

## Welcome to SLHS!

Welcome to our – and now **your**, school! Our Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) Academic Booster Committee has prepared this FAQ for you. The PTSA, boosters, school staff, and others in our community offer opportunities throughout the year to get acquainted and become involved.

The week prior to school opening there is a huge Block Party for parents and students, as well as a volunteer orientation for families in September. There are monthly PTSA meetings, generally the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in the Media Center. Those include a report from our student leaders, a presentation on a topic of interest to parents, a brief business meeting followed by Principal Bruce Butler's wonderful photographic summary of the month at South Lakes.

Other opportunities for involvement are identified throughout this FAQ. For more information, start visiting our fantastic website [www.SouthLakesPTSA.org](http://www.SouthLakesPTSA.org) and utilize the contact information on the last page of this booklet.

Welcome to our Seahawk family,  
I look forward to meeting you soon.

*Susan Sather,*  
SLHS PTSA President

# Frequently Asked Questions

2012-13



## SOUTH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL

<http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS>

11400 South Lakes Drive 703-715-4500  
Reston, VA 20191

Provided as a service by  
**SLHS ACADEMIC BOOSTERS**,  
a Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA)  
sponsored organization dedicated to  
supporting academic achievement at SLHS.

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## Academic Boosters

### Did You Know that the Academic Boosters both celebrate and support academics?

On the celebration side, they host an Honor Roll Breakfast every quarter, give away gift cards in the Bringing Up Grades program, and work with the school on the Academic Achievement Ceremony. On the support side, they work with seniors

on college application essays, serve as writing coaches for the Theory of Knowledge, host mock SAT and ACT tests and feedback sessions and provide volunteers for the Post Secondary Options Day. *Interested in learning more?*

### Check out their web page:

<http://www.southlakesptsa.org/academicboosters.html>

## School Operations

### 1. What hours does the school operate?

The academic day begins at 7:20 am and ends at 2:10 pm. (This may vary slightly from year to year.) Students should not arrive before 6:45 am. Bus schedules arrive by mail a few weeks before the new school year. Parents wishing to drop off or pick up students should do so in the designated kiss-&-ride area on the flagpole side of the school (entrance to the right, or East, of the school as you face the school from South Lakes Drive). Buses use the stadium, or West entrance, as do student drivers.

### 2. What are late buses?

Late buses are available Monday afternoons (departing at 3:30 pm) and Wednesday afternoons (departing at 4:15 pm) to transport students home after extracurricular activities. Not all rehearsals or practices may end at this time. Please check with individual coaches and teachers for specific information about your child's activities.

(Note: Only students attending approved after-school activities – in-class tutoring, club meetings, rehearsals, practices, etc. – will be issued late-bus passes.) A late bus pass is required to ride a late bus home.

### 3. How does SLHS implement block scheduling?

“Block scheduling” is a system where students attend classes on alternating days. SLHS's block schedule consists of four 85-minute classes that repeat every other day, with seven minutes of passing time between classes:

**Blue Days: 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th periods**

**Green Days: 2nd, 4th, 6th, and 8th periods**

School information is given to students in class; some documents are intended for parents and may require their signatures. Lunches are staggered: Student lunch periods may fall at the beginning, middle, or end of their 5th/6th period classes. There are no homerooms.

### 4. What is Learning Seminar?

Seahawk Seminar and Rewards 'n Remediation are flexible times, split during 4th period, built into every other school day that allows students to do supervised academic and structured activities that are otherwise difficult to work into the day. These activities might include make-up work and tests, extra help from teachers, class meetings, assemblies, elections, studying, and project work. It is a gift of time.

### 5. What are “sub-schools?”

Each grade level (and the special education program) has its own locker bay, vice principal, and administrative assistant. These are known as “sub-schools.” The administrator stays with the students in his or her sub-school all four years. The sub-schools are located with the class lockers and both remain the same for the student's four years.

### 6. What is the process for approval of late arrivals, early dismissals, and absences?

Late arrivals, early dismissals and absences must be approved by the appropriate grade-level administrative office. Approval requires a note signed by the student's parent or legal guardian and containing the following information: student name, date, precise time of late arrival/early dismissal, reason for late arrival/early dismissal, parent name (legible), and contact information. Note: SLHS strictly abides by the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) guidance and policy with respect to the definition of excused and unexcused absences and tardiness.

**Late arrivals:** Students arriving later than 7:30 am must immediately report to their sub-school office, present their parent note, and receive a tardy pass that will allow them to join their currently scheduled class.

**Early dismissals:** Students must report to their sub-school office first thing in the morning, present their parent note, and receive an early dismissal pass that will allow them to be excused by their classroom teacher at the appropriate time.

**Absences:** To report absences, parents should phone the appropriate sub-school office first thing in the morning and leave the following information: student name and grade, reason for absence, parent/legal guardian name, and contact information. Note that unreported absences will be verified by automated phone calls to the student's parents/guardians. The same procedure should be used to arrange absences in advance. Support staff for reporting absences can be reached at: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/office\\_support\\_staff.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/office_support_staff.shtml).

### 7. Can students take/receive medications at school? How?

In accordance with FCPS policy and guidance, students are not permitted to self-administer prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) medications at school. If students must receive medications (prescription or OTC) during school hours, the following procedures apply:

1. The parent/guardian must complete and sign a medication authorization form, available for download at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/healthservices/forms.shtml>
2. The parent/guardian may authorize OTC medications for relief of symptoms for headache, muscle ache, orthodontic pain, or menstrual cramps, and for antibiotic and antiviral medications. However, a physician must authorize and sign for all other medications.
3. Medications *must* be kept in the school clinic during the school day. While students are permitted to transport OTC medications to and from the school clinic, students are not permitted to transport

- prescription medications: These must be dropped off/picked up by the student's parent or guardian.
- All prescription medications must be in their original containers and labeled by a physician or pharmacist. OTC medications must be in the original container with the name of the medication visible.
  - The student is to come to the clinic at the prescribed time to receive medication, which can be given no more than one half hour before or after the prescribed time.
- NOTE:** For a full description of FCPS's notices, policies, and regulations, see <http://www.fcps.edu/Directives.shtml>. Click "M" in the topical index for medical policies.

## Academics

### 8. What special programs are available at SLHS?

In addition to its regular education curriculum, South Lakes offers several other academic programs intended to accommodate students with different learning needs.

**International Baccalaureate (IB):** The IB Middle Years Program (IBMYP) (grades 9 & 10) and the IB Diploma Program (grades 11 & 12) and the IB Career Related Certificate Program (IBCC) (grades 11 & 12) offer an academically demanding curriculum for motivated students. IB courses may be taken individually or as part of the diploma program. (See question #10 for more information.)

**Honors:** All "Pre-IB" courses are Honors courses and may be taken individually or as part of the IBMYP Certificate Program.

**ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages):** The mission of SLHS's ESOL program is to develop English proficiency of non-English-speaking students while advancing their academic achievement.

**Special Education:** SLHS offers both self-contained classes and general education classes co-taught by general and special education teachers. In addition, the special education department offers a variety of remedial classes, study skills classes, and life skills classes for students who may benefit from additional direct instruction in specific areas. SLHS's Work Study Department offers functional academics and vocational programs for students with ID/IDS (intellectual disabilities/intellectual disabilities severe).

**Advanced Placement (AP):** SLHS offers AP Government.

### 9. What diploma options are there?

It is extremely important that students entering 9th grade be aware of all diploma options because course choices they make in 9th -12th grade may affect their eligibility to receive certain diplomas. A verified credit is awarded when a student passes a course and the associated SOL. For more information, go to: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student\\_services.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student_services.shtml).

**Standard Diploma:** Requires 22 credits of coursework (six of which must be verified credits) in designated subjects. This is comparable to a "basic" diploma offered by high schools throughout the US. This diploma is accepted by college admission offices. It is less rigorous than the Advanced Studies diploma.

**Advanced Studies Diploma:** Requires 24 credits of coursework (nine of which must be verified credits) in designated subjects. This diploma is intended for students interested in pursuing college or other advanced studies. Most SLHS students earn this degree.

**International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma:** The IB Diploma signifies that a student has successfully completed the IB program. It is earned in addition to the Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma.

**Modified Standard Diploma (MSD):** Requiring 20 credits of coursework, the MSD is intended for students who have a disability and are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Eligibility for and participation in this program is determined by the students' individual education program (IEP) team any time after the student's 8th grade year.

### 10. What do we need to know about the IB program?

As noted above, students in 9th grade should learn about the IB program and its academic requirements to help them plan for courses later.

IB is a course of studies that emphasizes global citizenship, intercultural awareness, rigorous (college level) academics, and higher-thinking skills. The program is over seen by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) in Geneva, Switzerland and is offered throughout the world, mainly in Europe and North America. The United States has the most IB schools, more than 1,300.

Participation in the IB program is optional and does not replace or supplant other state-mandated high school diploma options. IB and Pre-IB courses are offered as open enrollment to all students at SLHS.

#### FOR MORE ABOUT THE IB PROGRAM:

- Attend IB Information Night in the fall
- Download IB documents from the SLHS website: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/ib\\_program.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/ib_program.shtml)
- Read about the IB program in the SLHS course description guide, available from the school office
- Visit the IBO website: <http://www.ibo.org>
- Contact SLHS Program Coordinators:

**IB:** Marie.Turner@fcps.edu, 703-725-4686

**MYIB:** Katie McDonald, kwmdonald@fcps.edu, 703-715-4500

**IBCC:** Susan Brownsword, skbrownsword@fcps.edu, (703) 715-4500

## Following are five ways students participate in the IB program.

**1) In 9th & 10th grades, all students at SLHS automatically participate in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP).** The objective of IBMYP is to infuse all 9th-10th grade classes with additional enrichment in global citizenship, intercultural awareness, and higher-level thinking skills. (IBMYP begins in 7th grade at Langston Hughes Middle School, but Freshmen entering from other schools may begin it at South Lakes.) Course selection in 8th-9th grades may affect a student's eligibility to earn a full IBMYP Certificate, awarded at the end of Sophomore year.

**2) 9th & 10th grade students may take individual honors courses.** These classes are more academically rigorous than general education classes. Honors classes are not required elements of the IBMYP program and are not required for the student to participate in the IB Diploma program during 11th and 12th grades.

**3) At the end of 10th grade, students have the option of earning an IBMYP Certificate of Achievement.** To earn the certificate, students must complete - in addition to their regular class work - a designated amount of community service and a personal project. The decision to earn an IBMYP certificate is made at the end of 9th grade.

**4) In 11th & 12th grades (in some cases earlier), students may take individual IB courses,** also known as advanced academics, just as students take individual AP courses. On successfully completing any IB class and associated exam, students receive an **IB Certification** for that class. As with the AP exams, if the student scores high enough on the IB exam, s/he may receive college credit. Score requirements for credit vary by university and must be individually researched. Most IB courses span two years and exams are given at the end of the second year. Advanced academic courses receive additional GPA credit. (See question #40.)

**5) South Lakes is now a candidate school offering the IB Career Related Certificate.** The IBCC allows students to explore career and technical education (CTE) courses at South Lakes and to benefit from elements of an IB education. Throughout junior and senior year students select two CTE courses in combination with two Diploma Program courses in addition to a unique IBCC core, comprised of an approaches to learning (ATL) course, language development, a reflective project, and community and service.

**6) Intended for students in 11th & 12th grades, the IB Diploma program is a comprehensive course of study.** The program requires five years of language and advanced courses that may have pre-requisites (prepa-

ratory classes). Course selection in 7th-10th grades may affect a student's eligibility to earn an IB Diploma. The IB Diploma program requires college-level work and is recommended for students who are self-motivated, can rise to intellectual and academic challenges, wish to continue their quest to write clearly and effectively in all areas, can develop excellent analytical and critical thinking skills, want to learn a foreign language at a reasonably high level, can learn to manage time effectively, and wish to participate in school and community activities.

The IB Diploma requires that students take courses in six areas of study: **1)** language (English); **2)** individuals and societies (e.g. history and government); **3)** mathematics **4)** arts/electives; **5)** experimental sciences; and **6)** a second language. In addition, they must participate in creative endeavors, physical activities, and community service ("creativity, activity, service" or CAS); write an extended essay on a topic of their choice; and take the Theory of Knowledge course.

Students who select this option will be known as "IB Diploma candidates" throughout high school; they will not know until July after their Senior year if they earned enough points on their IB exams to earn the actual diploma. Some universities will give credit for earning the full diploma. For example, University of Southern California will give 20 credits to a student with an IB Diploma that earned a score of 30 or higher.

### 11. What are the academic expectations for general education (non-IB) classes?

In accord with Virginia Department of Education and FCPS standards and guidelines, general education (non-IB) courses at SLHS are similar in content, scope, and difficulty to equivalent courses at all FCPS high schools.

### 12. What SOLs are students required to take?

Students take Standards of Learning (SOL) tests at the end of the year in courses that have corresponding SOL tests. These 11 courses are: Biology, Chemistry, and Geosystems; Algebra 1 and 2, and Geometry; World History 1 and 2 and US/Virginia History; and English 11 reading and writing. The SOLs most commonly administered in 9th grade are: Biology, World History I or World History II (honors), and Algebra I (or Geometry or Algebra II). For more information about SOLs, go to: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml>.

#### Do You Know ...

South Lakes is one of 8 high schools in FCPS to offer the IB program. The others are Annandale, Edison, Lee, Marshall, Mount Vernon, and Stuart High Schools, and Robinson Secondary School. In 2011 worldwide, there were 3,289 schools in 141 countries offering three IB programs to 990,000 students. The US has 1,308 IB schools, more than any other country.

### 13. What SOLs must students pass to graduate?

This depends on several factors, including the student's diploma objective and course selections. **To determine SOL requirements, parents and students are urged to become familiar with the verified credit requirements for each diploma.** (A verified credit is awarded when a student passes a course *and* the associated SOL.) This information is provided to parents at various SLHS-sponsored events (including Curriculum Night), and can be requested from your student's guidance counselor at any time. (See Student Services: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student\\_services.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student_services.shtml)).

### 14. When is the PSAT/NMSQT test given?

Students in grades 9, 10, and 11 may take the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in October. The test includes two 25-minute critical reading sections, two 25-minute math sections, and one 30-minute writing section. The cost to have the test scored is \$17.00 (subject to change). FCPS has arranged to administer the PSAT to 10th graders without cost. This allows them to prepare for the test in 11th grade. Based on their scores on this test, students may qualify for National Merit Scholarships.

### 15. How does SLHS ensure students are learning?

Using a rigorous program of assessment (tests, quizzes, homework, informal assessment, etc.), instructors constantly evaluate students to determine which skills have been mastered – and, more important, which skills have not yet been mastered. Teachers provide re-teaching/reinforcement through additional classroom work, after-school tutoring, homework, and other methods.

## Activities

**Website for SLHS Activities:** [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student\\_life.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student_life.shtml)

### 16. When do students sign up to participate in sports? What are the requirements for participation?

Fall sports include cheerleading, dance team, cross country, field hockey (girls), football (boys), golf, and volleyball (girls). Tryouts begin in early August and practices typically begin immediately thereafter.

Note that to be eligible to participate in fall sports, athletes must submit the following forms: **1)** Virginia High School League (VHSL) physical, **2)** emergency care,

#### Do You Know ...

The SLHS boy's track team has won 5 consecutive in-door and outdoor season Northern Region championships from 2008-2011. The girls and boys both won the 2011 Liberty District track & field championship in 2011. SLHS had 70 Freshman, JV, and Varsity tri-athletes in 2010/11, and over 200 athletes earning academic honors in spring 2011.

**3)** student participation policy, and **4)** athlete information. (Click on "Files and Links" at: <http://www.southlakesathletics.org/>.) The student and a parent must view the concussion education available on the FCPS website. Athletic trainers administer the IMPACT test on athletes to help identify a concussion.

Student physical examination forms must be signed off by a physician NO SOONER than May 1 of the current year, are good for one year, and must be

submitted before practices begin. SLHS offers affordable sports physicals at the school every spring (mid/late-May), or students may opt to have their family physicians conduct the necessary examination.

Winter sports include cheerleading, dance team, basketball, gymnastics (girls), indoor track, swim/dive, and wrestling. Tryouts typically begin in mid-November. Spring sports include lacrosse, baseball (boys), softball (girls), soccer, tennis, and track & field, with tryouts typically held in late February.

For more information about athletics at SLHS, tryout schedules, sports physical dates and forms, summer and spring sports, etc. visit the SLHS Athletics Department website at <http://www.southlakesathletics.org>.

### 17. How can students participate in the choral program?

Students wishing to participate in chorus as Freshmen will be assigned to Women's Chorus or Men's Chorus (known jointly as Concert Choir). These two groups perform both separately and together in concert but practice separately to provide more intensive and focused instruction. Beginning their Sophomore year, students may remain in Women's Chorus or Men's Chorus (Concert Choir) or audition to participate in Advanced Mixed Chorus (South Lakes Singers or Advanced Women's Ensemble).

Freshmen are eligible to audition for all extracurricular choral programs. Show Choir, combining music and choreography, is offered as an 8th period class for credit. It meets once a week from 2:15-4:00. It is preferred that Show Choir members be part of another choral ensemble. However, exceptions can be made for students who wish to be a part of the choral program but have scheduling conflicts.

#### Do you know ...

The SLHS choral program received the Inclusion and Diversity in Arts Award from the American Association for People with Disabilities (AAPD); it also hosts the Sing Strong A Capella music festival. South Lakes was a Blue Ribbon School for its band, orchestra, and choral program, awarded by the Virginia Music Education Association. SLHS received a Cappie for female vocalist in The Scarlet Pimpernel.

SouthLakesMen'sACappella (SMAC, for men) and Ladies' ACappella Ensemble (LACE, for women) choirs are open to any student who enjoys singing rock, pop, and other music in the ACappella style. These choirs are extra-curricular and generally meet once a week after school.

Both groups perform throughout the community as well as for school concerts and events. Freshman auditions for Show Choir occur at the end of the school year preceding enrollment, and are announced in advance.

### 18. How can students participate in the band program?

All Freshmen are invited to audition for band and will be placed according to their ability levels. Incoming students who demonstrate exceptional ability will be offered membership in Marching Band, Jazz Band and/or Wind Ensemble. Auditions are held in the spring during students' 8th grade band class. If a student is not enrolled at Langston Hughes Middle School or Rachel Carson Middle School, he or she will need to contact the director to schedule an audition.

**IMPORTANT:** Marching Band is a component of the program of studies for the advanced band curriculum in Fairfax County. It is a crucial building block for concert ensembles. Any student who elects to enroll in Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band or Percussion Ensemble is required to participate in Marching Band. Students enrolled in Symphonic Band have the option of completing an alternative Marching Band assignment that will allow them to participate in both fall VHSL (Virginia High School League) sports and band.

### 19. How can students participate in orchestra?

Students are invited to audition for the Intermediate or Advanced orchestra. Auditions are held in the spring during the registration process or by appointment with the orchestra director.

### 20. How can students participate in the theater program?

Interested Freshman will be placed in Theater I. Note that all students at SLHS – not only those participating in theater classes – are eligible to participate in open auditions for major productions.

### 21. What are the student leadership organizations?

The Student Government Association (SGA) elects five officers each spring, and senators in the fall. They represent peers, consult with administration on decisions, plan activities, and act as representatives for the

#### Do you know ...

SLHS students performed at the American Association of People with Disabilities gala in Washington DC last year. The SLHS leadership and student body are active in charitable drives for disaster relief, local shelters, and SLHS families in need. They also tutor or mentor youth in math, science, reading, music, and athletics.

SLHS student body in the community. Each class has a Student Council with five positions elected in the fall (Freshmen) and spring (other classes). There is also a Student Advisory Committee. For more information, visit the student life section of the SLHS website: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student\\_life.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student_life.shtml).

### 22. What extracurricular clubs and activities are available? When can students sign up?

There is a wide variety of clubs and organizations available at SLHS, established on the basis of student interest and teacher sponsorship. Examples include student government (9th grade officers elected in September; other grade officers elected in spring), honor societies, performing groups and clubs, academic teams, co-curricular clubs, language, cultural and international clubs, newspaper and yearbook staff, service clubs, and special-interest clubs. Students may learn more about specific clubs and activities during lunch events and at the Extracurricular Activities Fair, generally held in September.

### 23. What is ANGP?

ANGP is the acronym for All-Night Grad Party. ANGP is held for graduating Seniors the night of high school graduation and provides a safe, supervised, alcohol/drug-free all-night celebration for new SLHS graduates. Each academic class is responsible for funding its own ANGP. Fundraisers and sponsorship appeals may begin well before Senior year. Parents in all grade levels are encouraged to assist in planning and executing the event (consider it "job training!"). SLHS parents developed the ANGP concept and hosted the first ANGP in FCPS in 1986. Today, most FCPS high schools sponsor their own ANGPs. At SLHS, 80% of Seniors attended in 2011.

## What Students Need to Know

### 24. How does South Lakes help rising 9th graders assimilate into the school?

Every incoming Freshman student is assigned a Junior or Senior "Taking Flight" mentor who meets with him or her in a group setting throughout the year to discuss high school transition issues and help him or her succeed at South Lakes High School. Most mentors attend the New Student Orientation before school

#### Do you know ...

Every incoming Freshman is assigned a Junior or Senior "Taking Flight" mentor, meeting throughout the year to discuss high school transition issues and help them succeed at South Lakes High School.

starts. New 9th grade students are assigned their mentors during the first week of school. Junior and Senior mentors are recommended to the Taking Flight program by teachers, submit an application, and are chosen by a committee of students and staff, and then trained. Each year, more than 100 mentors are chosen from several hundred applicants.

### 25. When do we receive student class schedules?

Schedules are available approximately two weeks before the start of the new school year. Families receive their students' schedules in the mail along with a package of other useful information, including bus schedules, bell schedules, lunch and gym information, and the date and time of New Student Orientation. (See question #38.)

### 26. What should students expect the first week?

Upon arriving at school, students should report directly to their first class of the day (1st period on Blue Days, 2nd period on Green Days). Throughout the week, teachers and student mentors will be available to help students open lockers, find classrooms, navigate the lunchroom, etc. In class, teachers will discuss the curriculum and distribute course syllabi, and go over class expectations and supply lists. Students should bring a notebook and pencil for taking notes. Parents should defer major school supply purchases until receiving these supply lists. Many teachers will post these on Blackboard.

### 27. Is there a way to look up or confirm assigned homework?

All teachers at SLHS are required to post homework information on the FCPS electronic service known as "Blackboard" or "24/7." Teachers may also post class notes, information about on-going class assignments, and links to useful resource materials. At the beginning of 9th grade all students will be assigned a Blackboard account, a user ID, and a password. If students forget their password, any teacher can assign a new one. To access a Blackboard account after it has been established, parents should go to <http://fcps.blackboard.com> or click on the "24/7 Learning" link on the SLHS website homepage. (See question #28.)

### 28. What is FCPS 24/7 Learning?

FCPS 24/7 Learning is an online resource that allows students to extend learning beyond the traditional school day and beyond school facilities. Students, parents, and teachers can use this to access homework and classroom

#### Do you know ...

SLHS has partnerships with the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce and Google, and has a professional development school (PDS) partnership with George Mason University.

assignments, view class calendars, explore links to enrichment activities, update emergency contact information, and much more. The Family Connection section allows students to plan for college, work on college applications, explore careers, etc.

A username and password are required to access the site. Go to <http://www.fcps.edu/is/instructionaltechnology/fcps247.shtml>. Follow directions to register. You will receive a user ID and unique code. Take the code and a photo ID (for privacy purposes) to the SLHS front office, where you will receive a password so you can log in.

### 29. What about the lunch program?

Students may purchase an FCPS-approved lunch for \$2.75. Monthly menus are available at the following website: [http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food\\_at\\_school/](http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food_at_school/). In addition, a la carte menu options are available every day, including salads, yogurt, sandwiches, soup and snacks. Students may pay cash for food items or purchase a pre-paid, renewable lunch card. Automatic lunch card account replenishment may be done online at <http://www.mylunchmoney.com>. Lunch cards may be purchased at New Student Orientation or anytime thereafter from any cafeteria cashier. (Make checks payable to "SLHS Food Services.") Parents can request that balances from middle school lunch cards be transferred to SLHS.

Any student may purchase an FCPS-approved breakfast for \$1.50 and lunch is \$2.75. Vending machines with snacks and drinks are open during lunch and after school.

Free and reduced meals are available to qualified applicants: breakfast is free and lunches are \$0.40. For more information, see: [http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food\\_at\\_school/free\\_reduced.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food_at_school/free_reduced.shtml)

Note: Prices listed above are for 2011-2012.

### 30. What about gym uniforms? How can they be purchased?

**Students must wear gym uniforms to participate in Physical Education (PE) classes.** The SLHS gym uniform consists of a tee-shirt and shorts, and can be purchased at New Student Orientation or from any PE instructor. Price information is mailed to parents before the school year starts. Other optional clothing items are offered for sale, including SLHS sweatshirts and sweatpants. On cool days,

**Do You Know ...** South Lakes graduates were accepted into nearly 150 colleges and universities in 2011 and attend some of the most elite in the United States and abroad, including UVA, Virginia Tech, William & Mary, MIT, Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Johns Hopkins, NYU, Princeton, US Naval Academy, Carnegie Mellon, Case Western, Morehouse, UCLA, University of Stuttgart Germany, Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, USC, UNC Chapel Hill, Cornell, Tufts, Miami University of Ohio, Plymouth University UK, York University Canada, McGill University Canada, and more!

students may wear appropriate personal clothing over their gym uniforms. Students are responsible for bringing their uniforms home to be cleaned – and are urged to do this at least weekly!

Students need a combination lock to secure their gym lockers. Locks are provided free of charge, but there is a \$3 cost to replace lost or damaged locks.

## What Parents/Guardians Need to Know

### 31. How does SLHS communicate with parents?

*(Note: Whenever parents are referenced in this FAQ, guardians are included.)*

**Keep in Touch (KIT):** The school provides PTSA-organized weekly bulletins, special announcements, class-specific updates, and emergency messages by email using the FCPS-wide system known as Keep in Touch (KIT). There are two ways parents can register with KIT to receive these important school updates. **1)** They will automatically be registered when they send in the emergency care information form with email contact information. **2)** They can register by visiting <http://www.fcps.edu/kit> and start receiving SLHS news updates right away. (They can find the emergency care information form through this link as well). Note: If parents are already registered with KIT and are receiving announcements from their student's current school, they will still need to update their profile to add SLHS.

**PTSA Newsletter:** The PTSA Newsletter is published six times a year online, and can be mailed to those who request it. KIT messages will provide a link to the online version. This informative newsletter contains a schedule of events for the coming month, as well as news and information from the principal, IB coordinator, academic teams, the PTSA, booster organizations, and other school activities. The PTSA Newsletter is provided by the PTSA as a service to all SLHS families, and can be accessed online at <http://www.southlakesptsa.org>.

**Student Directory:** There is a small fee to cover the cost of publishing student directories. An order form is sent out early in the year, and they may be ordered online through the PTSA website.

**SLHS Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA):** *All* parents are encouraged to become members of the SLHS PTSA and to attend monthly PTSA meetings, generally held the third Wednesday of every month. Each meeting typically includes a month in review by the principal and a guest speaker who talks about programs and/or resources available at SLHS. This is the best way to

keep abreast of what is happening at the school. To learn more about the SLHS PTSA and to register online, visit <http://www.southlakesptsa.org>. PTSA membership forms are mailed out over the summer, or contact a PTSA officer at any time to receive a membership form.

**SLHS/PTSA Website:** Detailed information about bell schedules, testing schedules, PTSA-sponsored activities like mod SAT tests and volunteer opportunities, and other information is available at the SLHS website, <http://www.southlakesptsa.org/>. Parents also will be contacted with important information via Keep In Touch (see above) and at the phone number and email address included in their child's most recent emergency care form. To update the form, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/healthservices/forms.shtml>.

**Daily Announcements:** Important information is communicated to students daily via morning announcements. Transcripts of the announcements are available at the SLHS website, <http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS>. This is a great way to glimpse school activities.

### 32. How can parents communicate with teachers during the year?

**FCPS 24/7 Learning:** This is a robust online resource for parents and students that contains Blackboard information (see below) and much more. (See question #28, or go to <http://www.fcps.edu/is/instructionaltechnology/fcps247.shtml>.)

**Blackboard:** Students are assigned a Blackboard account, which they access using their student ID and password. The site contains announcements, homework assignments, projects, interactive activities, and other classroom information for each class. This Blackboard account contains the same class information as that accessible by parents via FCPS 24/7 Learning. (See question #27 for details or go to <http://fcps.blackboard.com>.)

**Email/Phone:** Teachers may be contacted by email or telephone. Teacher email addresses are available on the SLHS website at <http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/faculty.shtml>. To reach a teacher by telephone, call the SLHS front office at 703-715-4500 and your call will be transferred to the teacher's voice mail. Teachers will not answer calls when they are teaching classes.

**Teacher conferences.** Teacher conferences must be scheduled through your child's guidance counselor. (See question #37.)

### 33. What opportunities are available to support activities?

**Join the PTSA.** The SLHS PTSA serves many important functions. The organization provides important input that helps shape SLHS programs, activities, and resources. The PTSA also serves as a forum for encouraging open communication among parents, administrators, teachers, and

#### Do you know ...

The SLHS class of 2011 received more than \$4.5M in scholarship offers from more than 60 universities. These were a combination of academic, athletic, merit, and needs-based awards.

students. It promotes school and family communications through its newsletter, weekly email messages, and a student directory. PTSA meetings provide opportunities to hear and discuss topics of special interest to SLHS members. PTSA membership dues provide funding for many worthy initiatives, including academic recognition programs, scholarships, staff recognition programs, and producing publication resources. All parents are strongly encouraged to join the PTSA and to attend PTSA meetings throughout the year. Meetings generally are held the third Wednesday evening of the month. (See question #31.) Parents may join online: <http://www.southlakesptsa.org/join.html>.

**Join a booster club.** Booster clubs provide important and valuable support to SLHS athletic, academic, and arts programs. In general, booster clubs are organized and run by parents rather than the PTSA, and their mission is to support specific programs within SLHS. Depending on your student's activities, you may wish to participate in Academic, Athletic, Theater, Band, Chorus, and Orchestra boosters. Academic Boosters is the only one supported by the PTSA, promoting and recognizing academic achievement. Websites are listed on the last page of this FAQ.

**Volunteer.** There are many opportunities to volunteer to support non-PTSA activities throughout the year. Parent volunteers serve as debate team judges, science fair judges, chaperones, tutors, media center volunteers, exam proctors, and more. Some activities require an ongoing investment of time, but others require a commitment of a single evening or a few hours. Volunteer opportunities are listed in the monthly PTSA newsletter on the PTSA website and may be communicated via Keep-In-Touch (KIT).

**Attend school events.** Parents and families are urged to attend at least some of the many activities and programs that the school sponsors throughout the year.

- Enjoy a sporting event. Visit our science fair.
- Take in a band, orchestra, dance, or choral concert.
- Attend a theatrical performance or art show.

Studies show parents who are actively involved have students that are actively engaged – so come out and show your support!

### **34. Does the school sponsor fundraising initiatives?**

SLHS does not sponsor any school-wide fundraisers. Instead, each program, class (Class of 2013, 2012, etc.), and activity is responsible for finding ways to meet its own funding requirements. Learn about ongoing fundraisers being sponsored by various SLHS clubs, organizations, and activities at the PTSA website or the monthly PTSA Newsletter. Please give them your support!

### **Do you know ...**

38 graduates from the class of 2011 were accepted to UVA, the 3rd-highest acceptance rate from regular FCPS high schools. SLHS had a UVA Echols Scholar recipient. 77% of SLHS applicants to Virginia Tech were offered admission.

### **35. What about test and sports fees?**

AP and IB test fees are no longer assessed but there are fees for sports. Fee information will be provided to athletes.

### **36. What is the function of parent liaisons?**

Family/parent liaisons work with school staff to help with home-to-school communication when parents or guardians speak limited English. SLHS has two parent liaisons who can communicate in Spanish and Arabic.

### **37. If a parent has a comment or concern about his/her child, who should be contacted?**

All SLHS students are assigned to a school counselor. Assignments are by alphabet, so students keep the same guidance counselor throughout their high school career. Guidance counselors are available to discuss any comments or concerns that students or parents/guardians may have about the student's school experience. Counselor names and contact information are available at: [http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student\\_services.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/student_services.shtml).

### **38. When can students and families see the school and meet teachers?**

Rising 9th graders (and any SLHS family) have several opportunities to become acquainted with SLHS.

**New Student Orientation (August):** In late August or early September, students new to SLHS are invited to attend new student orientation. Its purpose is to allow students to explore the school; locate their classrooms and meet their teachers; purchase lunch cards, gym uniforms, and other items; locate lockers and practice opening them, etc. (NOTE: Though parents may attend this event, it is intended primarily for students. Parents are invited to attend the volunteer orientation meeting, held the same night at 7:00 pm. Check the PTSA web site for details or if these plans have changed.) Information about new student orientation is mailed to families of new students, and is available on the SLHS website at <http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/>.

**Back to School Night (September):** About four weeks into the new school year, SLHS hosts Back to School Night, the purpose of which is to allow parents to visit their students' classrooms, listen to presentations by their students' teachers, and learn more about the school and its programs.

**Touch Base with Teachers (December):** At this event, parents have an opportunity to participate in four-minute mini-conferences with their child's teachers. Teachers will be clustered in main areas of the school to permit quick movement among teachers. In most

cases, this will be enough time for teachers to fill you in on how your student is performing in class and answer questions. If these conferences identify issues that need to be discussed in more depth, parents may schedule follow-up conferences through their child’s guidance counselor.

**Curriculum Night (February):** At this event parents and students are invited to listen to short presentations by representatives of each academic department. After the presentation, department representatives will be on hand to pass out additional information and answer parent questions. All parents and students, including rising 9th graders and their parents, are invited to attend this annual event.

**IB Information Nights:** Parents and students are invited throughout the year to attend meetings about the International Baccalaureate (IB) program as implemented at SLHS. The presentations will cover program information, course offerings, recommended sequencing, and degree information. All SLHS parents are invited to attend these meetings, whether or not their students are participating in the IB program.

**School Website:** Check often for dates and locations of the events above, and for other opportunities to be engaged.

**39. What technology is available?**

SLHS’s technology became state-of-the-art after its renovation in 2008, with hundreds of computers. The entire building is wireless. The theater, lecture hall, gym, and music rooms have upgraded sound systems. SLHS’s computer network incorporates an FCPS-approved content-filtering application that restricts student access to inappropriate materials on the Internet. Classrooms and the media center are equipped with a variety of technologies optimized to facilitate research and instruction, including LCD projectors and sound systems installed in the ceiling of every classroom, and “smart boards” or electronic whiteboards in all math classrooms. SLHS’s IT infrastructure is supported by two tech support staff.

**40. How does the school protect student safety and security?**

While discipline issues are a fact of life at all US high schools, SLHS ensures that all FCPS and SLHS policies and rules are vigilantly and consistently enforced. Student safety/security is predicated on students being where they should be, when they should be, engaged in supervised learning 100% of the school day. To this end, SLHS enforces a strict absentee and tardy policy, ensuring that all students are on campus and in their classrooms during instructional hours. Between classes, teachers and personnel proactively patrol hallways, bathrooms, and other common areas, interacting with students and ensuring that transitions function smoothly. Students may not leave campus during lunch or at any other time without prior administrative approval.

In accordance with FCPS policy, SLHS has a full-time, dedicated School Resource Officer (SRO) who oversees school buildings, grounds, and hallways. The SRO also provides security for school events, after-school detention, and other activities. Additional security personnel may be enlisted to provide security for football games or other major school activities. The school does not have (and has never had) metal detectors.

Parents with questions about school security are invited to contact their grade-level assistant principal (sub-school principal). Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit SLHS at any time. Visits should be coordinated in advance through a school guidance counselor or the appropriate grade-level administrator.

**41. What is the grading scale?**

FCPS adopted a 10-point grading scale in 2009. The grade point weight (GPA) is 1.0 for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and selected dual-enrollment college courses. Honors courses receive an additional 0.5 weight. Below is the scale:

A (93-100) = 4.0	C+ (77-79) = 2.3
A- (90-92) = 3.7	C (73-76) = 2.0
B+ (87-89) = 3.3	C- (70-72) = 1.7
B (83-86) = 3.0	D+ (67-69) = 1.3
B- (80-82) = 2.7	D (64-66) = 1.0
	F (below 64) = 0.0

**Fairfax County Public Schools  
2012-2013 Standard School Year Calendar**

- September 4 ..... School Begins
- September 27..... SLHS Back-to-School Night**
- October 8..... Columbus Day Holiday
- October 9 - 13..... SLHS Homecoming Week**
- November 2..... First Grading Period Ends
- November 5 - 6 ..... Student Holidays
- November 21..... Students Released 2 hours Early
- November 22 - 23 ..... Thanksgiving Break
- December 7 ..... SLHS Touch Base**
- Dec 24 - Jan 1 ..... Winter Break
- January 21..... Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday Holiday
- January 25..... Second Grading Period Ends
- January 28 - 29..... Student Holidays
- February 18\* .....George Washington Birthday – Presidents’ Day Holiday\*
- March 25 - 29 ..... Spring Break
- April 12..... Third Grading Period Ends
- April 15\* ..... Student Holiday\*
- May 27..... Memorial Day Holiday
- June 13..... Graduation Day for SLHS**
- June 18\* ..... Last Day of School/Early Release\*

\* Date subject to change if more than three school days are lost because of inclement weather.

## Websites

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS):	<a href="http://www.fcps.edu">http://www.fcps.edu</a>
South Lakes High School (SLHS):	<a href="http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS">http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS</a>
SLHS Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA):	<a href="http://www.southlakesptsa.org">http://www.southlakesptsa.org</a>
FCPS 24/7 Learning:	<a href="http://www.fcps.edu/is/instructional/technology/fcps247.shtml">http://www.fcps.edu/is/instructional/technology/fcps247.shtml</a>
Blackboard:	<a href="http://fcps.blackboard.com">http://fcps.blackboard.com</a>
Keep In Touch Registration:	<a href="http://www.fcps.edu/kit/">http://www.fcps.edu/kit/</a>
SLHS Athletics/Activities:	<a href="http://www.southlakesathletics.org">http://www.southlakesathletics.org</a>

## Contacts

SLHS Principal:	<a href="mailto:Bruce.Butler@fcps.edu">Bruce.Butler@fcps.edu</a>
SLHS Director of Student Services (Guidance):	Davina Johnson, <a href="mailto:DrJohnson@fcps.edu">DrJohnson@fcps.edu</a>
SLHS Director of Student Activities:	<a href="mailto:Linda.Jones@fcps.edu">Linda.Jones@fcps.edu</a>
SLHS Safety & Security:	<a href="mailto:Brian.Elliott@fcps.edu">Brian.Elliott@fcps.edu</a>
9th Grade Sub-School Principal:	<a href="mailto:Lindsay.Trout@fcps.edu">Lindsay.Trout@fcps.edu</a>
10th Grade Sub-School Principal:	Mr. <a href="mailto:Dana.Walker@fcps.edu">Dana.Walker@fcps.edu</a>
11th Grade Sub-School Principal:	Kim Greer: <a href="mailto:KPGreer@fcps.edu">KPGreer@fcps.edu</a>
12th Grade Sub-School Principals:	<a href="mailto:Chad.Lehman@fcps.edu">Chad.Lehman@fcps.edu</a>
Special Education Sub-School Principal:	<a href="mailto:Mark.Penn@fcps.edu">Mark.Penn@fcps.edu</a>
SLHS PTSA President: Susan Sather:	<a href="mailto:President@SouthLakesPTSA.org">President@SouthLakesPTSA.org</a>
Academic Boosters:	<a href="http://www.southlakesptsa.org/academicboosters.htm">http://www.southlakesptsa.org/academicboosters.htm</a>
Athletic Boosters:	<a href="http://www.seahawkboosters.com">http://www.seahawkboosters.com</a>
Band Boosters:	<a href="http://www.southlakesband.org">http://www.southlakesband.org</a>
Chorus Boosters:	<a href="http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/boosters.shtml">http://www.fcps.edu/SouthLakesHS/boosters.shtml</a>
Orchestra Boosters:	<a href="http://www.southlakesstrings.org">http://www.southlakesstrings.org</a>
Theater Boosters:	<a href="http://www.southlakesdrama.com/theatreboosters.htm">http://www.southlakesdrama.com/theatreboosters.htm</a>

### Do you know ...

SLHS piloted an entrepreneurial club, Start It Up, in 2011 which is supported by Cbeyond Communications and the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce. In this after-school program, students discuss what it takes to become an entrepreneur – activities to take a business idea from the conceptual to a business plan that they will present to potential “investors.”

## SLHS in Brief

<b>Address:</b>	11400 South Lakes Drive Reston, VA 20191
<b>Phone:</b>	703-715-4500
<b>Fax:</b>	703-715-4597
<b>Hours:</b>	7:20 am – 2:10 pm (academic); 7:00 am – 3:30 pm (office)
<b>Established:</b>	1979
<b>Number of Students:</b>	~2,237
<b>FCPS Cluster:</b>	Cluster 8
<b>School Accreditation:</b>	Fully accredited
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	48% White, 15% Black, (*10-'11 school year) 19% Hispanic, 11% Asian/ Pacific Islander, 7% other
<b>Athletic Conference:</b>	Liberty District, Northern Region
<b>School Colors:</b>	<b>Royal blue</b> and <b>Kelly green</b>
<b>School Mascot:</b>	Seahawk
<b>Student Newspaper:</b>	<i>South Lakes Sentinel</i>

## SLHS Academic Boosters Support the following Academic Initiatives:

- SLHS FAQ
  - Honor roll recognition breakfasts
  - College application workshops & assistance
  - College scholarship program
  - BUG (Bringing Up Grades) recognition
  - SAT and ACT preparation support
  - Academic letter ceremony
  - Assistance with TOK essays
- ... *And much more!*

### We Need Your Help!

To learn more about Academic Boosters or to become a member, contact Kim Shoop:  
[kjshoop@aol.com](mailto:kjshoop@aol.com) or 571-216-9807