

Tall Pines STEM Academy
Parent & Student Handbook
2022-2023



The strength of the pack is the wolf.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Tall Pines STEM Academy is to provide an option for families where STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is intertwined in the school's culture and prepares middle school students to become the next generation of ethical leaders. Tall Pines STEM Academy will provide a combination of classroom and outdoor learning experiences to engage students, promote wellness and physical fitness, inspire creativity, foster critical thinking and problem solving skills, and cultivate citizenship and leadership skills through rigorous and relevant content and projects in a natural setting.

CONNECT WITH US

Address

82 Camp Long Road
Aiken, SC 29805

Phone Number

(803) 502-1692

Fax Number

(803) 220-2123



tallpinesacademy.com



Tall Pines STEM Academy

2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR

| JULY 2022 | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

JULY 2022

| AUGUST 2022 | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

AUGUST 2022

3-5 Camp Timberwolf
8-12 Professional Learning Days
15 First Day of School

| SEPTEMBER 2022 | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |

SEPTEMBER 2022

5 Holiday
15 Interim Report Card
16 Professional Learning Day

| OCTOBER 2022 | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

OCTOBER 2022

17-21 Holidays
28 Report Cards

END OF GRADING PERIODS

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 1st period | 10/25 |
| 2nd period | 1/20 |
| 3rd period | 3/29 |
| 4th period | 6/8 |

INTERIM REPORTS

| | |
|------------|------|
| 1st period | 9/15 |
| 2nd period | 12/2 |
| 3rd period | 2/27 |
| 4th period | 5/8 |

REPORT CARDS

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 1st period | 10/28 |
| 2nd period | 1/27 |
| 3rd period | 4/12 |
| Final | 6/15 |

IMPORTANT DATES

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| First Day for Students | 8/15 |
| Last Day for Students | 6/8 |

TESTING WINDOWS

The dates for South Carolina standardized tests are to be determined. The dates will be publicized as they are determined by the state.

**Inclment weather days have been replaced with a virtual learning plan.*

| NOVEMBER 2022 | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

NOVEMBER 2022

8 Holiday
21 Professional Learning Day
22-25 Holidays

| DECEMBER 2022 | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

DECEMBER 2022

2 Interim Report Card
19-30 Holidays

| JANUARY 2023 | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

JANUARY 2023

2 Professional Learning Day
16 Holiday
27 Report Cards

| FEBRUARY 2023 | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | | | | |

FEBRUARY 2023

17 Holiday
20 Holiday
27 Interim Report Card

| MARCH 2023 | | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

MARCH 2023

10 Professional Learning Day

| APRIL 2023 | | | | | | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

APRIL 2023

3-7 Holidays
12 Report Cards

| MAY 2023 | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

MAY 2023

8 Interim Report Card
29 Holiday

| JUNE 2023 | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | | | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |

JUNE 2023

6-8 Half Days
8 Last Day of School
9 Professional Learning Day
15 Report Cards

TALL PINES STEM ACADEMY

TALL PINES STEM ACADEMY
82 Camp Long Road
Aiken, South Carolina 29805
TALLPINESACADEMY.COM

STAFF DIRECTORY

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Aycox, Charlene | 5th Grade Math | caycox@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Barton, Lynda | 8th Grade Math, Algebra 1 | lbarton@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Brooks, Hank | Leadership | hbrooks@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Carnahan, Melani | 5th Grade ELA | mcarnahan@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Gore, Brittany | nurse | bgore@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Graham, John | Physical Education | jgraham@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Green, Shannon | 5th Grade Science and Social Studies | sgreen@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Griffin, Stephany | 8th Grade Science | sgriffin@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Kidd, Melissa | 7th Grade Science | mkidd@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Knowles, Aaron | 7th Grade Social Studies | aknowles@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Lambert, Megan | 6th Grade ELA | mlambert@tallpinesacademy.com |

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lee, Ashton | Special Services | alee@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Maclure, Jeremy | 7th Grade ELA | jmaclure@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Martinez, Alondra | 8th Grade Spanish | amartinez@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Mastromonico, Lori | Principal | lmastro@tallpinesacademy.com |
| McClure, Abril | 6th Grade Science | amcclure@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Meesseman, Missy | Special Services | mmeesseman@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Overstreet, Jessica | 8th Grade ELA, English 1 | joverstreet@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Roberts, Barbara | Special Projects Coordinator | broberts@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Simpkins, Lenisha | 7th Grade Math | lsimpkins@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Slack, Chevonne | Reading Coach | cslack@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Spragg, Katie | 5th Grade Writing | kspragg@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Stewart, Tiffany | Leadership | tstewart@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Thomas, Kim | Office Manager | kthomas@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Walters, Leslie | 6th Grade Social Studies and Writing | lwalters@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Weimer, Chrystie | Physical Education | cweimer@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Wooten, JT | 8th Grade Social Studies | jwooten@tallpinesacademy.com |
| Vincent, Kevin | Assistant Principal | kvincent@tallpinesacademy.com |

BELL SCHEDULE

| 5 th Grade | 6 th Grade | 7 th Grade | 8 th Grade |
|--|--|--|--|
| 1st period (Related Arts) 8:00 – 8:45 | 1st period 8:00 - 9:00 | 1st period 8:00 - 9:00 | 1st period 8:00 - 9:00 |
| 2nd period (Related Arts) 8:45 – 9:30 | 2nd period 9:00 - 10:00 | 2nd period 9:00 - 10:00 | 2nd period 9:00 - 10:00 |
| 3rd period 9:30 – 10:30 | 3rd period (Related Arts) 10:00 - 10:45 | 3rd period 10:00 - 11:00 | 3rd period 10:00 - 11:00 |
| LUNCH/RECESS 10:30 - 11:30 | 4th period (Related Arts) 10:45 - 11:30 | LUNCH/RECESS 11:00 - 12:00 | 4th period 11:00 - 12:00 |
| 4th period 11:30 - 12:25 | LUNCH/RECESS 11:30 - 12:30 | 4th period (Related Arts) 12:00 - 12:45 | LUNCH/RECESS 12:00 - 12:55 |
| 5th period 12:25 - 1:20 | 5th period 12:35 - 1:35 | 5th period 12:45 - 1:30 | 5th period 12:55 - 1:55 |
| 2nd Recess 1:20 - 1:40 | 6th period 1:35 - 2:35 | 6th period 1:35 - 2:35 | 6th period (Related Arts) 1:55 - 2:35 |
| 6th period 1:40 - 2:35 | 7th period (Ext.) 2:35 - 3:15 | 7th period (Ext.) 2:35 - 3:15 | 7th period (Related Arts) 2:35 - 3:15 |
| 7th period (Ext.) 2:35 - 3:15 | | | |

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Tall Pines STEM Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Tall Pines STEM Academy Special Programs Coordinator (Missy Meesseman)

82 Camp Long Road Aiken, SC 29805

(803) 502-1692

STUDENT RECORDS

TPSA will treat each student's educational records as confidential. Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records maintained by the school. Parents have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. Schools must have written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a student's educational record. However, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

School officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

REGISTRATION/ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Open enrollment is held beginning in January for students entering school in the fall. Any student currently enrolled in TPSA does not need to apply again. Presently enrolled students will be required to submit a Letter of Intent. Failure to turn in a Letter of Intent will be interpreted as a withdrawal. Open enrollment will be used to enroll students in the upcoming fifth grade class. If more rising fifth graders apply than we have spaces available, a lottery will be held to determine placement. The lottery will be duly publicized and held at an evening meeting open to the public. Available slots in existing student cohorts will be offered to those on the waiting list. New registrations for existing cohorts will be added to the end of the waiting list in the order they are received.

SERVING IDENTIFIED STUDENTS

Students with *Section 504 Plans* will be served according to the accommodations on their 504 plan. Mr. Kevin Vincent (kvincent@tallpinesacademy.com) is our 504 Coordinator.

Students receiving special services through an *IEP* will be served in accordance to their IEP. Mrs. Missy Meesseman (mmeesseman@tallpinesacademy.com) and Mrs. Ashton Lee (alee@tallpinesacademy.com) are our special education teachers.

Students state identified as *gifted and talented* are served at Tall Pines STEM Academy differently based on grade level. Fifth and sixth grade gifted and talented students are grouped based on state identified GT status in science class and challenged with a compacted and accelerated curriculum. Seventh and eighth grade gifted and talented students will be served through honors and high school credit classes. Opportunity to qualify for gifted and talented is offered through the Performance Task Assessment to select students during their 5th grade year. Additionally, students' scores on MAP and SCReady each year may qualify them to be identified as gifted and talented.

SEVENTH AND EIGHT GRADE CLASS OPPORTUNITIES

Seventh grade students will be selected to participate in Honors English and Honors Math based on their GT status, MAP scores, SCReady scores, and end of the year class averages. These seventh grade honors classes are designed to prepare eighth grade students for high school credit courses. Additionally, seventh grade students will take the Fundamentals of Computing part one. This 2022-2023 school year will be the first opportunity for this class. This year's seventh graders will complete the second half of this class in their eight grade year. This class will fulfill the requirement for a high school technology credit. Eighth grade students will be selected to participate in English 1 and Algebra 1 based on MAP scores, SC Ready scores, and end of the year class averages. Eighth grade students will also have the opportunity to take Introduction to Spanish or Spanish 1. Please, be aware that final grades in Fundamentals of Computing, English 1, Algebra 1, and Spanish 1 affect high school GPA. In these classes the workload is more rigorous and faster paced. Students taking Algebra 1 are required to take an End of Course exam from the state that counts as 20% of their final grade in the course.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Generally, TPSA will follow the same inclement weather schedule as the Aiken County Public School District (ACPSD). We reserve the right to dismiss, close, or delay beyond Aiken County's decision if we feel it is the best decision for the safety of our students. An e-mail and/or text message will be sent if school is dismissed, delayed, or canceled. Virtual assignments will be posted in and communicated through Google Classroom.

It is important to update the school with any changes to your contact information so you can be reached!

EMERGENCY DRILLS

South Carolina State Law requires that we conduct fire drills, and they are to be conducted without warning. The drills are very important to help teach students how to react in cases of emergency. Instructions are also given in preparation for tornadoes, earthquakes, or severe weather warnings.

OFFICE HOURS

The main office is open from 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. on regular school days, workdays, and in-service days. After 3:45 p.m. and before 7:45 a.m., callers may leave phone messages, which will be checked upon arrival by office staff.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend school regularly. Parents are responsible for having their children in school. Students must be in school more than half the day (four class periods) to be counted present. Vacations are counted as unexcused absences even if you notify TPSA ahead of time; this policy is from the South Carolina Department of Education.

Any student who fails to bring a valid excuse to school within **three** days automatically receives an unexcused absence. Students must be in school more than half the day to be counted present. State law requires students to miss no more than ten days per year. According to the South Carolina State Board of Education, "a child ages 6 to 17 years meets the definition of a truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences." It is the policy of TPSA that after 3 consecutive unlawful absences, and/or 5 cumulative unlawful absences, an attendance intervention meeting must be held with the parents and TPSA administration. Parents are responsible for having their children in school. The mission of TPSA is to provide engaging learning experiences that are not easily made up individually or at home.

TARDY POLICY

School begins at 8:00 a.m., at which time all students should be **in their classrooms** ready to begin the day. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be accompanied to the office by a parent or guardian. Excessive tardies could result in a meeting with the parents.

EARLY DISMISSALS

A parent or guardian must sign out any student leaving school early. Dismissals during the last 30 minutes of the day should be avoided if at all possible as it becomes a disruption to the class as teachers and students are closing instructional activities for the day. Please plan to have your child dismissed by 2:45 or wait to pick them up in the carline. The school will not dismiss a student into the custody of another individual without verified permission from the parent or guardian.

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

TPSA expects all students to behave appropriately in school, to be responsible and to be accountable for their actions. We expect students to act with respect toward each other and toward all faculty and staff, visitors and guests. Repeated disruptions will be cause for suspension and/or dismissal. TPSA follows a three-strike plan (included in the PACKS behavior plan at the back of the handbook). If a student is referred to the office for a discipline issue the administrator has the right to issue a strike. Three strikes equal possible expulsion from TPSA. Strikes do not carry over to the following academic year. In the fall, all students start with a clean slate.

Behavior that disrupts the learning of others will not be tolerated at TPSA. If behavior off-campus negatively affects student interactions and learning on-campus, then TPSA considers those actions as disruptions, and they will be dealt with accordingly (for example, texts and/or social media posts or other off-campus actions/behaviors).

Students eligible for protections under IDEA and Section 504 are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as their non-disabled peers in accordance with the regulations specified by IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Our students will have the opportunity to take several excursions during the school year. During these excursions, students are expected to have excellent behavior. If a student has had serious disciplinary infractions during the school year prior to one of these trips, the school administration will determine if a student is disqualified from participating based on the student's record of behavior. This also applies to students with excessive outstanding balances.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Tall Pines STEM Academy does not tolerate sexual harassment of any kind. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior that occurs when one person has informal power over the other. This behavior may be verbal, non-verbal or physical.

Examples of Sexual Harassment include:

- Behavior that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's school performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile or abusive school environment
- Sexual innuendos, gestures, and/or comments
- Humor or jokes about sex or females/males in general
- Displays of pictures, calendars, cartoons, or other materials with sexually explicit or graphic content

BULLYING/INTIMIDATION POLICY

TPSA is a bully-free school and exercises a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** regarding any form of bullying and/or intimidation. Bullying may be defined as any gesture, electronic communication, written, verbal or physical act that takes place on school property or at any school-sponsored function that:

1. Will have the effect of harming a student (physically or emotionally) or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property; or
2. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

If a student receives a referral for bullying they will automatically receive a strike. Three strikes equal possible expulsion from TPSA.

WEAPONS

Weapons of any kind, including replicas, are not to be brought to school. Violation of this ordinance may result in suspension or expulsion.

DRESS CODE POLICY

Students should come to school in clean clothes daily. Clothing for males and females should not be too low, high, tight, loose, transparent, or have the potential to distract from learning. Midriff and undergarments should not show, even when the student lifts his/her arms above his/her head. Students should dress for physical activity daily. An example of acceptable dress would be t-shirt, active pants (or shorts of reasonable length) and athletic shoes. If clothing is unacceptable or distracting, parents will be called to bring a change of clothes for the student.

CELL PHONE AND SMARTWATCH POLICY

Students may possess cell phones and smartwatches while at school. However, personal use of cell phones and/or smartwatches is strictly forbidden. Failure to follow this policy will result in the prompt seizure of the device by the teacher. Cell phones should be turned on silent (not vibrate) from 8:00 a.m. to dismissal. Smartwatches will be placed in backpacks during all assessments and should not be used for communication throughout the day. At dismissal, phones can be used to communicate about transportation (with teacher permission), but only for this purpose.

- The first offense of this policy will result in the teacher taking the cell phone and/or smartwatch until the end of the day.
- The second offense of this policy will result in taking the cell phone and/or smartwatch and given to the office staff until a parent can pick up the device.
- The third offense of this policy will result in the loss of privilege to have a cell phone and/or smartwatch on campus and a possible strike.

PBIS

TPSA teachers use this system for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. PBIS helps teachers to document and reward students for practicing our school expectations. These rewards collect as points and can be redeemed at the PBIS store and other school wide events. This schoolwide management system also allows teachers to document problem behaviors helping to communicate student needs between teachers and administrators. Please refer to the behavior plan at the end of this document for more information.

VISITORS

All visitors and parents must obtain a visitor's pass from the office when visiting the school or cafeteria. Be prepared to show your driver's license or picture identification. Parents are asked to set up appointments to talk with teachers in advance. Teachers have responsibilities before school and are ready to begin the day at 7:30

a.m. We welcome notes in the morning, but visits should be scheduled in advance. If a parent has a problem that needs immediate attention, please see an administrator first.

TRANSPORTATION RESPONSIBILITY NOTICE

Parents are responsible for getting their children to school every day and on time. TPSA does not provide transportation for students. Parents are also responsible for transporting students for participation in extracurricular activities at their locally zoned schools.

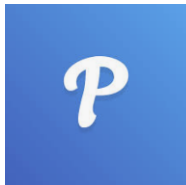
MORNING DROP OFF PROCEDURES

Morning drop off begins at 7:30 a.m., and students may arrive at school between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Please drive through the car loop, and do not drop students off at the front office. No one will be available for supervision before 7:30 a.m. Staff will be on duty to assist students. Flags and pledges will begin at 7:50 a.m., and we encourage all students to try to take part in this. Never unload students in areas other than the approved drop off area.

AFTERNOON PICK UP PROCEDURES

Dismissal begins at 3:15 p.m. Any student not enrolled in the Afterschool Program should be picked up promptly. At 3:55 p.m., any student remaining at school will be checked in to the Afterschool Program and charged accordingly. See the section on the Afterschool Program for more information. Tall Pines uses an app for dismissal. This allows students to stay safely supervised and out of the elements during afternoon dismissal. Parents and anyone who will be picking up your student will need to download the app prior to the first day of school. Information will be sent home at registration and prior to the beginning of school.

PikMyKid App



SICK STUDENTS

If a student becomes ill, the school nurse will evaluate their need for treatment and communicate with parents. If a student needs to go home, the call to parents must be through the office. *Students should not use their cell phones to call home to be picked up.*

Students should remain home or will be sent home from school if they have any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever, defined as a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, with or without symptoms
2. Any communicable disease
3. Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
4. Vomiting/diarrhea
5. Untreated head lice

Students should be free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

COVID-19

If Covid-19 mandates are given from the South Carolina Department of Education or local government, parents and students will be notified by the school regarding those changes.

GRADING SCALE

Report cards and transcripts will show numerical grades. The grading scale is as follows:

A 90 - 100 Excellent

| | | |
|---|------------|---------------|
| B | 80 - 89 | Above Average |
| C | 70 - 79 | Average |
| D | 60 - 69 | Below Average |
| F | 59 & below | Failing |
| I | | Incomplete |

Report cards are issued four times a year with interim reports being sent home in between. Grades can be monitored using PowerSchool. Teachers will update Powerschool weekly.

LATE WORK POLICY

Students turning in late work can expect to have point deductions for work turned in late based on grade level.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

TPSA IT assets are provided to students for educational purposes and research consistent with its educational mission, curriculum, and instructional goals. Printed copies of the full technology agreement are included in enrollment packets.

Students are expected to follow instructions from TPSA faculty and staff when utilizing IT assets and are expected to comply with these instructions to the best of their ability. TPSA faculty and staff reserve the right to dictate proper usage of IT assets in relevance to ongoing instruction and expect student compliance to those instructions.

CHROMEBOOK POLICIES AND FEES

TPSA provides Chromebooks to its student body as a part of our school's instructional program. TPSA students can expect to use their issued Chromebook every school day to support instructional programs and curriculum. Please review the following policies regarding the distribution and use of TPSA Chromebooks.

Students and parents/guardians must agree to following policies before a Chromebook will be issued:

1. A \$35 usage fee will be paid for the device.
2. The student and parent/guardian have both read and signed the Acceptable Use Agreement.
3. The student agrees to follow all TPSA policies regarding the use of the Chromebook.
4. Once issued, the student is responsible for the care and appropriate use of the issued Chromebook.
5. The student shall not alter or remove any TPSA identification labels.
6. The student shall not deface the Chromebook by placing stickers or using markers on the Chromebook.
7. Any theft, or suspected theft, loss, damage, or malfunction of Chromebooks must be reported to school faculty or staff as soon as possible.
8. Upon request, students will deliver the issued Chromebook to TPSA faculty/staff for technical inspections, inventory management checks, or any other check.
9. Students will bring the Chromebook to school fully charged every day.
10. Student will not utilize the webcam or microphone for any purpose other than academic or research related use either at school or home.
11. Chromebooks are not to be used by anyone other than to whom the Chromebook is assigned.
12. Students will not attempt to alter, bypass, or circumvent the operating system, system/network security, or filtering controls on the Chromebook.
13. No external storage devices are to be used with the Chromebooks.
14. Do not use any chargers not issued by the school.
15. Chromebooks will be returned to TPSA prior to conclusion of each school year and/or prior to the student's withdrawal from TPSA if earlier than the end of the school year.

The TPSA IT staff will make best effort attempts at repairing damaged Chromebooks. Repairs and their subsequent associated costs will be dictated to TPSA leadership per the TPSA IT staff and are not subject to amendments by students or parents/guardians.

Broken Screen - \$50
Replacement Battery - \$50

Lost/Broken Charger - \$25
Defacement Fee - \$50

Replacement Keyboard - \$50
Chromebook Replacement - \$200*

*Replacement costs are due immediately if the damage is determined to be intentional.

TPSA leadership views the issuing of Chromebooks to students similarly to the issuing of textbooks as these devices are essential to the academic progress of our students. As such, TPSA has a “2-strike” policy regarding the replacement of Chromebooks. If a Chromebook is damaged beyond repair, and that damage is determined by the IT staff as accidental, the student will be issued another Chromebook, and the parent/guardian will not be responsible for the full replacement cost of the computer. If the student damages the second issued Chromebook, either intentionally or unintentionally, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the full cost of a replacement computer up to \$200.

If a student returns a Chromebook that has been defaced with stickers or markings of any kind the parent/guardian will be responsible for a \$50 fee and up to the full replacement value of the Chromebook.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION

TPSA provides a Google Workspace for Education account for your child. Google Workspace for Education is a set of education productivity tools from Google including Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Classroom, and more used by tens of millions of students and teachers around the world. At TPSA, students will use their Google Workspace for Education accounts to complete assignments, communicate with their teachers, and learn 21st century digital citizenship skills. Parents will sign the G-Suite for Education Consent Policy at the beginning of each school year.

NOTE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING TECHNOLOGY

The Internet is a powerful learning tool, but it should not be used indiscriminately or without supervision. While your child is at school, the staff will make every effort to assure that this resource is used appropriately. As parents, it is your responsibility to monitor this resource at home, not unlike the manner in which you monitor use of TV, video games, or the telephone. It is not advisable for children to engage in long hours of unsupervised time online.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM/FAMILY POINTS

As part of TPSA charter application, family members are required to invest in their students’ educational experience. The expectation is to earn 300 family points. A contract detailing the point system is given and signed at the beginning of each year. Points may be earned by volunteering, participating in events or meetings, fundraising and donations, sharing expertise and/or networking, etc. It is the responsibility of each family to keep track of their family point activities. This record should be turned in to the front office.

Volunteers must have a current background check completed through Clemson University and attend volunteer training each year.

PARENTS’ RIGHT TO KNOW

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, the **Tall Pines STEM Academy** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student’s teacher(s) and/or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student’s teacher—
 - . has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction:
 - . is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - a . is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child’s teacher’s and/ or paraprofessional’s qualifications, please contact the LEA, Lori Mastromonico.

TPSA BOARD

Elections

Information will come to all families in the fall regarding the election of Tall Pines STEM Academy Board members. Ballots will be sent to all families in October.

Meetings

The current TPSA Board meets every third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m.in building 4. These meetings are always open to the public.

Current Members

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Michelle Lorio - Chairman | Jennifer Minolfo - Secretary | Alissa Perry |
| Tim Meesseman | Chasity McDaniel | Mandy Sims |
| Phil Dersham | Wendy Dietzel | Tracie McBride |

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

The TPSA Afterschool Program will operate daily from 3:35 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Students must be signed out by a parent when picked up. Parents will be billed at the rate of \$5 per hour (with \$5 as the minimum daily charge) and maximum cap of \$50 per week. Students not picked up at 6:00 p.m. will be charged at the rate of an additional \$5 for each 5 minutes past 6:00 p.m. If an emergency should arise, those cases will be handled on an individual basis. Parents will be billed monthly and should pay by the 10th day of the following month. Payments can be made by check to Tall Pines STEM Academy. There is not an option to pay online this year. Families with past due balances will be notified and may be denied access to the Afterschool Program. Students will be served a snack and have the opportunity to work on homework and/or read, as well as enjoy some physical activity time, at the discretion of the Afterschool Director.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

- Lunch is \$4.00 per day, and students order lunch daily in their first period class.
- The lunch calendar is sent home monthly via email.
- Lunch payments can be made by check (made payable to **Clemson University**) or through TPSA's website (Current Students, Payment).
- Lunch balance can be checked in PowerSchool.

TUTORING

All content teachers offer free tutoring afterschool. Teachers may use this time to work with students who are having difficulty and/or who need assistance with a particular project or concept. Fifth and sixth grade students also have tutoring opportunities each day during the extension period for all content areas. Ending time and pick-up location will be communicated by each teacher. Students who are not picked up at the arranged time will report to the Afterschool Program.

DRINK POLICY

Students are only allowed to have water to drink in the classrooms. This helps keep our classrooms cleaner and technology safer from sugary residue left behind when tea, sodas, coffee, sports drinks, etc. spill.

TPSA PACKS BEHAVIOR PLAN

Pactice Patience

Act Responsibly

Convey Respect

Know and Care for my Community

Strive for GREATNESS



Silent Lunch Offense (these are NOT added to PBIS):

Chewing gum, no chromebook/charger, classroom disruptions (talking, outbursts, etc.)

Silent Lunch PLUS Loss of Recess (these are documented as a MINOR REFERRAL in PBIS and parent contact will be made by the teacher):

- Cell Phone - this includes smart watches
- Repetitive disruptions or misbehavior
- Misuse of Technology
- Out of class/tardy
- Disrespect to others or property

5 Minor Referrals = Principal Conference with Student + Parent Contact

8 Minor Referrals = Friday Detention or Suspension

Additional Referrals may result in a strike

3 STRIKES = Possible Expulsion

Reasons for strikes include, but are not limited to...

- Possessing banned items such as vapes, alcohol, or tobacco
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Intentional damage to Chromebook or other school property
- Repeated referrals

The TPSA administrators may refer any major violation of school safety directly to the school board for review.