

Summit Charter School Family Handbook

2011-2012

“Making a Difference in the Mountains”

Mission & Philosophy:

School Motto: Seeking Excellence

Introduction

This handbook has been prepared for our families of Summit Charter School. Please be sure you familiarize yourself with the school policies, and refer to this handbook throughout the school year for any questions you may have regarding the Summit program.

Our Mission

To provide a creative and nurturing educational environment that motivates our children to seek excellence within themselves and in their endeavors.

Our Philosophy

Summit Charter School was founded on the principles of Earnest Boyer’s and the Carnegie Foundation’s Basic School Concept where the school serves in four capacities:

School as Community

In partnership with parents, teachers, and community, the school encourages each student to recognize and attain his or her highest potential through academic, social and personal growth.

Curriculum with Coherence

Through creative and innovative teaching methods, Summit strives to provide a positive educational progression and to stimulate a passion for life long learning. Education is not confined to the classroom, and our students are inspired to learn at home and in their community. They are encouraged to explore, understand, and serve the world around them through place-based curriculum.

Climate for Learning

Every student is encouraged to become a disciplined, creative, motivated learner. Summit serves the whole child, acknowledging that a student’s physical, social and emotional well-being affects learning. Summit provides a learning environment that is focused and purposeful.

Commitment to Character

Summit is concerned with the ethical and moral dimensions of a child’s life. The school emphasizes, through the curriculum, seven core virtues:

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Honesty | Respect | Responsibility |
| Compassion | Self-Discipline | Perseverance |
| Giving | | |

Although Summit is not a member of the Basic School Network the principles of community, curriculum coherence, climate, and character are encouraged and practiced with a vision for place-based education throughout the Summit community and program.

Summit Pledge

Each day, in my words and my deeds, I will do my best to live these seven virtues:

Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, Self-Discipline, Perseverance, and Giving

Curriculum/Philosophy

The curriculum at Summit is continually developed and improved through a process using numerous resources and teacher input. Each class has a curriculum outlining what should be taught within each specific base camp. The curriculum, like many other things, is an evolving work in

progress and one that is examined and updated frequently. Our curriculum is designed to prepare our students above and beyond the State’s core assessment standards and to implement innovative lessons that promote student success through place-based learning activities and character education, and the whole-child development.

Summit Charter School Organizations:

Board of Trustees

The school, as an educational institution incorporated under the laws of North Carolina to be run as non-profit, is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board consists of a maximum of 21 voting members. The Director, a teacher representative, and the Summit Family Association president serve as ex-officio members. The Board, made up primarily of parents and community representatives, serve a term of 3 years with a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Board, through various committees, concerns itself with school finances, capital needs, staff salaries and school policies. The Board employs the Director, who in turn, recruits the other faculty and staff.

Board meetings are scheduled quarterly. All board members are expected to attend, along with the director, an elected teacher representative and the Summit Family Association representative. Meetings are also open to the public. A list of current board members is included in the Family Directory and board meetings will be announced through the Bear Express and Summit calendar.

Board Committees

Numerous committees are open to parent and teacher volunteers. The Standing Committees are listed below. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please notify the director.

Standing Committees: Academic Advisory, Building, Facilities, Marketing, Technology, Strategic Planning, Finance, Governance, Executive, and Summit Charter School Foundation, Inc.

Summit Family Association (SFA)

The Summit Family Association (SFA) is an active organization that meets monthly, organizes fund-raisers, and provides numerous opportunities for families to become involved in various aspects of the school. Parents and teachers are expected to attend meetings and participate in activities. A copy of the SFA Handbook is included in this document.

Parents who would like to volunteer for one of these committees should contact the SFA president. For any additional information, comments, or questions please contact the president.

Student Council

The Student Council of Summit Charter School is organized to give students the opportunity to participate in student government and to experience the many responsibilities that go along with being in a leadership role.

Administrative Chain of Command

If families have a concern about their child, they should first speak with the classroom teacher. In the event that a situation should arise that must be dealt with by the administration, the chain of command is as follows:

Base Camp Leader
Director
Board Chair

Academic Policies:

A curriculum with coherence requires a dedicated effort by the student, teacher and family. Please familiarize yourself with the academic policies and procedures to better facilitate our students' achievement.

Communications

Communication between the school and the home is one of the most important aspects of the academic program. Summit will exercise the following standard forms of routine communication between the school and family:

- **Learning Logs:** Each student will be issued a Learning Log at the beginning of the school year. Learning Logs are to be used to journal the days' events, homework assignments, and family-teacher communications.

- **Parent Signature Folders:** Parent Signature Folders are sent home with each student every Monday. These folders will contain the graded papers for the prior week, assignments for the coming week, and announcements and notices from the teachers and/or the school. Students are required to return the folder promptly with the front cover signed.
- **Interim Reports:** Interim reports are issued to each student via the Parent Signature Folder at the mid-quarter. Interim reports provide a brief status of progress in each of the major core subjects.
- **Progress Reports:** Progress Reports will be completed by the teachers at the conclusion of each quarterly grading period and issued at the time of the quarterly conference. Teachers will also record the final grades for the school year on the cumulative file for each student. End of Year grades should not be issued to students with outstanding textbooks, library books, or other property belonging to the school.
- **Conferences:** School-scheduled conferences will be held at the end of each quarter to discuss and distribute progress reports to the parents. Conferences may also be held, at anytime, at the request of the teacher, parent, or administration.

- **Blackbaud:** The integration of the Blackbaud system and FAWeb, will allow the faculty to communicate with parents through an Internet portal. Weekly assignment sheets, classroom notes and grades will be available through up-to-date online postings.

Exceptional Children's Program

Summit Charter School serves students of various levels and abilities within the classroom (inclusion model) as well as resource room and one-to-one instruction. If your child has been served by the Exceptional Children's Program at a previous school, please inform Summit at the time of enrollment to insure placement and completion of necessary paperwork. If you currently have a child in the ECP, please meet and cooperate with the special education teacher to ensure the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is current and adequate progress is being made. For additional information, please contact the special education teacher.

Grading Scales

Summit uses developmentally appropriate grading scales tiered by atrium level.

K-2

- E- Excellent Progress
- S- Satisfactory Progress
- NP- Needs Progress

3-5

- E- Consistently exceeds grade level expectations
- G- Meets grade level expectations with independence
- S- Meets grade level expectations
- NP- Needs progress to meet grade-level expectations

Middle School

A+	99 - 100	C+	83 - 84
A	95 - 98	C	79 - 82
A-	93 - 94	C-	77 - 78
B+	91 - 92	D+	75 - 76
B	87 - 90	D	72 - 74
B-	85 - 86	D-	70 - 71
		F	0 - 69

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the instructional program. Purposes of homework include promoting independent study habits, developing responsibility and self-direction, and reinforcing school learning by providing necessary practices for developing skill and proficiency. Students can expect, on average, nightly homework assignments to reinforce the concepts being taught in class. Homework is the student's responsibility. The parent should encourage the child to fulfill this responsibility and should provide a suitable study area. The type and amount of homework may vary by age/grade, and the assignments should be recorded by the student (or teacher in the younger grades) in the student's learning log/assignment book on a daily basis.

Testing

Summit Charter School participates in the statewide accountability-testing model (EOG- End of Grade Testing) and will administer the standardized tests in accordance with the set guidelines. Testing will be handled by the Testing Coordinator and teachers will be trained prior to administration. All students in grades 3-8 are expected to participate in the state testing program and parents should encourage their child to do their absolute best on these tests. Test results will be shared with parents at the conclusion of testing. The test schedule is as follows:

Mathematics- Grades 3-8	Computer- Grade 8
Reading- Grades 3-8	Algebra 1- Grade 8
Writing- Grades 4 & 7 (4 samples during the year)	
Science- Grades 5 & 8	

Students in grades 3-7 will take the E.R.B. The purpose of this test is to provide Summit with an evaluation tool for student progress.

If you feel additional testing is needed, please notify the Testing Coordinator.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to students upon the recommendation of the teacher and/or parent. Should you be contacted about your child receiving tutoring services, please assist your child and our volunteers by adhering to the tutoring schedule and promptly transporting your child to or from the tutoring sessions.

General Policies:

Athletic Policy

Students in grades 6-8 are expected to follow the Athletic Policy guidelines for Summit Athletic Programs. A complete copy of the Athletic Policy is on file in the Summit Charter School Information Notebook located in the Athletic Director's office.

Students must have a current athletic physical and permission to treat form on file in the office and with the Athletic Director before they may participate in any athletic practice and game.

Students with unsatisfactory grades and/or behavior may become ineligible for athletic participation at the director's discretion.

Attendance

Parents or guardians must sign in all late arriving students at the front office. All early dismissals must also go through the front office. A parent or guardian must sign the student out. No students may be released from the classroom without a call from office personnel.

Late arrival to school and early dismissal from school will be monitored. School hours are from 9:00 AM until 3:30 PM. Students are expected to be in attendance during these hours. Late arrivals and early dismissals are very disruptive to the classroom and demonstrate a lack of respect for the school schedule, the teachers, and students. **A child must**

be present for ½ of the instructional day in order to be counted present. By state law a note from the parents/guardian is required after an absence in order for the absence to be counted as excused. Without a note the absence will be counted as unexcused.

It is considered to be a violation of the Family Partnership Agreement if a student's absences meet or exceed 10% of the school days to that point of the school year (i.e. 6 of 60, 10 of 100, 18 for the year).

Before/After Care

Before Care (7:30 – 8:45am) and After Care (3:30 – 5:30pm) may be available to students. All students must have a completed enrollment form on file for emergency use. Parents who plan to use this service on a continuing basis must inform the person in charge in advance. At the end of the school day, any students who have not been picked up by 3:45 PM will be sent to After Care. Parents will have to pay a fee for this service. Space is limited to 15 full time students.

Classroom Expectations

Each teacher will devise and post a set of classroom rules. Expectations are kept short and simple so students can remember them easily. Students should be made aware of rules and review them often. Conduct of middle school students is graded and averaged with other academic grades each quarter.

Class Parties

To avoid extravagant interruptions, parents are discouraged from organizing classroom parties to celebrate their child's birthday unless the activity can be fit into the mid-morning snack or into the lunch period without disturbance. Please check with your child's teacher concerning classroom policy.

Clubs

Students should be encouraged to participate in clubs and sports activities. Please relay information about the availability and schedule of events to students in your classroom when it is distributed to you. All school-sponsored clubs must seek administrative approval and must be sponsored by a faculty/staff representative. Club involvement and sports events should not interfere with the educational process of the child. If problems arise, please notify the Director.

Discipline

At Summit we expect all of our students to behave properly. Teachers maintain effective discipline practices in their classroom at all times. The teachers at the beginning of each school year will outline discipline procedures. Middle School discipline procedures are outlined in the Middle School Handbook and are discussed with students at the beginning of the school year. All students are expected to know and follow the Summit Pledge.

Dismissal from School

Under the guidelines of the Family Partnership Agreement, a family or student in violation of this policy may receive a strike. Upon the 3rd strike given at anytime while enrolled at Summit, a student or family may be asked to leave the school.

Diversity

We prize the cultural, socio-economic and philosophical diversity we find among our families and student body. Our task is to help our children appreciate differences in others while valuing themselves. We must help children recognize the biases that exist in our society as we create an environment that challenges stereotypes and prejudices. We should plan no school activities in places that discriminate on the basis of race, creed, or national origin.

Drop-off/Pick-up

Students should not be on campus prior to 8:45 AM unless they are being tutored, are in the Before Care program, or are accompanied by an adult.

Morning Drop-off- Drop off is between 8:45 and 9:00 AM.

- Cars are to enter Cashiers School Rd at Cornucopia restaurant
- Maintain 10mph speed and take caution around narrow areas in the road and limited visibility points along Zeb Alley and Mitten Lane
- Cars will line up the Summit drive in a single care line
- Students will be dropped off at one of the four stations on the main porch
- Cars are to remain on the right side of the drive and should take caution exiting Mitten Lane and Zeb Alley
- During times of high traffic, we encourage drivers to exit to the right on Cashiers School Rd towards the Methodist Church to reduce road congestion

Afternoon Pick-up

- Cars are to enter Cashiers School Rd at Cornucopia restaurant
- Maintain 10mph speed and take caution around narrow areas in the road and limited visibility points along Zeb Alley and Mitten Lane
- Cars will line up the Summit drive in the two right-hand lanes leading to the cul-de-sac and exercise an alternate merge for a single pick-up line
- Students will line up by grade in designated spots on the front porch
- A caller will announce approaching car numbers and delegate students to one of four pick-up stations (i.e. “carpool 56 report to station B)

- Cars are to remain on the right side of the drive and please **STOP** at the end of the drive and **LOOK** before turning onto Mitten Lane
- During times of high traffic, we encourage drivers to exit to the right on Cashiers School Rd towards the Methodist Church to reduce road congestion

Additional Carline Notes

- Students dropped off prior to 8:45am will be sent to before care (billed as used)
- Students dropped off after 9:00am must be accompanied by an adult to the office to sign in and receive a tardy slip
- Any students not picked up by 3:45 PM will be escorted to After Care, and a fee will be charged
- If your child is to ride home with an individual other than yourself, a note is required.
- For the safety of the children we ask you *not* to be on your cell phone during car line.
- Do Not pull out of the car lane and pass a car or bus that is loading or unloading children
- During special events, the 3rd car lane may be used as overflow parking

Enrolling/Withdrawing Students

We try to offer families interested in Summit as much information as possible. Prior to enrolling a student, families are required to meet with the Director and tour the facilities.

Prior to enrollment, parents will need to complete an application for each potential student. This should be done through the front office. Final enrollment is completed January 31st of each school year. Class sizes are limited to 24 students. If needed, Summit will go to a lottery system to finalize enrollment and a waiting list will be formed. The school accepts students from anywhere in North Carolina regardless of race, color, creed, and national or ethnic origin. For additional information regarding enrollment procedures, please refer questions to the front office.

If a student must be withdrawn for any reason, please notify the front office. For our attendance records, we will need to know the date and reason for withdrawal. We will also need to gather the student's records to transfer to the school he/she enters.

Facility Use

Summit School strives to be a true "community school" and is always willing to allow outside groups/organizations to use our facility whenever possible. Groups requesting use of our facilities should contact the office by phone or letter in order to make arrangements.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Summit Charter School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's records. However, Summit Charter School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with Board procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Summit Charter School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation programs and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for baseball, soccer and other school sports
- School calendar and directory

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that publish yearbooks and local news agencies.

If you do not want Summit Charter School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Summit Charter School in writing by the tenth day of each new school year. Summit Charter School has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Photograph
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Degrees, honors and awards received

Summit Charter School, by making this information available to parents on a yearly basis, is in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Law of 2001 as described in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A complete copy of this law may be viewed online at www.ed.gov.

Family Partnership Agreement

Summit Charter School is founded upon **trust and responsibility shared among parents, teachers, students and community**. Parents in particular are viewed as their child's primary teachers, and the home as the foundation for learning. Parents and students sign a Family Partnership Agreement to actively support their child's education and the school.

Field Excursions

There are many places in the western North Carolina region, which are well worth class visits. Classrooms may choose to go on field trips periodically throughout the year. Parents can assist by promptly returning the necessary paperwork, adhering to schedules and by offering to chaperone. Field trips are an educational experience which allows students to visit new and interesting places. Please note that chaperoning a field trip is a huge responsibility. Parents should follow the teacher's directions explicitly and ***should not bring siblings***.

Parents who are willing to drive their car and transport children on a school trip must have completed a background check with the school and file their current license, registration and insurance card with the business office.

Immunization Requirements

The North Carolina Immunization Law has been amended effective July 1, 1987. The law, .0401 NCAC 7A(a) describes the immunizations required. Immunizations must be placed in the student's cumulative file within the first 30 days of the school year (or the enrollment date for student transfers). For additional information, please contact the front office.

Inclement Weather/Early Dismissal

In the event of inclement weather, the Director will make a decision whether to cancel school, remain on a regular schedule, or call for a late start. At the time of decision, the Director will initiate the faculty phone tree. Once the faculty phone tree is initiated, the teacher should initiate his/her own class phone tree to notify parents. The class phone tree will list the youngest or only child as the contact. Other means of obtaining weather information include:

WYFF-Channel 4-Greenville
WLOS-Channel 13-Asheville
School Message-743-5755

In the event of a late start, school will begin at 10:00am for students. There will be no Before Care offered on days that school has a late start. Regardless of the decision, parents should not bring their child(ren) to school if they feel that their safety is at risk.

***Please note that for the purpose of inclement weather, Summit is not listed as a Jackson County school. Watch or listen for information specific to Summit Charter School.**

Lunch

Students should bring lunch and a full water bottle from home each day. The school does not provide heating or refrigeration services for students, and students should be encouraged to carry ice packs for cold items and not bring items that require warming or cooking. Teachers are also encouraged to secure a parent volunteer to cover their class for lunch so that the teacher may have a free lunch period. If a child forgets lunch, crackers may be provided by the school (this service is not to be abused).

Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch. Please make sure that you are aware of lunch times and recommended guidelines.

Lunch Times: 12:15 – 12:40, Recess 12:40 – 1:00

Parent Lunch Guidelines:

- Parents should send lunch *with their child* to school everyday
- Parents should plan to eat with their child at the *beginning* of the lunch period
- Parents should model our promotion of healthy meals and consumption of water or nutritious beverages
- Extravagant meals brought in from area restaurants can often be very disruptive and are discouraged
- Parents are encouraged to *eat* lunch with their child, not to drop it off at the front desk for delivery
- A parent's invitation to eat lunch at Summit is intended to promote quality family time during the school day without disruption to the schedule and student policies

Mascot/School Colors

The mascot for Summit Charter School is the Explorer Bear designed by Codi Moore at the school's opening. School spirit colors are hunter green and white.

Medication

Teachers are not allowed to keep or distribute medicine in the classroom. All medication will be kept in the office to be distributed at the appropriate time. In accordance with North Carolina statutes, all medication must be in its original container and accompanied by a doctor's note. Parents are responsible for notifying the front office of all medication needs and for personally delivering the medication to the front office. Students will be allowed to leave class and walk to the front office to receive medication.

The school staff cannot administer any medication (prescription or over the counter) to a child unless it is ordered and prescribed by a doctor. We must have a doctor's note on file indicating dosage, the amount to be given, and the time of administration for each medication. All medications must be brought to the front office by parents in the original container, and the markings on the container must match the doctor's note. Medications may also be brought in and administered by a parent on school grounds. No student may possess any type of medication (including cough drops and inhalers) while attending school or a school function. This policy is in accordance with the NC Department of Public Instruction.

School Sponsored Activities

Parents should support all school-sponsored activities and are encouraged to attend as many events as possible. Parents are needed to volunteer for activities in their child's classroom, or they can sign up as volunteers to assist in family activities sponsored by the SFA. Parents will be notified of upcoming events.

Telephones/Cell Phones

Students may come to the office to use the telephone for emergency calls. Cell phone use on campus can be a major disruption. **Parents and staff members are asked to turn off their cell phones while on campus.** Cell phones belonging to students must be turned off and stored in a book bag/locker during the school day.

*For safety reasons, parents should refrain from using their cell phones while in car line.

Tobacco, Weapons, Drugs

Summit Charter School is committed to providing a safe and drug/tobacco free campus. ***NO tobacco products, weapons or drugs are allowed on campus at any time.***

Uniform/Dress Code

Summit Charter School students are expected to adhere to the prescribed dress code at all times during the course of the school day. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary measures. Please refer to the Uniform/Dress Code Guidelines for any questions regarding student dress and appearance. A committee of parents, teachers, and the director will review the dress policy on an annual basis.

Visitors

All visitors must check in at the front office and obtain a Visitors Badge. The badge must be worn in a visible place while on campus. Please return the badge to the office when you leave campus. Parents are asked to check into the office as well. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

Volunteerism

Volunteerism plays an integral part of Summit and continues to be the backbone for its success. Families are expected to volunteer a minimum of 36 hours per child over the course of the year to help support Summit. A full explanation can be found in the Family Partnership Agreement. Volunteer log sheets can be found in the main office and is printed on the reverse side of your child's Green Folder. The SFA will appoint a volunteer coordinator to assist families with engaging in volunteer opportunities and recording their hours.

Volunteers working directly with students are required to complete authorization papers for background checks.

Water Bottles

Keeping hydrated is important to overall health. Children should bring a bottle of water with them to school each day.

Ways You Can Support Summit

- Sign up for *Tools for Schools* at Ingles. Summit receives credit from your purchases and can choose school equipment from a catalogue provided by Ingles. This must be **renewed** on an annual basis.
- Link your Target credit card to Summit Charter School. The school will receive a % of your purchase. This must be **renewed** on an annual basis.
- Box Tops for Kids- clip your Box Top coupons on various food products and turn in to the school.
- Printer Cartridge/Cell Phone recycling for cash.

Encourage family, friends, and other groups to contribute and participate in Summit's efforts. Little things add up quickly.