

# Carolina Friends School

## Student Success Program

### Parent Handbook

#### **Contact Information**

Josh Schafer

[jschafer@cfsnc.org](mailto:jschafer@cfsnc.org)

919-383-6602 ext.275

## **Why should I consider the Student Success program?**

As a parent, it can be difficult to find a tutor who specializes in the subject area needed. With the Student Success program, the tutors have already been vetted for you. They have been interviewed, their references have been checked, they are insured, and they have had a criminal background check. You can feel confident that if we recommend a tutor or coach for your child, then that person has the skillset needed to support your child.

Additionally, the school will support the tutors in their work with occasional opportunities for training, free copying, copies of student books, and a lending library of materials. Tutors can consult with Josh Schaffer, who has an extensive special education background, to brainstorm different approaches to working with students.

In many tutoring situations, one of the missing ingredients for an excellent tutoring experience is the communication between the subject area teacher and the tutor. Because our staff members work here on campus, they have access to your child's teacher and both parties are dedicated to work as partners to support your child.

In addition to regular updates from the tutor, you will receive a written evaluation of progress during the middle of the trimester and at the end of the trimester. Whenever possible, tutors will use measureable outcomes to assess progress.

## **What is the difference between tutoring and coaching?**

**Tutoring** involves providing direct teaching in a specific academic subject. At times tutors also help students with some organizational challenges, but this is not the focus of the support. Tutoring support falls into three general categories:

- **Remedial tutoring** is designed to reteach material that the student did not master in class. Remedial tutoring usually involves specialized teaching methods designed to enhance understanding. We recommend that students attend two sessions/week.
- **Classroom support** – This type of tutoring is designed to bolster the student's understanding of current classroom instruction. It may involve extra practice and/or specific teaching methods or strategies.
- **Homework support** – the tutor supervises the child's approach to homework and provides academic support with any homework that may be challenging.

**Coaching** is very different from tutoring in that the purpose is not to teach specific academic content, but rather to support students in developing their own strategies for time management, planning and organizational issues. Coaches meet with students once a week to guide the student in developing goals for completing responsibilities both in and out of school. The student makes a weekly plan with the coach's guidance. A key facet of the plan involves accountability for following through on the implementation of the plan. As a result, the coach and student agree on how often and when the student will report to the coach on his/her progress toward those goals. If the student is unsuccessful in meeting the goals, the coach will help the student figure out what got in the way of success and will help the student develop a different approach.

### **How to decide if your child needs a tutor or a coach?**

If your child is struggling in a particular class, you might think that hiring a tutor is the first thing to do. Many times, children will ask for a tutor. However, there are steps that you and your child should take before making the financial and time commitment to a tutor. Start by contacting the subject matter teacher and find out if there are office hours or lunchtime during which your child could be getting extra support. Most teachers are willing to offer extra help if they are just asked. You may even find out that the teacher has already offered this help, but your child neglected to tell you or take advantage of it. Sometimes, your child may be able to find a peer who can help them understand the material. There are three situations in which you may want to consider a tutor:

- Your child has already been using the teacher's extra support and is still struggling
- Your child has a history of difficulty in this subject
- Your child has a learning disability that is impeding his/her progress in this class

If your child's lack of time management and organizational skills are having a significant impact on his ability to complete his/her work on a regular basis, then you might want to consider hiring a coach for your child. It is extremely important that before hiring a coach, you speak with your child and ask them if s/he would like some support around these issues. If your child responds negatively, then do NOT go ahead and hire a coach. Coaching only works if the child is emotionally ready to tackle these issues. While it can be incredibly frustrating to watch a child make poor decisions, they will not make the changes that coaching enables unless s/he is invested in the decision. If you go ahead and hire a coach without your child's agreement, you risk alienating your child and having the child sabotage the process. Then when your child matures and decides s/he wants some support, they will have a negative association with coaching and likely will not use the service when it could be helpful.

**Josh's Role (Director of the program)** Oversees this program for the whole school. If you have comments or concerns regarding a facet of the program, please contact her first.

If you are concerned about your child's academic achievement and feel that there might be something more significant going on besides getting a little behind, please consult with your child's unit Learning Specialist (see below). They will be able to help you sort out whether or not an evaluation is in order and can refer you to reputable professionals to provide these evaluations.

### **Learning Specialists at CFS:**

Upper School - Josh Schaffer - [jschaffer@cfsnc.org](mailto:jschaffer@cfsnc.org)

Middle School – Kerry Howard – [khoward@cfsnc.org](mailto:khoward@cfsnc.org)

Lower and Early School – Caitlin Cameron – [ccameron@cfsnc.org](mailto:ccameron@cfsnc.org)

Once it is established that your child needs extra support, Josh will help you make an appropriate match for your child with a tutor or coach. He will discuss your child's tutoring or coaching needs with you. He will ask you what times your child has available for tutoring or coaching, and then will look at the tutor/coach schedules to make sure that those available can take on more students. He will then share the name(s) and contact information with you and you can begin making a connection. Once you and the tutor or coach have come to an agreement regarding time and place, please let Josh know of your choice and complete the **Parent Tutor Agreement** form. Josh will also be responsible for keeping track of tutoring sessions and billing.

### **Where and when does tutoring happen?**

**Lower School** – Tutoring spaces are coordinated in the Lower School in conjunction with the classroom teacher and Lisa Carboni, the Head Teacher of the Lower School. There are a variety of small spaces within the Lower School that are used for tutoring.

**Middle School** – Tutoring in the Middle School is scheduled either after school or during the school day during the afternoon elective periods in the designated tutoring rooms. If a student is to be tutored during the school day, s/he must enroll in a section of Homework Central during the time that s/he will be tutored. On days the student is not being tutored, s/he will have a supervised study hall.

**Upper School** – Tutoring in the Upper School occurs either in the Fishbowl, an available classroom, or Dave's office. Tutoring can be scheduled for after school or during the day. For students who want to tutoring/coaching services during the school day, they must enroll in a class that will allow them to miss a period to

receive services. Students should consult with their advisor and Judith Hawkes (US Registrar) to determine which classes qualify.

**How do I know if my child is making progress?** You will receive a mid-trimester progress report and an end of trimester report. In addition, the tutor will call or email you on a regular basis to give you an update as to how the session(s) went.

**What do I do if we find that my child and the tutor or coach is not a good match?** First, discuss this with the tutor to see if there is something that you are not understanding about the situation. It is possible the tutor may be able to make some changes in approach that will make your child feel more comfortable. If you really think that your child is either not making progress or it is just not a good fit, please let Natalie know. She will try to find another match for you if possible.

**What do I do if my child will be absent?** If your child is ill and cannot come to school on a day s/he is scheduled to receive services, please let the tutor/coach know by 8:00a.m. to avoid unnecessary trips to campus. If you do not notify the tutor and they make the trip to school, you may be charged for that session.

If you know that you will be going out of town, please do not depend upon your child informing the tutor. Give the tutor enough notice so that he or she can plan how to use that time, possibly with other students while you are gone.

**How does my child transition from the classroom to the tutor?** Lower School students will be picked up from their classroom by the tutor and returned to the teacher's care after the tutoring session is completed.

Upper and Middle School students are expected to report to their tutoring/coaching session during the class period in which it is scheduled. If the child does not arrive at the session as expected, the tutor/coach will make an effort to locate the student. If the student is not found, the tutor/coach will let the administrative assistant of that unit know. If the student regularly does not show up for the session on time, then the tutor/coach will let the parents know that this is becoming an impediment to progress.

**What are the fees and how does the payment system work?** You will be billed once a month for the tutoring sessions that occurred. The billing cycle runs from the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month to the 14<sup>th</sup> of the following month. The dates of the sessions being billed will be listed on the invoice. Fees for tutoring are \$60/45 minute session. Fees for coaching are \$70/45 minute session.

**Are fee reductions available?** Fee reductions for Student Success Program are available to families who are already participating in our adjusted tuition program, up to the same proportion of their tuition adjustment. Fee reductions will be available for no more than two sessions per week. Funding for Student Success Program fee reductions is limited. As such, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to offer a fee reduction for students enrolling in the program after our available funds have been allocated at the start of the school year.

If you are eligible and interested in receiving a fee reduction for the Student Success Program, please contact Katie Collini at [kcollini@cfsnc.org](mailto:kcollini@cfsnc.org).

**How do we end the tutoring or coaching sessions?** If you decide that you need to end the tutoring or coaching sessions for any reason, please give the tutor or coach fourteen day's notice prior to the last session. This allows the tutor or coach time to find another student to fill your child's spot.