toward your child or others.
- Request that you be informed or schedule a follow up conference to discuss findings and determine actions to monitor and support all students involved, as well as to deter continued and/or escalation of incidents.
- Seek resources to assist you in strengthening your child's resiliency toward harm.

Cafeteria Meals: Breakfast and Lunch accommodations

Breakfast will be available in the cafeteria from 7:00-8:10 am for students registered for Before School Care (BSC), and from 7:50-8:10 for students not registered in BSC.

For lunch, students have the option of bringing a packed lunch or purchasing lunch in the cafeteria. Menu selections are posted on the school website. Lunch orders are taken in homeroom every morning. Orders are submitted to our food service provider by 9:00 a.m. If a student arrives at school after 9:00 a.m., he/she must have a packed lunch.

If a student arrives at cafeteria without a lunch and did not order lunch in homeroom, the student will be given a meal selection if one is available, or the parent will be called to bring a lunch. The student's account will be charged for lunches provided to students.

Please keep a positive balance in your child's lunch account. Payments for lunch should be submitted to the school office, either cash or check (payable to Food Service). Please note: There is a \$25.00 fee for returned checks, and cash payment may be required for the remainder of the school year.

Food Choices & Lunch Boxes

Since we promote healthy eating habits, please do not send sodas or candy in your child's lunch. Students will not be allowed to 'share' or trade lunch food, due to various food allergies. Lunch boxes from home should include an adequate mid-day meal and a drink. Do not pack lunches that require microwave heating, and please provide necessary utensils and condiments in your child's lunch box.

All families should complete the online Meal Applications for Free/Reduced Lunch. Please visit <https://www.palmbeachschools.org/sfs/> to complete the application. If you require assistance, please see the school office. **Parents are responsible for providing lunch or paying for lunch until the application is approved.**

Cafeteria guidelines reflect our school's code of conduct and are set for school safety regulations. All students are expected to follow all cafeteria procedures and demonstrate appropriate student behavior during their lunch periods. Parent Volunteer Hours during breakfast and lunch will be welcome.

Clubs

Enrichment programs are provided in addition to the regular After School Care Program. It is not a prerequisite to be enrolled full time in After School Care to participate in enrichment. These programs will include extra-curricular activities, clubs, and athletic/team sports. Students will have opportunities to participate in our enrichment programs throughout the year, and we encourage parents and community members to participate in supporting and leading the afterschool programs. The enrichment/club schedule and fees will be provided to the parents as activities become available.

Communication

Communication is absolutely essential to school success. Our administration and staff seek to facilitate open and frequent communication with parents at all times.

Classroom teachers may utilize a homework and communication folder and/or online communication tools such as Jupiter Ed. Parents will have access to their child's grades by logging into Jupiter Ed. Student work and progress reports will be sent home as needed. The parent/guardian may be asked to sign and return this information, so please check your child's folders and backpack daily in addition to checking email and Jupiter Ed.

School administrators are always available to speak with parents. However, we encourage parents to speak with your child's teacher first for classroom issues. At no time is it appropriate for a teacher to meet with parents while other students are present, including during arrival or dismissal; conferences must be scheduled ahead of time. Direct communication to your child's teachers during school hours may be made through their school email addresses or by leaving a message with the school office.

Online/Internet Based Communication

As a technology-based school, Gardens SOTA requires each family to have a current, working email address for all school communication and access to the internet for web-based information and homework assignments. This requirement supports the school mission in preparing our students for success in the 21st century. In our efforts to become a 'green' and paperless school, much communication as well as student work will be accessible only by email, school website, or internet.

If you do not have an email address, please create one with a free provider such as google or yahoo. If you do not have access to the internet, a designated computer station for parent use will be available

during designated hours. Please check your email, Jupiter Ed online, and your child's backpack frequently for time-sensitive notices and progress information.

Conduct (Student Code of Conduct)

As students of a charter school of choice, Gardens SOTA students are held to the highest standard of exemplary behavior. Students must demonstrate respect, honesty, diligence, sincerity and proactivity in their approach to relationships and academic studies. Every student is expected to self-manage and facilitate effective teaching, learning, and functioning in the school community and in all school-related activities both on and off campus. High standards of student conduct are required so all students may enjoy an environment conducive to exploring, discovering, and creating.

Our Student Code of Conduct aligns with the Palm Beach County School District (PBCSD) Student Code of Conduct, available at www.palmbeachschools.org or in the school office. In addition to the expectations articulated in the PBCSD Student Code of Conduct, Gardens SOTA students are held to the following expectations:

1. Students shall respect the authority of school personnel, including but is not limited to administration, teachers, staff, substitutes, and adult volunteers.
2. Students shall maintain attentive, cooperative behavior in the classroom. Disruptive behaviors (excessive talking, lack of attention, noisemaking, unnecessary requests, off-topic comments), and flippant or argumentative attitudes are prohibited.
3. Malicious or negligent destruction of school property shall result in the replacement, repair or payment for damages by either the student or his/her parents.
4. Pictures or slogans referring to substance abuse, drug culture, alcohol, gangs or racism; or any profane, abusive, obscene or hateful language is prohibited on student clothing, accessories, notebooks, materials or any other paraphernalia.
5. Aggression or intimidation of any kind, physical or verbal, demonstrated toward any other student or school personnel is strictly prohibited and is grounds for dismissal from Gardens SOTA.
6. Frustrated reactions that involve hitting, biting, punching, slapping, kicking etc. any other student or school personnel, or other actions that endanger the safety and wellbeing of any other student or school personnel, will not be tolerated and may result in suspension. Repeated actions of this nature may result in dismissal from Gardens SOTA.
7. Personal cell phones/devices must be turned off unless permitted by a teacher during designed activities for academic purposes. Students should not call or text any individual from their personal devices during school hours. Students must ask to use the school office phone to contact a parent for illness or other necessities. Violation will result in confiscation of the student's device, to be returned only to a parent.

By contrast, the following positive and responsible behaviors are expected of all Gardens SOTA Students:

1. Communicating with honesty and integrity, being trustworthy in all academic and social matters, and establishing a personal reputation worthy of trust.
2. Taking responsibility for personal actions and reactions throughout the school day.

3. Giving best effort in relation to classroom studies, creative technology projects, homework, assessments and all aspects of education.
4. Treating fellow students and all school personnel with dignity, empathy and sincerity.
5. Supporting fellow students in their academic efforts and seeking to assist and encourage whenever possible.
6. Using words, actions and body language to communicate respect and consideration for others.
7. Keeping the learning environment and school grounds clean/organized and properly managing the use of school materials and devices.
8. Committing the time and energy necessary to reach goals of excellence.

Discipline Procedures:

All incidents of student misconduct shall be appropriately documented. Gardens SOTA references the discipline matrix incidents and actions of the Palm Beach County School District in addressing student behavior and determining disciplinary action. Due to the high level of accountability expected of our students related to their conduct, a higher level of consequence than that listed in the PBCSD discipline matrix may be applied. The Discipline Matrix is included in the PBCSD Student Code of Conduct, available at www.palmbeachschools.org in the school office.

Dismissal Policy

The intent of this policy is to ensure a safe, orderly and peaceful educational environment for the student population of Gardens School of Technology Arts. The policy shall apply to all activities occurring on school grounds, on other sites being used for school activities, and in any vehicle authorized for the transportation of students. This policy shall apply to all school authorized and school sponsored functions, including, but not limited to, field trips, athletic events and club activities.

1. A student shall be subject to dismissal (a) if the student commits a Level Three or Four offense as such is defined in the School District of Palm Beach County Student and Family Handbook (the "Handbook"), or (b) if the student commits repeated and chronic Level Two offenses as defined in the Handbook. Written documentation of violations shall be maintained in the student's file and may be used, among other things, as the basis for a dismissal.
2. Upon determining that grounds for dismissal exist with regard to a particular student, the principal shall notify, in writing, the student and the student's parent/guardian of the consideration for dismissal, and the student's right to due process, including a hearing on the grounds for the dismissal (the "Dismissal Hearing"). Such notice shall state that the student has a right to a hearing with the principal.
3. The Dismissal Hearing shall take place within three (3) days of notification of the parent/guardian. The student shall remain in the school until the Dismissal Hearing occurs, unless the presence of the student in the school presents a danger to the health, safety or welfare of the students and employees of the school. In that case, the student may be suspended until the Dismissal Hearing has occurred.
4. Based on evidence presented at the Dismissal Hearing, the school principal may dismiss the student immediately. A dismissal letter shall be provided to the parent (or student, if applicable) within 24 hours after the Dismissal Hearing. If a student waives his/her right to a Dismissal

Hearing, the principal shall determine if the student is formally dismissed from the Charter School, and shall provide written notice of that decision. Such dismissal shall be effectively immediately.

5. The decision of the school principal may be appealed to the school's Board of Directors (the "Board"). A student shall make a written demand to the President of the Board requesting that the Board review the evidence presented at the Dismissal Hearing and either reverse or affirm the student's dismissal. The appellate hearing with the Board shall be private unless the parent/guardian wishes to elect to hold a public meeting under Florida Statutes §286.011. Once dismissed, a student is not precluded from enrolling at a different public school unless the student has been expelled from all Palm Beach County Public Schools.
6. All notices required under this policy shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested or hand delivered.
7. All references to the "principal" shall mean the Charter School Director of Academics or his/her designated representative.
8. This Dismissal Policy shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions mandated in the Resolution Agreement.

Dress Code

A high standard of dress encourages respect for individuals in the school community. The GSOTA dress code guidelines are in force on all regular school days. Positive benefits of uniforms include:

- Uniforms encourage students to express their individuality through academic achievements, not outward appearances.
- Uniforms put the focus on academics, not fashion.
- Uniforms minimize the visible socio-economic differences between children.
- Uniforms create a sense of school pride and belonging.

Uniform Shirt Options

Polo with Embroidered School Logo – purchased only at Harris School Uniforms

4152 Blue Heron Blvd. W. #118, Riviera Beach, FL 33404

Orders may be placed online at www.harrisschooluniforms.com

- Primary/Grades K, 1, 2 – Royal Blue or White polo shirt
- Intermediate/Grades 3, 4, 5 – Teal or White polo shirt
- Middle School/Grade 6, 7, 8 – Black or White polo shirt

Dri-Fit T-shirt – purchased at GSOTA

- Primary/Grades K, 1, 2 – Royal Blue, Gray or White t-shirt
- Intermediate/Grades 3, 4, 5 – Lime, Gray or White t-shirt
- Middle School/Grade 6, 7, 8 – Black, Gray or White t-shirt

Uniform Bottoms – May be purchased at any retail store

- Boys – Traditional uniform shorts or pants in khaki, navy, black; four pockets or less; neatly tailored style. **No cargos, denim, athletic/sports styles or sweats.**
- Girls – Traditional uniform shorts, skorts or pants in khaki, navy, black. Shorts or skorts length near the knee. **No denim, yoga pants, leggings, athletic/sports styles or sweats.**

Socks/Shoes

Closed-toed, closed-heel shoes worn with socks. No crocs, sandals, roller skate shoes, military or boot style footwear.

Accessories

No fashion extremes in clothing, jewelry, makeup or hairstyles that are distracting. Conservative jewelry and hair accessories are permitted. Hats and bandanas are not permitted.

Cool/Cold Weather Clothing

- A white or black long-sleeved t-shirt shirt may be worn under the uniform shirt.
- A solid color, buttoned or zippered sweater or jacket may be worn in the classroom.
- Students may purchase a monogrammed hoodie from Harris School Uniforms or GSOTA.
- Students may wear appropriate jackets, hats, scarves for outdoor activities in cold weather.

Dress Down Days

Clothing on approved dress down days must conform to the standards of modesty and appropriateness reflected in the school uniform. Students may not wear clothing with offensive images or text, immodest cuts or fits, spaghetti straps or other attire deemed inappropriate by the administration.

Uniform Violations

School administrators will determine if clothing is appropriate for school and complies with the dress code. If a student comes to school out of uniform (or dressed inappropriately on dress down days), the parent will be called to immediately bring the student an appropriate change of clothing. Habitual or excessive violations of the dress code will result in additional consequences.

Exemptions

Exceptions to the Dress Code shall be permitted when:

- A student’s parent requests a reasonable accommodation to address the student’s disability or medical condition. Such request shall be provided in writing and submitted to the Director for approval; or
- The wearing of clothing in compliance with the Dress Code violates a student’s sincerely held religious belief. Such students and the student’s parents shall submit a signed affidavit setting forth the religious issues and the requested exemption to the policy; or
- A parent/guardian notifies the Director in writing that the student’s failure to wear clothing that complies with the Dress Code is due to financial hardship. The school shall offer assistance to students who are having difficulty complying with the Dress Code due to financial hardship.

Emergency Evacuation

Your child's safety is paramount, and we hold regular fire drills, lockdowns and extreme weather procedures drills to plan for emergencies. Under extreme circumstances, should we need to evacuate the building, the local police will assist in determining the location the students would be held. For information during such an emergency you may contact 561-290-7661 or the school website.

Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The revised Family Rights and Privacy Act became a Federal law in November 1974. The intent of this law is to protect the accuracy and privacy of student educational records. Without your prior consent, only you and authorized individuals having legitimate educational interests will have access to your child's educational records. In special instances, you may waive this right of access to allow other agencies working with your child to have access to those records.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned throughout the school year to enhance student learning and provide students with community experiences. Participation on field trips is a **privilege**. Students serve as representatives of the school; therefore, they may be excluded from participation in any trip for reasons relating to conduct or attendance. Students with fees owed to the school for Before Care Program/After School Care Program, NSF checks, etc. may not be permitted to attend field trips until these fees are paid.

Written parental permission must be submitted for a student to participate and attend a field trip. Signed permission slips and any field trip fees must be submitted on time, according to the teacher's instructions, prior to the field trip, or the student may not be permitted to take part. Field trips fees are non-refundable. Students will be advised if there are specific dress code requirements for each field trip.

Parent volunteers and chaperones may be requested by the teacher for school field trips. **All parents and volunteers must be cleared through the screening process in the school office 2 weeks prior to the field trip date.** Parents may not bring siblings or other children with them on school-sponsored field trips. The Guidelines for Chaperones form must be signed prior to any parent attending a field trip. Parent chaperones are required to adhere to these guidelines.

Grading Procedures

Students and parents will have regular access to progress and grades through Jupiter Ed. Conduct "grades" will be based on attitude, cooperation, citizenship, etc. and will be reported separately from the regular subject grade.

Governing Board Meetings (Placing Items on the Agenda)

The school's Governing Board meetings are open to attendance by any member of the general public. As stated in the school's ByLaws, the parent or legal guardian of any child enrolled in the school, a teacher or any member of the public with an issue for Governing Board consideration may ask to be included in the meeting agenda by submitting a written and signed request to any member of the Board of Directors. Written requests must be received by 1:00 pm on the last business day preceding the scheduled meeting date in order to be considered for inclusion in the agenda.

Governing Board Meeting schedule for 2017-2018:

- July – No Meeting
- Monday, Aug 7, 2017, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Sep 11, 2017, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Oct 9, 2017, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Nov 13, 2017, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Dec 11, 2017, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Jan 8, 2018, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Feb 12, 2018, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Mar 12, 2018, 6:00 PM
- Monday, Apr 9, 2018, 6:00 PM
- Monday, May 14, 2018, 6:00 PM
- Monday, June 11, 2018, 6:00 PM

Changes to the meeting dates and times along with draft agendas will be posted to the school website calendar. Quarterly meeting minutes will be posted to the website in compliance with current Florida State Statute. Unless otherwise noted, board meetings are held at Gardens School of Technology Arts, 9153 Roan Lane, PBG, 33403.

Grievance Procedure

Most parental concerns can be addressed through open communication. If a parent or student has a grievance or complaint, please adhere to the following:

1. Carefully analyze the problem and be sure you have ALL the facts.
2. Ascertain that you have a rational attitude about the problem.
3. Seek to resolve the problem with the teacher, if applicable.
4. If you believe the problem is not resolved, request a meeting with administration.
5. If still unresolved, the parent should contact the designated Gardens SOTA Governing Board Parent Liaison.
6. If the matter is still unresolved, the Governing Board Parent Liaison may request a written request from the parent, who will then present the appeal to a review team that will include, but not be limited to a teacher, the Governing Board designee and a parent.
7. If still unresolved, the Governing Board designee or the parent may request the matter be presented to the full Governing Board. (See “Placing Items on the Board Agenda”) The Board will not consider or re-hear the case, but simply determine if the appropriate procedure and policy was adhered to prior to rendering a decision.
8. The Governing Board’s response will be considered final.
9. At any point in the process, the school may inform the Palm Beach Charter School Department.

As a charter school, Gardens SOTA is a ‘choice school’, meaning that parents send their students to the school by choice. Parents that do not adhere to the above procedure or seek to circumvent this process are demonstrating that Gardens SOTA may not be the right choice for them and their child and may lose the privilege of automatic re-enrollment.

Gardens SOTA Parent Liaison for 2017-2018 is Jennifer Ciampi who may be contacted directly by email at jennifer.ciampi@mysota.net or by calling 561-290-7661.

In accordance with Florida Statute, s. 1002.33(7)(d)(1), F.S.

1. Each charter school's governing board must appoint a representative to facilitate parental involvement, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes. The representative must reside in the school district in which the charter school is located and may be a governing board member, charter school employee, or individual contracted to represent the governing board. If the governing board oversees multiple charter schools, in the same school district, the governing board must appoint a separate individual representative for each charter school in the district. The representative's contact information must be provided annually in writing to parents and posted prominently on the charter school's website, if a website is maintained by the school. The sponsor may not require that governing board members reside in the school district in which the charter school is located if the charter school complies with this paragraph.

2. Each charter school's governing board must hold at least two public meetings per school year in the school district. The meetings must be noticed, open, and accessible to the public, and attendees must be provided an opportunity to receive information and provide input regarding the charter school's operations. The appointed representative and charter school principal or director, or his or her equivalent, must be physically present at each meeting.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to develop study habits for students early on in their academic career. It is also used to reinforce concepts that have been taught or to work on projects that have been assigned. A child who does not complete work in class may have to complete classwork in addition to homework, and the student's grades may be affected.

Much of the homework for Gardens SOTA is to be completed online, and it is important that students have access to a device with an internet connection to complete homework. Submitting completed work is the student's responsibility. Assignments will not be accepted at the office from parents.

Parents are to ensure that homework is completed and all communication has been seen daily. Parents may help in the following ways:

- Show an interest in your child's work.
- Provide a place and time for quiet study.
- Assist in practicing with spelling words and number combinations.
- Encourage home reading and listen to your child read.
- Review the homework for neatness and completeness.
- Refrain from doing the work for your child.
- Discuss problems related to home study with your child's teacher.

Students will not be permitted to return to a classroom after daily dismissal to get homework assignments and projects (this includes the students participating in the After School Care program).

Hallway Behavior

Appropriate hallway behavior is expected at all times. Students will transition and travel through the hallways quietly and respectfully to avoid interrupting ongoing classes. For safety reasons, students are to walk in line as directed, keeping hands, feet and other objects off the corridor walls, quiet voices, no horseplay, and no loitering. Students are not permitted to show public displays of affection.

Honor Role & Awards

Gardens SOTA has set high expectations for our students. It is our goal to have all students reach their full potential and give their maximum effort. Our role includes helping them reach beyond what they believe or realize they are capable of achieving. We look forward to acknowledging the achievements of our student body with Honor Roll Assemblies for grades 3-8 at the end of each grading period, as well as Year End Award Assemblies.

Injury or Accident

An incident/accident report will be completed and filed for everyday accidents and minor injuries. The procedures listed below will be followed for an injured student:

1. Upon teacher discretion, the student will be escorted to the office for first aid treatment minor accidents and injuries. Teachers will notify the office if the student is unable to be moved.
2. School personnel will administer basic first aid. An accident report will be sent home.
3. Depending on the severity of the injury, a parent may be called and the injury described. An injury to the head requires the student to be picked up by the parent. Emergency contact persons will be called if parent cannot be reached.
4. Emergency personnel will be called for critical injuries that require medical or emergency care that school personnel is not authorized to administer, and the parent or emergency contact will be notified immediately.

Instructional Books, Technology Devices, Equipment, Materials and Supplies

Instructional materials are costly and all students are responsible for the proper care and use of the materials they are given. Unless otherwise directed, students must not write in textbooks. Charges will be made for damaged or lost books, technology devices and equipment and/or school materials. Upon transfer, students must return all books, equipment and materials, and all student accounts must be paid in full.

Classroom supply lists are distributed to families each summer and all items are to be brought in prior to starting school. Additional supplies or donations may be requested during the school year. Elementary Parents are asked to give a \$50 for Annual Technology/Projects Donation. Middle School Parents are asked to give an \$80 for Annual Technology/Projects Donation.

Lice

Head lice are an extremely contagious condition of the hair and scalp. Students may be checked periodically for head lice and will be sent home immediately if school personnel suspect lice or lice eggs (nits) are present on the students head/hair. Such students MAY NOT return to school until treatment has been administered and all nits have been removed from the hair. Upon returning to school, the

student will be checked to determine if any nits are still present before admission to class. For hard-to-control, recurring cases of head lice, parents/guardians will be asked to contact a physician or lice removal specialist. To prevent an outbreak of head lice, parents are asked to examine the hair of their children regularly.

Lost and Found

Throughout the school year, items which have been lost will be turned into the school office. **Please label all personal belongings**, including sweaters and hoodies, with the student's name. Students may claim lost and found items through the school office. Unclaimed items will be donated monthly to various charitable institutions. Unlabeled, unclaimed uniform items in good condition will be available for purchase.

Medication

If a student requires prescription medication to be administered during the school day, the parent must obtain a Physician Authorization Form from the pediatrician to bring to the school. The parent must then complete an authorization form permitting the school to administer the medication, which must be in the proper container with the prescription label. If it is necessary that a student take non-prescription medication during school hours, the parent must come to the school to administer the medication. The dispensing of any medication to students by employees of Gardens SOTA without specific written authorization by the physician and parents of the student is prohibited. Additionally, the school does not have a nurse on staff and is not able to provide the services of a school nurse.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is the support organization of parents, teachers, and administrators. We encourage all parents and school families to join the PTO, as annual PTO fees directly support Gardens SOTA and many student programs. A great portion of each child's day is spent at school; therefore, his/her growth and development becomes a shared responsibility between the home and school. Becoming an active member not only supports your child's school program, but will further the goals and healthy growth of the school community as a whole. Attendance to monthly PTO meetings and volunteer hours at PTO events may be counted and logged as required service hours.

PTO officers will be elected annually. The PTO sponsors fundraisers throughout the school year to support various programs. Monies generated by fundraising events also are used to purchase unbudgeted items or special requests from the teaching staff. According to the parent contract, you must participate in a minimum of one school fundraising activity. **If you are interested in serving on the PTO, please contact the school office.**

Parent Volunteer Hours

In keeping with the GSOTA Mission and Vision, we seek to involve families and partner with parents. Taking part in your children's education program is crucial to their success. Therefore, parent volunteer hours are highly encouraged and requested as part of your student's enrollment at GSOTA.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Several volunteer positions are necessary for the school to fill to assure school areas and programs have adult supervision. These are trained volunteer positions where the parent or adult family member has direct contact with the students. Please consider any of these commitments not only to fulfill your annual volunteer hours but to share your talents and support the school community:

Lunch Room – Assist cafeteria staff with lunch distribution and supervision, assist with student needs and transitions.

Classrooms – Assist teachers during specific activities or for special events (must be arranged ahead of time with the classroom teacher).

Events – Work a booth or provide donations toward the annual Trunk or Treat, Spring Fling, Field Day and other school events.

PTO – Join PTO and attend PTO meetings to work with other parents and teachers on initiatives for our school.

Early Morning – Assist students in the early morning childcare program from 7:00-7:45 am.

Afterschool Program – Assist the afterschool staff with homework time, games and activities.

Copy Room – Assist teachers and office staff with photocopies, filing, and office projects.

Car Line Attendant and Student Escort – Assist in afternoon dismissal and the safe transition in parent pick up and car line traffic.

School Facilities Assistance – Assist in cleaning, landscaping, painting and maintenance projects.

Volunteer Clearance

All SOTA parents and volunteers are required to complete a volunteer screening in the school office prior to volunteering on campus or attending school field trips. This requirement assures safety and security for our students. **Please register in the school office by September 1 to ensure clearance.**

Payment of School Account Fees

In order to ensure proper credit is posted to your child's account, please submit all payments in a payment envelope (available in the school office) with all requested information completed on the envelope. Receipts for cash payments must be requested from the school office. If an account is not current, the student may not be able to attend school functions and/or may lose automatic re-enrollment status for the following school year. Returned checks are subject to a \$25 fee. **Payments for food service must be made separately from other school payments, as SOTA sends these funds directly to the School District Food Service Program.**

Personal Property

Please label your child's name on all personal property such as: book bags, lunch boxes, jackets, raincoats, school uniform shirts, etc. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please do not have your child bring toys to school.

Pickup

Student pickup will begin at 3:10 pm on regular days. Students must leave the school grounds immediately after dismissal, unless enrolled in our After School Care program or Enrichment activities. From the dismissal area, children will be escorted either to the After School Care (ASC) program, released for pickup or released to walk or bike ride home. Please avoid calling the front office during dismissal and pickup time (3:10 through 3:45 pm).

Unless serving as a volunteer, parents must remain outside the school building at dismissal time and inside their vehicles. Designated staff, teachers, or school volunteers will escort students to the designated area for pickup. In order to keep the fire lanes free from obstruction and to avoid traffic backups on the school's street, driveway pickup line will not be accessible until 3:00 pm daily. Drivers arriving earlier than 3:00 pm will be asked to park or move to the rear of the line. Students will not be permitted to cross the pickup lines or roadway to enter cars waiting in the parking lot.

Each student will be issued a placard that is to be placed in their pickup vehicle for easy reference. Only individuals listed on the Emergency Contact Form are permitted to pick up students from the school. Valid photo identification may be required of individuals picking up students. A student will **not** be released to any individual who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form or does not provide photo identification. Friends and strangers will be denied access to a student in the absence of verified parental consent.

Parents or guardians should submit to the school office a copy of any legal documents which indicate who has legal access to the child and his/her records during school hours. In the absence of legal documentation, school officials will provide access only to those individuals whose names appear on the student's registration form and emergency contact form.

Students not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$10.00 or more depending on the length of delay, payable at the time of pick up.

If making changes in your child's dismissal plan, please provide written notification in advance or by phone to the school office **by 2:30 pm**.

Examples of changes to child's dismissal plan:

- A biker/walker student going home through parent pick-up or vice versa.
- An After School Care student going home in parent pick-up.
- Students to be picked up by a new individual. (The name and phone number of the individual must be added to the Emergency Contact Form and ID will be required.)

A student is marked 'absent' if he attends school less than four (4) hours in a day. Students leaving early must be signed out by a parent or authorized adult at the school office. Parents will not be allowed to pick up their child directly from the classroom. There will be no early release after 3:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Pursuant to F.S. 1003.44, the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag will be recited at the beginning of each school day. A student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge. Upon written request by his or her parent, the student will be excused from reciting the pledge, including standing and placing the right hand over his or her heart.

Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP)

A PMP is required by the state when a student is not progressing at the appropriate rate in academics and/or behavior. It is designed to help meet a child's individual needs and assist that child in reaching grade level standards.

Students are required to have a PMP if:

- They receive a Level 1 or 2 in reading or math on the FCAT
- Academic grades are a "D" or below
- Behavior is negatively affecting academic achievement

Students with a PMP may be required to participate in intervention classes and/or Summer School programming as assigned by the academic team.

Returned Checks

A \$25.00 returned check fee will be charged to your account for any returned checks. Payment for the returned check must be made in cash or money order. The returned check and \$25.00 fee must be made within 7 days of notification from the school. After two returned checks to the school, a family may be required to pay all future fees and payments by cash or money order only. Students whose families do not submit payment for returned checks may lose privileges of field trips, special events and/or automatic re-enrollment status.

School Advisory Council

The school advisory council (SAC) assists in the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan. SAC will meet several times a year to discuss school wide goals within the School Improvement Plan. Currently the Governing Board acts in the role of the SAC.

Sickness (Illness)

The importance of regular school attendance cannot be over-emphasized; however, students should not be sent to school when they are ill or it is suspected that they have a communicable disease. Your child should not attend school if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 99.6 or higher (Note: the use of fever reducers does not make a child well enough for school)
- Colored nasal discharge or chronic cough
- Flu symptoms such as malaise, achiness, nausea, lethargy, paleness
- Diarrhea twice or more within 24 hours
- Vomiting more than once within 24 hours (or in the morning before school)

- Rash or open sores
- Conjunctivitis, red/pink eye or discharge from the eye
- Throat pain or ear pain

Students who are ill or who are suspected of having a communicable disease should not attend school. For absences of three (3) or more consecutive days, a doctor's note **must** be provided to the school office.

If a student becomes ill during the school day and it appears that he/she would be best cared for at home, the parent will be contacted to pick up. Please expect to pick your sick child up within 30 minutes of being contacted. We are not able to keep sick students in school for extended time or until the end of the school day. In order for a child to return to school, he/she must be free of symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours.

School personnel must be notified of any student's chronic illness (i.e. asthma, diabetes, heart conditions or seizures). This heightens awareness in case of an emergency. Please update Emergency Contact Information whenever changes occur. Students will not be permitted to take calls from parents to see how they are feeling. The school office will contact a parent if there are concerns about a child's health or wellbeing.

Severe Weather Information

Gardens SOTA will carefully monitor reports and decisions issued by the Palm Beach County School District in case of severe weather emergencies and then make an informed decision that will be in the best interest of the students, staff and parent safety. Parents should watch the local news for information about school closings and check for email and website messages from the school.

Student Progression Plan

Gardens SOTA's student progression plan will be aligned with the Palm Beach County School District's Student Progression Plan requirements and procedures for K – 8th grade students. The district's progression plans can be found at the district website, www.palmbeachschools.org.

Students' Rights

Students have the right to feel safe from threats and bodily harm. Disruptive behaviors are never acceptable, and will follow the discipline procedures outlined by Gardens SOTA.

Parents who have a conflict with a student other than their own child and/or another parent are requested to speak to the administration. At no time may parents approach or confront another student or parent of another student directly.

All students and school staff will be treated with respect. Slurs, innuendos, hostile treatment, violence, harassment, misuse of internet (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) or other verbal or physical conduct against a

student or school staff will NOT be tolerated. Police authorities will be contacted when deemed necessary.

Technology Appropriate Use Policy

The Gardens SOTA Technology Use policy reflects the District policy:

1. The purpose of this Policy is to set forth terms and conditions as well as standards and guidelines for the acceptable uses by students of Palm Beach County School District technology resources. This policy does not prohibit or restrict public access to inspect data and information on publically available District technology resources.
2. Student access to District technology resources is authorized exclusively for academic purposes as stated below.
 - a. District technology resources include, but are not limited to, electronic mail, Internet access, electronic records and databases, and computer software and hardware, including biometric record readers. Students may be provided or have access to electronic mail if authorized by the Superintendent/designee for educational or learning purposes.
 - b. Students shall not use any such resource for private business, personal use or gain, and student use must be related to the curriculum, the academic development of the student, or a school extracurricular activity, as defined in Fla. Stat. § 1006.15 (2) and as provided within School Board Policy 5.60.
 - c. Students shall not use District technology resources for hacking, cheating, criminal activity, vandalism, sexting, cyber bullying, circumventing of District proxies or security policies, violating any state or federal laws or School Board policies, or violating third-party providers' acceptable use policies or terms and conditions of use.
 - d. Unless otherwise directed, students will use their district student ID as their technology passcode. Students are required to keep their passcodes confidential, and are not allowed to disclose them to any other persons. The principal and/or teacher may allow for relaxed standards as to passwords for students in lower grades or of younger ages only, or if certain students require a reasonable accommodation based on impaired cognitive or processing ability, or other recognized comprehension deficit, due to disability.
 - e. Students will have a unique user ID, except IT may approve in certain situations a generic user ID. The principal and teacher may request that IT provide shortened or simplified user ids for students in lower grades or of younger ages only, or if certain students require a reasonable accommodation based on impaired cognitive or processing ability, or other recognized comprehension deficit, due to disability.
3. The Superintendent has established the accepted network user standards of behavior, as well as guidelines, which apply to students using District technology resources. These standards and guidelines are found within this Policy and within the District's Information Technology (IT) User Standards and Guidelines Manual. This Manual is located on the District's Information Technology Security web site.
4. When a student uses District technology resources, the student is subject to and is required to abide by the provisions, terms, conditions and standards within this Policy and the Manual as well as other applicable policies.

5. Students using District wireless devices, including but not limited to cell phones, are also subject to the provisions within School Board Policy 5.183.
6. The student registration form, PBSO 0636, which is required to be reviewed, completed and signed by the parent/legal guardian/emancipated student annually, will contain language providing Notice of this Policy and will state:

“NOTICE OF TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS”

Your child's school's access to the Internet is filtered to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act and School Board Policy 8.125. Your child will be required to follow the acceptable use standards and guidelines that are stated in Policy 8.123, the referenced Manual, and the Notice of Conditions for Student Use of District Technology and be bound by their terms. There is only a limited expectation of privacy to the extent required by law related to a student's use of these technology resources. Before your child uses these District resources, he/she will read, be read to, and/or explained these documents and will electronically acknowledge that he/she understands, and agrees to follow, them.

You are invited to read this Policy, Manual and Notice. If you need assistance reading the documents, you may ask the school for assistance. The policy is available at: <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/policies/> under chapter 8—Policy 8.123.”

7. There is only a limited expectation of privacy to the extent required by law for the student related to his/her use of these technology resources. The District may monitor a student's use of District technology for good cause, such as educational purposes, responding to a records request, compliance with School Board policies, compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), to investigate a possible security incident, as part of the District's routine maintenance of its technology resources, or to analyze computer performance. This provision shall be interpreted and implemented in conformance with FERPA (20 U. S.C. § 1232g); 34 C. F.R. Part 99; and Fla. Stat. §§ 1002.22 and 1002.221. Students are advised that many District technology resources, including but not limited to laptops and desktops, may contain input systems such as web cameras and microphones which can be remotely controlled to turn them on and off. The District will not utilize any such input systems remotely unless consistent with the law.
8. As set forth in the Manual, students may use electronic acknowledgements through their District account for certain forms and documents as approved by the Superintendent/designee.
9. Violation of this Policy or the standards required by this Policy may result in disciplinary action as set forth in School Board policies 5.1812 and 5.1813. IT has the authority to take reasonably necessary immediate actions to protect District technology resources.
10. The Superintendent/designee will direct age appropriate training for students who use District technology. The training will be provided and designed to promote the District's commitment to the standards and acceptable use of District technology as set forth in the Manual and this Policy, and student safety and meeting any E-rate requirements by teaching children about safety on the internet, appropriate behavior while on online, on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and increasing cyber bullying awareness and response.

During the training, students will be allowed to ask questions. Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge electronically that he/she viewed the training and understood it and will follow the provisions of the Policy and Manual.

Telephone

The school has a business telephone to help transact the business of the school and the lines must be kept open. Students may not make or receive non-essential personal calls at any time. Student cell phones are not permitted to be used on campus. If cases of accidents, illnesses, or should an emergency arise, school personnel will contact parents or guardian.

Testing and Assessment

As a public charter school, Gardens SOTA is required to participate in Florida State Assessment Test schedule as established by the Palm Beach County School District. Testing information can be found at the district's website www.palmbeachschools.org and will also be communicated to parents throughout the year. In addition to State testing, the school will administer various assessments, including benchmark diagnostic assessments throughout the school year.

Visitors

To avoid disruptions of the normal classroom routine and daily learning, visitors, including parents, are not permitted to enter classrooms and academic learning areas unannounced during school hours. For the safety and protection of students and the school community, all visitors (including parents) must check in at the school office, comply with the visitor sign-in/out procedures and receive permission to enter a classroom or other area of the school facility. All visitors will be required to present valid photo identification upon arrival until a face and identification relationship has been established with the office personnel. Cooperation will enable the school to provide a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

2017-2018 FAMILY CONTRACT

Parents and students choosing enrollment at Gardens SOTA are seeking a unique educational opportunity, a quality environment with high academic and behavioral standards, and a setting in which parents are active partners in their child’s education. Enrolling at Gardens SOTA is a decision of personal choice, by which decision the parent(s) and student agree to the following:

- a. The Parent and Student agree to review and abide by all rules and guidelines in the GSOTA Parent/Student Handbook.
- b. The Student agrees to abide by the Student Code of Conduct at all times and the Parent agrees to hold the Student accountable for such, cooperating with the School in its efforts to maintain high behavioral standards. Violation of the Student Code of Conduct will result in consequences up to and including dismissal from the School.
- c. The Parent shall arrange and provide transportation for the Student to and from School, with the option to participate in a School-coordinated car pool if available.
- d. The Parent and Student agree to abide by the Attendance Policy, ensuring the Student arrives on time daily and attends regularly. Excessive absences and late arrivals shall result in consequences as defined in the GSOTA Parent/Student Handbook.
- e. The Parent and Student agree to support the school’s unique learning model and creative technology initiatives, ensuring that the Student’s engagement level remains high throughout the school year.
- f. The Parent and Student agree to demonstrate respect and courtesy in all dealings with other GSOTA students, all faculty and staff members, administrators and other parents.
- g. The Student agrees to consistently give the highest effort in the learning process, demonstrating diligence and personal responsibility in completing all academic and creative technology assignments and projects.
- h. The Parent and Student agree to support required academic interventions and remedial coursework prescribed for the Student to achieve grade-level progress.
- i. The Parent agrees to remain engaged in the Student’s education, checking the online grading system (Jupiter Ed) regularly, reading all communications from GSOTA, and initiating/attending Parent conferences to review the Student’s academic progress and/or behavior.
- j. The Parent understands that GSOTA communication is primarily electronic and shall provide GSOTA with a dependable email address which the Parent checks regularly.
- k. GSOTA Students often have digital or internet-based assignments and homework, and the Parent agrees to ensure the Student has online access outside of school hours to complete these assignments.
- l. The Parent agrees to support the School by volunteering a minimum of 10 hours per school year to assist with events, field trips, fundraisers and other initiatives of the School.

Student Signature	Student Print Name	Date
Parent Signature	Parent Print Name	Date

Florida Department of Education Opinion from General Counsel specific to Florida Charter Schools states that failure of a parent to uphold or fulfill their responsibilities under [a family contract] would be sufficient grounds for that charter school to deny admission to the child the following year.