



SFMS 2019-2020 Newcomers Guide

Welcome to Spring Forest Middle School! The SFMS PTA has put together this resource guide to help with the transition to our school. We hope you find this information helpful.

**** PTA website: WWW.SFMSPTA.COM Each family should go to this website and sign up for the Weekly Eblast emails and REMIND notices from the Principal.**

Other items available on the website: Links to Join PTA, Online Student/Family Directory, Volunteer Sign-ups, our Facebook page, Campus Calendar, past Eblasts, PTA Board contact info, How to get involved and support the school, PTA forms (*The site will be updated during the summer for the new year.*)

REMIND App or texts: Parents and students should sign up for REMIND notices from the school (link is on the PTA website) as well as for classes that use the App.

School Website: <https://sfm.springbranchisd.com/> - has Schedules for School Day Bells, Tutorials, Busses, Lunch Menus, Early Dismissals, School Holidays, Dress Code, Faculty Directory, Links for district flyers & messages, ItsLearning (for teacher assignments and class calendars), Skyward App to check grades and absences (the same website you registered your student for school.)

Who to contact:

WHY	WHO	HOW
General questions	School website or Front Office	sfm.springbranchisd.com or 713-251-4600 ext. 0
Student home sick	Attendance Office	713-251-4600 ext. 2
Schedule changes	Counselor -6th Grade: Patricia Schappell -7th Grade: Jana Gwinn -8th Grade: Leah Whitten	713-251-4600 https://sfm.springbranchisd.com/counseling
PTA / Campus Calendar / Volunteer Information	PTA Website or PTA President or Facebook Page	www.sfmspta.com or email president@sfmspta.com or https://www.facebook.com/sfmspta/
Questions/concerns about a class	Your student's teacher	See syllabus or email teacher (staff directory on website)

Terms and Information to Know:

PTA: SFMS PTA is a non-profit organization made up of Spring Forest parents, teachers and community members. PTA fundraises to provide benefits to every student and staff member at our school. The funds pay for materials and technology for classrooms, building improvements, online directory, Spirit Wear, Multicultural Festival, Staff Appreciation, School Dances, professional staff development, E-Blast communication, and much, much more!

Bobcat Camp: August 12, 2019. Each grade comes at a different time to pick up schedules, buy spirit wear, find lockers, buy athletics/PE uniforms, pick up pre-purchased school supplies. New students can tour the school, though this is not a Meet the Teacher Day.

Spirit Wear: PTA sells a spirit shirt, an athletics shirt/short combo, and leggings that are all approved for uniforms. There is also a sweatshirt or fleece... kids need that for cold classrooms and walking to/from school on cooler days. Different electives also have spirit shirts (Band, Yearbook, Theater, etc.) that are approved to wear with uniform shorts (khaki/navy).

Curriculum Night is an evening in September for parents to experience their student's schedule, meet each teacher, obtain details about each class including tutorial schedule, make-up guidelines, how to contact the teacher, etc. It's an important event to find out what is going on in your student's classes and get a feel for the school.

PTA Membership: EVERYONE can join PTA in support of our school - parents, grandparents, siblings over the age of 14, educators, community members, neighbors, etc. SFMS PTA strives to positively impact and enrich the lives of our students, staff and families. Membership dues are very affordable...Just \$10 per person, (or \$40 per family). It is our goal to have at least one PTA member per student at our school. Joining the PTA shows your commitment to our kids, our community and our school!

PTA Meetings: We invite all parents to attend any of our General meetings (see Calendar on sfmspta.com.) Learn about how PTA is helping the school and how you can get involved. We also hear a brief "state of the school" discussion with Mr. Barnes at our monthly meetings. (Meetings are usually the third Tuesday of the month at 11:30am.) Our one evening meeting is just before Curriculum Night in September.

Free Dress Day: PTA sponsors a few days each semester that students buy a wristband for \$5 and they are "free" to dress in non-uniform clothing. District dress code guidelines still apply.

Spirit Lunches: PTA sells a Pizza Lunch a few times a year as a fundraiser for 8th Grade Dance. It consists of 2 pieces of pizza, a cookie and a water bottle.

Spirit Nights: Various restaurants in our community provide a fundraising opportunity for the school by hosting "spirit nights" during certain hours on a certain day. Make sure to let the cashier know you are attending for SFMS. Our school will receive a portion of sales back as a fundraiser!

Volunteering: All parents must register with the district **each year** in order to volunteer at school events. The link is on the PTA website and the district website. Volunteer opportunities at SFMS are found on the PTA Website. They are announced through eblast, Reminds, Facebook and other emails. Please consider helping out at the school! It's a great way to become part of the SFMS Community, meet other parents, and some of the teachers and administrators, etc.

Devices: New to our school this year, the district is providing a device for each student for a \$25 rental fee. PTA is providing the required bag for students to carry their device, charger, personal items and school work. SFMS is requiring just \$5 to purchase the bag that your student will keep.

Block Schedule: SFMS will have regular class schedules, periods 1-7 on Monday, Tuesday and Friday. Wednesday will have 90 minute class periods of 1, 3, 5, & 7. Thursday will have 90 minute class periods of 2, 4, 6 AND two 45-minute periods of Advisory Classes, to be determined by the student, counselor and teachers.

Supporting our School: If your family or business would like to be a Bobcat Sponsor, please check the PTA website Sponsors/Supporter Tab. Tax-free donation dollars go directly to our school and benefits all of our students.

Tips from other parents:

- All visitors must check in at the front office and receive a name badge, even if you are just going to the attendance office.
- If you need to take your child out of school, allot an additional 15+ minutes to get your child from a class prior to leaving the school. Plan on more time if they are in PE.
- Take a photo of your child's schedule. Have your child take a photo of their schedule. Students should keep it on their phone. Use the schedule when planning kids' appointments.
- Kids will receive a hall locker backpacks, books, lunch etc (combination lock is attached to that locker). Kids in PE or Athletics will have one little locker in PE for their gym clothes. Parents need to provide a combination lock for the gym locker. You can buy these at Walgreens, CVS etc. They are about \$10. Practice the combination.
- Buy two (2) sets of gym clothes. And LABEL! Gym clothes can be purchased at Bobcat Camp and/or will be distributed the first few days of school. You can send money later for an extra set of gym clothes.
- Remember that kids have to change for PE. Make sure their underwear is in good condition and that girls wear a tank top/sports bra under their clothes.
- Pay attention to the courses that build enough to earn high school credit – art, computer, wood shop, Spanish.
- Take Pre-AP everything. You can go down to Academics if the course is too hard. It is almost impossible to go up. Pre-AP needs about 80% from 5th grade.
- School supplies (ream of paper, pens, pencils, dry erase markers, Kleenex) and gift cards are great teacher gifts.
- Lunch – be prepared that kids may not want to bring lunch box. Paper/plastic bags are more common and the kids throw everything away.
- If your child orders a school lunch be aware that there are many extras they can buy! Check the on-line system for what they have purchased www.parentonline.net.

Tips for students:

- Practice a combination lock over the summer. Many, many, many times.
- Take a photo of the map of the school on PTA website (two levels). Once you receive your class schedule (at Bobcat Camp), practice where you need to go. Remember teachers understand kids being late the first few weeks of school as the 6th graders figure out where to go for classes.
- Keep a photo of your schedule on your phone.
- Save the notes from ALL your classes. You will need them for exams this year and maybe in future years!
- Keep your school supplies at home or in your locker. Teachers will tell you what to bring for each class.
- Don't decorate your locker right away. You could switch lockers within the first few weeks.
- Take developmental athletics even if you don't like sports. It's a great way to learn about each sport.
- Take Spanish. It is worth high school credit and can help with the high school schedule.
- Participate in Student Council. It's an easy way to get involved.
- Make a friend with an upper classman. They will help and you will have a friend at SHS.
- Attend any "incoming 6th grade" party. There is usually a pool party (minimal cost) before school starts.
- Learn how to use Google Docs