



for Dyslexics

Student Handbook 2018-2019

Unlocking the Door of Language

Home of the Stellar Wildcats



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Stellar Academy for Dyslexics

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We proudly employ highly qualified teachers and staff with a desire to see every student reach his/her academic potential.

Head of School

LoriAnn Abrahams

Teaching Staff

All of our teachers have completed intensive post-graduate work in the Slingerland® approach to literacy; they are passionate about what they do.

Our Instructors and Aides provide a variety of highly valuable training and experiences to support our teachers.

Board of Directors

Dale Grant – Founding President

Will Davi – Board President

Peter Kuipers - Treasurer

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Melinda Mawson – Member at Large

Jonathan Allen – Member at Large

Jeff Price – Member at Large

Sampada Chavan – Member at Large

Ken Smith – Member at Large

Welcome to Stellar Academy for Dyslexics

Thank you for choosing to entrust your most precious possession – your child – to our care. In September of 1988, Stellar Academy was born out of a desire to create a success-based learning environment for children with symptoms of dyslexia. Since its inception, Stellar has provided educational experiences to optimize a children’s academic growth.

The purpose of this Handbook is to inform all Stellar families of school policies and procedures. Please read the entire Handbook with your student. Your student will be held to the standards of behavior and academics contained in it.

When you sign the Admission Agreement you are signifying that you have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies contained in this Handbook.

Unlocking the Door of Language –

Stellar Academy exists to ***Unlock the Door of Language*** for children with symptoms of dyslexia in a safe learning environment. Special attention is given to Language Arts through the Slingerland approach -- a sequential, simultaneous multisensory instructional approach to language arts.

Philosophy of Education

- Teamwork - Stellar staff, students’ family members, and area professionals work as a team.
- Race against the clock – Intervene early in the life of a child and return them to regular education as quickly as possible.
- Intense focus - on Language Arts instruction.
- Uniqueness - Identify and develop the strengths of each student.
- Equip each student with strong study skills in all academic areas.

School Policies

Excursions

Volunteer parent drivers are essential to making excursion possible. All drivers must fill out a Parent/Volunteer Driver form.

IEP Meetings

A staff member will attend one IEP meeting per student each year at no cost to the family. As a student is ready to transition out of Stellar Academy, the Head of School will assist the family with a transition plan.

Appearance of Students in News Media Presentations

A parent/guardian who prefers that their student not be photographed or interviewed may write a note to the school to express their preference. School staff and administrators will then make every effort to ensure that this student's photo or name does not appear in the news report. Stellar cannot guarantee that students will not appear in the background of photographs.



Safety

- It is Stellar Academy's goal to create a positive and safe school environment where teachers teach effectively and students reach their academic and personal growth potential.
- To ensure the safety of students and staff and to avoid potential disruptions, all visitors must check in at the school office immediately upon entering the school building.
- To ensure minimum interruption of the instructional program, visits shall be arranged on consultation with the student's teacher and/or the Head of School.
- Classroom visits or conferences will be scheduled within a reasonable time of the parent/guardian request.
- Except for law enforcement personnel, only the parent/guardian or those designated on the emergency card are permitted to contact or take your student from school.
- All students, staff, parents and volunteers have the right to be free from any hate crimes, hazing, and/or degrading and inflammatory statements, which include, but are not limited to abusive, harassing, or insulting behaviors which degrade or stereotype an individual on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, culture, heritage, or gender.
- Stellar does not permit gangs or gang activities, such as but not limited to: initiations, paraphernalia, clothing, writings, tagging, gestures, or any form of gang activity.
- Stellar does not permit the administering of corporal punishment to students.
- Stellar has a hands-off policy between students.
- Stellar students are not permitted to share food.

School Policies

Attendance

Both teachers and parents want students in school every day so that they may achieve their maximum potential. Because student attendance is a top priority, staff carefully monitors attendance and holds students and parents accountable for good attendance.

Absences

It is the responsibility of the student to be in school every day and on time. Illness or doctor appointments are generally the only acceptable excuses for absences. Parents are asked to call the school office before 8AM (510) 797-2227 on each day of their child's absence. If this does not happen, the Office Administrator will call home or work regarding absences that have not been cleared for the day. If your child needs to be released for an appointment, bring a note to the office. If possible, schedule appointments for after 11:00 to avoid missing Slingerland lessons. If a student is late arriving at school, they must check in at the office for a late slip. The late slip must be shown to the teacher when they go to the classroom.

Illness

If a student experiences fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, keep them home and do not send them to school until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes a violation of the California Education Code, Section 212.6 and 48900.2, as well as Federal law, Section 703 of Title VII. As such, sexual harassment may constitute just cause for disciplinary action against pupils committing such an offense. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated of any student by any other student or any employee.

Definition: Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by someone from or in the educational setting (students grades 4-12). The conduct must be considered by the person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

In general, the following conduct is considered sexual harassment:

- sexual assault; physical abuse (unnecessary touching, pinching, or cornering);
- verbal abuse (propositions, lewd comments, or sexual insults); leering, or display of pornographic material designed to embarrass or intimidate; or
- subtle or overt pressure for sexual favors accompanied by an implied or overt threat

Stellar Academy believes all persons, regardless of their gender, should be free from discrimination of any kind, including sexual harassment. All sexual harassment claims should be presented to the Head of School and shall be handled in a confidential manner.

School Discipline

Our Discipline Policy is built on the premise that each student has the right to learn and each teacher has the right to teach. Good behavior by students results in a safe environment with more time devoted to learning.

The School discipline policy is designed to help students focus their energies in positive ways. Any behavior, in which learning, safety, physical or mental health or the well-being of others is disrupted, will have consequences. The following is a partial list of behaviors and possible consequences which may be given. All decisions are at the discretion of the Head of School, except Mandatory Expulsion.

School staff:

- Will fairly and equitably enforce the written policies of the school.
- With reasonable belief that a student has illegal, dangerous or inappropriate objects at school, will require the object to be handed over. If student refuses to hand over the object that student's parent/guardian will be called to remove their child from the school
- May suspend or expel a student for acts that occur at any time while under school jurisdiction, including but not limited to: while on school grounds, during lunch, and during or while going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Some examples of behaviors that may lead to disciplinary action include:

- Failing to obey school personnel
- Causing classroom or recess disturbance or disruption
- Bringing toys to school without administration permission
- Rough play or roughhousing activity
- Behaving in an unsafe manner
- Teasing, name calling, ethnic slurs, bad language, or sexual remarks
- Disturbing other people's property
- Failure to comply with the dress code
- Running (other than on the playground)
- Throwing objects (other than PE balls on the playground)
- Playing aggressive games, keep away, or tag
- Hitting, touching, grabbing, or wrestling
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity

School Discipline

Possible disciplinary consequences for the above behaviors:

- Verbal warning
- Recording the incident
- Conference with Head of School
- Suspension from school
- Loss of privileges such as excursions
- Expulsion from school

Possible Suspension or Expulsion

Examples of behaviors for which a student may be suspended (removed from school for one to five days) or expelled (removed from school permanently):

- Disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid authority of school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties
- Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person
- Possessing a dangerous object
- Possessing any controlled or non-controlled substance, alcohol, or intoxicant
- Committing robbery or damage to school property or private property
- Possessing or using tobacco
- Committing an obscene act or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Possessing any drug paraphernalia

Mandatory Expulsion (removed from school permanently):

Expulsion is mandatory when a student commits one or more of the following while under the school's jurisdiction:

- Offering, arranging, or negotiation to sell any drug paraphernalia
- Selling or otherwise furnishing a firearm, knife, explosive, other dangerous objects, or controlled substance
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery
- Committing or attempting to commit extortion
- Making terrorist threats against school officials or school property or both
- Using a substance in a manner to try and chemically harm an individual
- Using, selling, or otherwise furnishing, or being under the influence of any controlled or non-controlled substance, alcohol, or intoxicant

Dress Code

Students are to dress appropriately at school and all school activities. The purpose of the dress code is to support a learning environment.

- Closed toed shoes are to be worn at all times. Shoes deemed appropriate are to be worn for PE, such as tennis shoes.
- Students are to wear pants that are tight fitting enough at the waist so they don't require a belt.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses are to be no shorter than mid- thigh.
- Undergarments are not to be worn over outer clothing. Undergarments are not to be visible. The torso and buttocks are to be covered completely.
- Off the shoulder, short blouses, shirts which show the torso, stomach or midriff, are not acceptable. Spaghetti strap tops, tube tops, muscle shirts, halter-tops, low-cut tops are not allowed.
- Students may not wear hats indoors. The Head of School may make an exception on specified days.
- Students may not wear any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, or symbol, or other insignia that advocates or encourages the use or abuse of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
- Students may not wear any clothing that expresses or advocates prejudice or discrimination against people based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or national origin, or sexual orientation.
- No wearing gang-related clothing on school premises or at school – sponsored activities as it poses a danger to students and disrupts instruction.
- Sunglasses may be worn only outdoors and only if they have safety glass. They may be worn indoors with a doctor's written medical permission.
- Other inappropriate clothing accessories or body markings, determined by the school administration to be a deterrent to safety or to detract from the educational process are prohibited.
- Chains, spikes on jackets/pants or other potentially dangerous objects may not be worn on school sites.
- No wearing clothing with holes or tears larger than a quarter.
- Students are to be neat and clean.

School administrators have final say on whether clothing is appropriate for school.

Dress Code

Enforcement

The majority of students are in step with the dress code each day. However, when a student arrives at school out of dress code, the following procedure will be followed.

- First time – Office staff will review dress code with student.
- Second time – Office staff will review dress code with student. Student will borrow appropriate clothing from office supply of Stellar logo-wear, if available.
- Third time – Parent will be called to bring appropriate change of clothing so student may return to class.

School administrators have final say on whether clothing is appropriate for school.

Technology

We believe that technology is not only a tool to improve your child's learning while in our school, but also a tool to improve their ability to successfully deal with the future.

- Because access to computers by students and staff is extremely important, any actions that might harm school equipment or software, or impair their effective use will not be tolerated.
- All students are expected to treat school equipment with respect and in accordance with school policies.
- Accessing any files, documents, applications, etc. other than your own without permission from the staff, may result in disciplinary action.
- No programs, applications, files, etc. may be loaded onto the school equipment without permission from the instructor.
- No games are allowed, other than those designed for instructional learning and approved by the staff.
- Students are to leave their assigned computers as they found them.
- Students must contact the teacher concerning any problem with the equipment, or they will be held responsible for any damage caused to the computer.
- Students may bring personally owned iPad to school if a "Personal iPad Use" form has been signed



Technology

Internet Use Agreement

1. Report any misuse of the network to the teacher. Misuse may come in many forms. It is commonly viewed as any communication, sent or received, that indicates or suggests obscene material, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language and other issues described below.
2. Use the internet in support of education and research in keeping with the high academic goals, moral values, and objectives of the school.
3. Use other organizations' networks or resources according to the rules of that organization.
4. Abide by laws of the United States, and state organization, which prohibit transmission of any copyrighted, threatening, obscene material or information protected by trade secret.
5. Show maturity by using the recognized rules of network etiquette. These rules, pertaining to email and other communication include: politeness, using appropriate language, respect for privacy (no personal information, phone, address, etc., or information about other students). Email is not guaranteed to be private.

Cell Phones:

- Students must keep cell phones in their backpacks during school hours, not on their persons. Cell phones may only be turned on before and after school. Staff will confiscate phones if seen during the day and return them to the parents at the end of the day.



Student Responsibilities

- Attend school regularly
- Be punctual
- Show respect to themselves and others
- Be diligent in their studies
- Treat school property and others' private property with respect
- Obey all school and classroom rules while at school
- Follow all directions and directives given by any staff member
- Dress according to the school dress code
- Be actively involved in learning
- Complete classroom work and homework honestly and diligently



Health Services

Medical Assistance at School

The Emergency Card will be used to contact a parent/guardian in the event of a medical emergency. The school may make medical or hospital services available for a student while at or on the way to or from any school activity. It is important to include all information regarding student health needs. A parent/guardian is responsible for updating their student's emergency card as information changes during the school year. This confidential health information will only be shared, at the discretion of the Head of School, with staff members who have a "legitimate education interest".

Authorized Medications:

- When necessary, students may receive medicines during school hours.
- Medicine authorization forms exist to facilitate meeting these needs. A parent/guardian must present written permission for medicines to be provided during school.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide and maintain current (prescription) medications in an original pharmacy labeled container.
- A student is not allowed to have medications (prescription or over-the-counter) in their possession.
- Staff will administer non-prescription medications only when provided by parent/guardian



Allergies at School

There are students who are allergic to certain foods, including nuts (peanuts, walnuts, hazelnuts, etc), and animals. Please help us keep all of our students safe and healthy at school.

- If you have a student who has food allergies, be sure to notify the office and teacher.
- Talk to your student about not sharing or trading their food or lunches with other children.
- When sending food for others to consume, do not send any foods that have nut or nut by-products in them. Read food labels for nuts or nut derivatives.
- Sometimes even plain M&M's, gummy bears, breakfast bars or puddings have nut or nut oils in them.
- Pets (animals) are not allowed at school due to student allergies.