

# **Samsula Academy**

2011-2012

**Reading Edge Academy, Inc.**  
**Volusia County's Premier Charter School**  
Serving the children of Volusia County

Dear Parents and Students:

It is the goal of the Academy to build a community which joins parents, the school staff, and the children together in a partnership of education. The purpose of this handbook of policies and regulations is to make clear what is expected of each party. To achieve our common goals, it is essential that all of us understand our commitment. Joining the Academy means that we work together to put these policies into practice.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Samsula Academy is to launch the academic careers of the students with the ultimate purpose of creating lifelong learners. We aim to accomplish this through individual instruction, engaging hands-on learning and maximizing resources. We integrate disciplines, tools and literacy to cultivate learners who evidence learning at the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy-as collaborators, creators and communicators of information and ideas.

## **Philosophy**

The vision and purpose of the Reading Edge Academy, Inc. is to ensure that all enrolled students will begin their school careers with success, confidence and a firm foundation in all core subjects, with particular emphasis on reading effectiveness. The Executive Board and administrators of the Reading Edge Academy, Inc. base the curriculum and other activities of the school on the finding that, although success in the early grades does not guarantee success throughout school life, failure in the early grades does, most certainly, guarantee failure in later schooling. The program is based on the following key developmental hurdles young children must face:

- a. The development of cognitive, linguistic, social and psychological bases in which success depends;
- b. A firm foundation in pre-reading and early language skills in preschool (including kindergarten); and
- c. The need for children to make enough progress so they enter fourth grade able to read for content knowledge.

The purpose of instruction in this charter school is to educate the total person in an environment in which each individual is recognized and respected, and in which moral values and academic excellence are central. To create this environment, the faculty and staff promote and

proclaim moral values they teach and uphold. The school strives to develop each child's potential through programs that aim to meet the individual needs of students.

Samsula S.M.I.L.E.S.

- Shows respect
- Makes smart choices
- Independently works hard
- Listens and shares
- Everyone Cooperates
- Safety Counts

### **Family Involvement**

1. The family will participate in the parent meetings scheduled by the school the child is attending.
2. The family will give 30 hours of service to the Academy, (three hours a month for ten months) keeping track and recording hours is the family's responsibility.
3. Completion of the 30 volunteer hour requirement establishes your child's continued attendance at the Academy.
4. The family will support all the regulations specified in the Parent/Student Handbook and work closely with the school staff.

### **Admission Policy**

The Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national or ethnic origin, or handicapping condition in the admission of students, employment of personnel, administration of educational policies, athletics, or other school programs.

1. As mandated by Florida State Law, a current health certificate, an immunization record, and a birth certificate must be on file prior to the first day of school. These may be obtained from your child's doctor.
2. To enter Kindergarten, a child must be five years old by September 1.
3. To enter Grade One, a child must have successfully completed Kindergarten and be six years old by September 1.
4. A birth certificate must be presented at the time of registration. Transfer students must present a transcript of test scores and the most recent report card from the previous school.
5. All incoming students must present proof that they have fully complied with Florida immunization laws and have up-dated medical records.

## Curriculum

The Academy's curriculum is designed to increase the child's knowledge and skills in all developmental areas: physical, social, emotional and intellectual, and to help children establish a foundation for lifelong learning. Material is presented in such a way as to develop children's self esteem, sense of competence and positive feelings toward education. Selection of new curriculum and/or programs will always be based on results of validated research. The Academy will use the scope and sequence benchmarks set forth by the Florida Department of Education's New Generation Standards and the Volusia School District Pupil Competencies as guidelines for its curriculum.

## Attendance Requirements

1. Florida law requires 180 student days annually, exclusive of holidays.
2. All students are expected to come to school **on time every day**. School begins at 7:50 AM. Excessive tardiness must be brought to the attention of the proper authorities.
3. Absence from school and tardiness are detrimental to the student's progress no matter what the reason. For very serious reasons, such as personal illness or death of a close family member, students may be excused from classes at the written request of their parents or guardians.
4. Anyone taking a child from school for appointments or illness must report to the office to sign a release for the child's dismissal.
5. Phone calls to excuse an absence are received from 7:00 AM until 3:00 PM at (386)423-6650.
6. **Family vacations which do not coincide with the school calendar are strongly discouraged.** Teachers *will not* provide make-up work in advance to a student leaving on a vacation. This work may be obtained from the teacher(s) when the child returns to school and must be completed within seven days and the student will sign a contract.

## Homework

Beginning in kindergarten, children are expected to do some homework each weekday night. If a specific classroom task is not assigned the child should study prior content and read. The type and length of assignments will vary as the child advances academically. In general, the maximum time devoted to written work, study, library reading, research or projects should be: Primary - 15 - 30 minutes daily and Intermediate - 40-60 minutes daily.

Written homework will not be given on weekends or over holidays and vacations. A succession of missed homework assignments will lead to slower academic achievement and may result in the gift of time. While parental interest in, and assistance with, homework is desirable,

children must learn to assume responsibility for their own work as early as possible. If a parent feels that the child cannot cope with the work assigned, please discuss this matter with the child's teacher so that adjustments can be made.

## **Reports to Parents**

Checklists are issued every 12 weeks. Formal parent-teacher conferences are encouraged whenever the need arises. Please contact teachers by note or call the office to make an appointment for a conference. Many problems grow out of simple misunderstandings and are often resolved when parents and teachers communicate directly. Only when this contact has not been effective are parents advised to confer with the principal by phone or by setting up an appointment for a conference.

Parents are asked to be reasonable in their demands on teachers both as to the time and the frequency of reports about a child. During class hours, all business is conducted through the office. Teachers can not be pulled from class to confer with a parent or may not be interrupted during class time or morning routines for any reason.

PLEASE check your child's backpack daily for information.

## **Field Study Trips**

The Academy usually plans field studies throughout the school year for every grade level. Educational field studies are used to enhance classroom instruction and there will be accountability. Parents are asked to assist with these and are expected to defray the costs of the excursion. To participate, a child must have the written permission of the parent, using only the form provided by the school. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of proper forms. All field studies are announced ahead of time. The permission slip will also cover any "walking tours" in the neighborhood. Because field studies are privileges afforded to students, participation may be denied to those students who fail to meet behavioral requirements.

## **Lunch**

Lunch is provided through the school's lunch program. Menus will be sent home each month. *Please pay a minimum of one week in*

*advance. Pre-paying for lunches in advance is strongly encouraged. Please send all monies to your child's classroom clearly marked in a sealed envelope, with your child's name, amount, specifically what for and dates. Change will not be given unless otherwise requested.* Money due notices are sent home weekly. Once an account exceeds \$15 overdue the child will be fed a cheese sandwich lunch until the account is made current.

For children who do not use the provided lunch program, parents are asked to provide a nutritious lunch daily for their children. Milk or juice may be ordered each morning at additional costs. **NO CANDY OR SODA.** Please label lunch boxes with your child's name. We do not have refrigerators to keep lunches cold. We do not heat student lunches. Messy food and containers that are hard for your child to open, present a problem for children. Be sure to pack utensils for your child to eat with and napkins. ***A good rule of thumb to use is: if the child cannot open the container, do not send it with them.*** Lunch time at the Academy is an opportunity for the children to learn proper table manners and to enjoy lunchtime conversation in a relaxed yet controlled atmosphere.

Any family that is eligible for the free or reduced lunch program and completes the paperwork will be advised about the program the first week of school or any time during the year. In accordance with Federal Law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this academy is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independent Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3272 or (202)720-6382 (TTY). USDA and Reading Edge Academy Inc. are equal opportunity providers and employers.

## **Illness**

1. Children who show signs of illness in the morning should be kept home as should those having bad colds or coughs.
2. The school should be notified by 9:00 a.m. each day a student is absent by phoning 386-423-6650.
3. Parents, or the person listed on the emergency form, will be called if a child becomes ill at school or is injured. **It is imperative that we have up-to-date emergency forms from every family prior to entering school. Parents are asked to notify the school immediately about address changes and especially home or work phone number changes that occur during the school year.**
4. Whoever comes to take a sick or injured child home must first report to the office with proper identification.
5. Please call the office if your child contracts a contagious disease, and consult with a doctor as to when the child may return to school.
6. For short term illnesses, *please do not call the school to request work for your child.* A reasonable time period will be given to make up missing work after the child returns to school. Special arrangements will be made in the case of a prolonged absence.
7. Head Lice -please inform the front office ASAP so we may help prevent spreading. Kindly bring the child to the office to be

checked before returning to the classroom.

## **Evaluation of Student Progress**

A variety of methods are used to assess student progress, these include:

1. A Formative Evaluation System.
2. Teacher-made tests or alternate forms of assessment correlated to the Next Generation Standards and Volusia Pupil Competencies.
3. Student portfolio assessment
5. The Stanford 10 Achievement Test beginning in Kindergarten
6. Individualized testing by county psychologist as needed and requested by the Problem Solving Team
7. Florida Writes in Fourth Grade
8. FCAT in Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade

## **Placement Tests**

All students, upon entrance to the Academy, may be given placement tests *which may* include any of the following:

- Skills Assessment
- Developmental maturity test; and/or
- The Stanford full battery or sub-tests: Reading Comprehension and Mathematics concepts.

## **Playground Rules**

To make the playground enjoyable and safe for everyone, and to protect school property, all students are to:

1. Obey adult supervisors promptly.
2. Speak respectfully to all adults and to fellow students.
3. Treat each other kindly and share playground equipment.
4. Avoid all play that involves tackling, fighting, jumping on one another, damage to clothing or any other unbecoming behavior.
5. Refrain from throwing or kicking sand, stones or other potentially harmful objects.
6. Refrain from using profane or obscene language.
7. Play in the areas specified.
8. Take proper care of equipment and of the play area itself.

For violations of these rules, one or more of the following actions will result:

1. The child will receive a verbal reminder.
2. The child will receive a time out.
3. The child will lose playground privileges for a specific time.
4. The child will be sent to the administrator and the parents will be notified to have a parent conference with a success team.
5. The child or his/her parents will be held financially responsible for deliberate damage caused or for that which results from behavior contrary to the school's code of conduct.

## **Conduct**

The school's philosophy of student behavior aims to motivate students to develop positive attitudes towards self-discipline and responsible behavior in order that they may attain their fullest potential. To help create a conscientious school environment, attention must be given to:

- Showing respect for other students, teachers and for all persons.
- Playing and working cooperatively with others.
- Showing initiative and being dependable.
- Taking pride in the school by caring for books and school property.

Cooperating with school policies and regulations is imperative. Parents are expected to help their children understand and follow school rules and to cooperate with the school when a child's behavior needs to be changed.

The school administration reserves the right to search the person or the belongings of students when a reasonable cause exists that poses a threat to the general welfare of the school.

The following types of behaviors are totally unacceptable:

1. Serious lack of respect for an adult or fellow student in words or gestures.
2. Repeated use of abusive, profane or indecent language, gestures or materials.
3. Fighting, bullying or mistreating other students.
4. Persistent lack of cooperation in class.
5. Disregard of rules at school and/or school-sponsored activities.
6. Stealing or damaging of another's property.
7. Defacing or destruction of school property.
8. Use or possession in school of tobacco or other drugs, alcohol or weapon-like materials.
9. Sexual harassment of any student by another student through words, gestures or overt actions.

When these unacceptable behaviors occur, one or several of the following procedures will be followed:

1. Personal interview with an administrator
2. Notification of parents or guardians.
3. Loss of privileges.
4. Detention session or other appropriate action.
5. In-school or out-of-school suspension.
6. An expulsion recommendation.

## **Bus Rules**

School bus transportation, by the sponsor school system, is available for some areas served by the school. Please contact the office for specific information. Students who wish to ride the bus must observe these rules:

1. **Be on time for your bus, it will not wait.**
2. Refrain from rough playing or damage to nearby property while waiting for the bus or boarding it.
3. Speak to the driver in a friendly, courteous way and obey the rules.
4. Remain seated on the bus until your stop.
5. Keep hands, arms and head inside the bus at all times.
6. Refrain from eating or chewing gum on the bus.
7. Never throw anything on the bus or from the bus windows.
8. Take good care of the bus and leave nothing behind when you leave.
9. Refrain from mistreating fellow passengers by offensive words or actions.
10. Take nothing onto the bus which is excessively large or which jeopardizes safety.

The school administration in conjunction with the bus driver's report, may suspend a student from the bus for a short time or permanently as circumstances demand.

### **Supervision and Safety Procedures**

1. To assure the safety of each child, all parents are expected to cooperate fully with arrival and dismissal procedures sent home at the beginning of each school year. Please use the paved driveway in front of the school for drop-off and pick-up, remember this is also the designated bus loop.
2. Children dropped off before 7:20 AM or not picked up by 2:40 PM will not have adult supervision provided by the school. The safety of these children is the responsibility of their parents. They will be sent to Extended Day Program at the parent's expense at the rate of \$5.00 for the first hour or any part of that hour and \$10.00 for the rest of the day.
3. During the school day, students may not leave the campus without the written permission of their parents and approval from the office.
4. The school is not responsible for the supervision and/or safety of pre-school children who accompany their parents to school.

### **EXTENDED SCHOOL DAY PROGRAM / REGISTRATION FORM**

- A. A non-refundable registration fee of twenty-five dollars \$ 25.00 per family is due upon registration.
- B. A fee of \$50 per week for childcare includes both morning and afternoon. Payment for the week must be paid prior to childcare beginning each week. For example: payment is due on Friday for the following week.
- C. Unexpected childcare is limited to 5 students daily and the \$5 or \$10 charge must be paid when child is picked up that day. (\$5 for less than 1 hour and \$10 for anything over 1 hour, 2 children \$8/hr and \$15/day.)
- D. Breakfast is offered to every student who attends morning care. The breakfast consists of one each, juice, milk, and entrée for the day. The cost is \$1.00 full price, 30 cents reduced price, and each item can be purchased separately. If a student wants a second item (ex. 2 milks) there is an extra charge of 50 cents each. A second breakfast is at full price or \$1.00. Student breakfast charges will come out of your child's lunch account. Breakfast and lunch money should be sent to the classroom in an envelope marked lunch, child's name, amount, and teacher's name. Prepaying is always a wise choice.
- E. Your child will receive a snack and a drink. Quiet time is set aside for homework with assistance as needed. A schedule will be posted and a weekly newsletter may be available.
- F. A weekly account past due is sent home via backpack express on Mondays.

The times and fees for ESD Program for the 2011 – 2012 school year is as follows:

**Times**

Before school care 6:30 am - 7:40 am

After school care ends at 6:00 pm

**Fees**

If you only use morning care the charge is \$2.00 per day

\$50 for child care per week which includes morning and afternoon

1 child \$50.00 per week = \$200/mon

2 children \$85.00 per week = \$340/mon

More than 2 children – an additional \$30.00/wk for each child

**Early Release Days:**

On the 33 Wednesdays with a 1:10 dismissal time the charges will be: *You must come in and sign your child out of ESD.*

One child picked up no later than 2:15 is \$2.00. Two or more children picked up no later than 2:15 is \$3.00

**Payment is expected in advance or on the day of service. If we must bill you for this service you will be charged the normal rates.** Please register your child so we are prepared for the number of children in attendance on Wednesdays. These charges are based

on a low number of additional children that will need ESD due to early release and are less than the normal fees for ESD. Should the number of students increase drastically and there is a need to hire more staff for ESD these charges may need to increase to cover the expense of additional staff.

\*Please note that if your child(ren) are picked up **after 2:15 these charges will revert** to the regular rates for ESD services which are \$5 for the first hour and \$10 for any time after that for one child.

**There is a phone in the ESD room**: You may call 386-423-6650(Samsula). This is the school number and it will ring in the office until the office is closed. Please be patient when calling after hours, sometimes ESD is outside playing.

**Early Release Days (ERD)**: The county calendar has mandated 33 Wednesdays as early release days (ERD). If you do not pick up your child at the correct dismissal time they will be placed in Extended Day and you will be charged accordingly.

**Tutoring Days**: If you are late picking up your child from tutoring they will be placed in ESD. You will be charged \$2.00 for the first 15 min., \$5 from 15 to 30 min. and \$10 for any time after 30 min. Fees are payable when child is picked up.

## Dress Code

Academy students wear a uniform to help the students realize they belong to a special group, show pride, and stress equality to all. We expect your cooperation in supporting all requirements of the dress code which is in effect from the first day of school.

**UNIFORMS**: for Samsula Academy

1. Royal Blue knit shirt with Samsula Academy logo.
2. UNIFORM STYLE: Khaki slacks, jumpers, skirts shorts, Capri's or skorts. (Nothing more than 3 inches above the knees.)
3. Brown or black belt to be worn with shorts or pants.
4. No trendy clothes
5. Solid BROWN or WHITE socks which cover the ankles (no stripes).
6. Plain, solid royal blue or tan sweaters or sweatshirts may be worn in school for warmth.
7. In cold weather, any color jacket may be worn outdoors only.

**SHOES**:

***Both boys and girls must wear white or black athletic shoes trimmed in no more than one other color.*** Sneakers should be no higher than the child's ankles. Sneakers that have a character on them, that light up, have platforms, wedges, wheelie's or similar

faddish styles may not be worn. No “shape ups” shoes are allowed. It is preferable to have tie or Velcro fastened sneakers. LACES MUST BE WHITE OR BLACK WITH NO CHARMS ATTACHED. SNEAKERS MUST BE TIED IN THE TRADITIONAL MANNER.

OTHER REGULATIONS:

1. Uniforms should always be clean, neat and in good repair.
2. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times in all grades.
3. Regarding jewelry, with physical education every day it is necessary to have the following rules:  
Boys: A watch and a single chain are the only jewelry permitted. No other medallions or charms may be worn.  
Girls: Girls may wear post earrings, a watch and a single chain only. Bracelets and rings should not be worn in school because of daily physical education.
4. Neat haircuts in good taste are expected. Please no extreme hairstyles. Neither boys nor girls should wear bangs that extend below the eyebrows because it inhibits vision.
5. Hair spray, perfume, cosmetics, nail polish, etc. are not to be worn or brought to school.
6. Fingernails should be kept clean and neatly trimmed so that their length does not prevent full and safe participation in all school activities. **NO NAIL POLISH OR ARTIFICIAL NAILS MAY BE WORN.**

**PLEASE BE REMINDED THAT BY SELECTING THIS SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD’S EDUCATION, YOU ARE AGREEING TO ADHERE TO ALL RULES AND REGULATIONS.**

### **Birthday Celebrations**

1. On the occasion of a child’s birthday, parents may notify the teacher ahead of time of their desire to send a small treat for distribution at an appropriate time set by the teacher. *The treat should be individually portioned* and should not include gum, candy or perishable foods such as ice cream.
2. Birthday parties are important to everyone, but especially children. We respectfully ask that if you are planning a birthday party outside of school, please do not distribute invitations during school, unless all the children in the class are being invited. We would never inadvertently want to hurt another child’s feelings by excluding them.

### **Book Bags/ School Owned Books**

To help keep our books and other school materials in good condition, students in grades K-5 are required to have and to use a backpack (no characters). PLEASE, NO ROLLING BACKPACKS. **Children and parents are financially responsible for the loss or damage of**

**any school-owned books, equipment or furniture in proportion to the expense involved.** The same rule applies to damage caused to another student's property or clothing.

### **Use of Telephone**

1. Ordinarily, students should not make telephone calls on the school premises. When calls are necessary, they are to obtain permission to use the telephone from their classroom teacher and the administration in the front office.
2. Parents are asked not to call the school office with messages for students which could be taken care of with better planning or at another time. Only emergency messages will be delivered to students during the day. Students should not bring cell phones to school unless the teacher and office are notified. Students should not be using cell phones during the day. It is always best if a student knows before they come to school how they are getting home, if they are staying for an activity, etc. A student may only call home if the school has changed the scheduled activity. Kindly send a note to the teacher for young students or students who may have difficulty remembering.

### **Calendar/Bulletin**

Detailed information about activities listed on the calendar is sent home in a monthly newsletter. Newsletters and flyers are sent home and are the best way to keep informed about school activities and opportunities for completing the service hour requirement.

**Please remember that the dates on these calendars may change.** PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK DAILY FOR INFORMATION.

### **Emergency Closing**

When dangerous weather conditions affect the entire area, the school will follow the directions of the *Volusia County agencies responsible* for public safety. Stay tuned to local radio and TV stations for information regarding school closings. *When the public schools of Volusia County are closed for emergencies, we are closed.* Please help us by tuning in to the local news for updated reports. Kindly refrain from calling the school for this information because it ties up the phone line which may be needed by the staff for the emergency.

### **Medication**

1. Any type of medication (prescription or non-prescription) brought to school must be accompanied by a note signed by a parent or guardian. This includes lozenges, cough drops, etc. The note should contain all pertinent information about the administration of the medication and should be brought with the medication to the school office **by an ADULT.**
2. **NO FORM OF MEDICATION IS TO BE KEPT ON THE CHILD'S PERSON OR AMONG THE CHILD'S BELONGINGS.**
3. All prescribed medication should be brought to school, by an adult, in original containers with pharmacy labels and signed in by the adult in the school office.
4. Non prescription medication such as aspirin, may not be administered by the school. Children who are on prescribed medication,

must be clearly instructed by the parent as to when they are to go to the office to take their prescribed medicine under the supervision of a trained adult.

5. Parents are required to complete a form available from the office if a child must take prescribed medication on a daily basis.

### **Physical Education**

1. Physical education and/or movement classes are conducted daily by a fully certified instructor.
2. To excuse a child from participation in a physical education class, a child must have a written note from the parent each time.
3. For more than three consecutive classes of non-participation a doctor's excuse is required.
4. Athletic shoes must be worn for these classes.

### **Art & Music**

Art and Music are considered Core Subject areas. Students are evaluated and an evaluation is placed on the report card. Participation and good conduct are expected from all students.

### **Lost/Forgotten Items**

1. All articles, including lunch boxes, should be clearly marked with the owner's name.
2. Lost and found items are kept in the cafeteria at Samsula Academy.

### **Parent-Teacher Academy**

All parents are encouraged to actively support the Parent-Teacher Academy which serves as a link for communication between home and school. **Attendance at scheduled PTA meetings is MANDATORY for all families.** In addition to raising funds for the school, the PTA sponsors programs which benefit the school community. The assistance and support of all families are required as a condition for membership in the school. This is a great way to sign up for volunteer work. The board meets monthly.

### **Samsula Academy Advisory Board**

The Samsula Academy Advisory Board and the Executive Board of REA, Inc. is the same. Their purpose is to oversee major decisions necessary for the continuation of excellence at Samsula Academy. They meet once a month, usually every third Tuesday to address issues concerning Samsula Academy. The public is encouraged to attend.

### **Citizen/Virtues**

The Academy believes instruction in key citizenship skills such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility and caring are important to the students. Each week a topic is presented to the students and emphasized in the classroom. Other virtues such as honesty, loyalty, perseverance, compassion, friendship, humility, self-discipline, generosity and so forth are introduced.

### **A Last Word**

It is impossible, and inappropriate, to make a rule on everything that may come up during the year. If you have any questions, please contact the school and ask. It is important that both the school and home work together in educating your child. We feel that the education of children goes beyond the three R's and includes social skills, learning to obey rules, following directions and listening.

Samsula Academy students and families will also abide by all District Policies and Procedures contained in the District Student Handbook.

## Miscellaneous

**School e-mail:** <http://readingedgeacademy.org>

**School Address:** Samsula Academy  
248 N. Samsula Dr.  
New Smyrna Beach, Fl 32168

**School Office Telephone Number:** (386) 423-6650

**School Office FAX Number:** (386) 423-6651

**Principal:** Mrs. Peggy Comardo

**Assistant Principal:** Ms. Gail Conrad

**School Hours:** 7:50 AM - School Begins  
2:10 PM – Dismissal

**Lunch Hours:** 10:40 AM – 11:40 PM

***This is a very important document. Please read carefully,  
sign and return it to school with your child.***

Please sign, pull or cut out and return to the school.  
I have received and read the student handbook given to our family for the Samsula Academy.

**Printed** Name of  
Guardian:

---

**Signature** of  
Guardian:

---

Date:

---

**Printed:** Child(ren)'s  
Name(s):

---