

SAL HANDBOOK Fall 2026 -2027

Welcome to the Spanish Acquisition Lab (SAL)! This handbook outlines important guidelines and policies designed to support a positive, respectful, and effective learning environment for all students and families. When enrolling, families have signed the online agreement, which includes a commitment to follow these rules and procedures. We encourage everyone to review this handbook carefully to help ensure a successful and enjoyable experience in our immersion classes.

Code of Conduct

At Spanish Acquisition Lab (SAL), we are committed to creating a respectful, safe, and welcoming learning environment for students, teachers, and families. The following standards apply to all participants:

- Treat others with kindness, patience, and respect at all times.
- Practice honesty, integrity, and responsibility in actions and words.
- Maintain a positive, cooperative attitude with teachers, parents, and fellow students.
- Uphold SAL's values and policies during all activities, including arrival, class time, recess, and dismissal.

Theme Quote:

"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." (*Colossians 4:6*)

SAL means "salt" in Spanish. This verse not only highlights our desire to learn another language in order to be able to answer others in a second language, but it also guides us in how we should learn and interact during class time. In SAL classes, we aim to:

- Speak kindly and respectfully to everyone, helping create a positive learning environment.
- Communicate patiently and graciously as we practice new language skills, understanding that learning is a process.
- Encourage one another with words that build up rather than discourage.

Building Expectations at Radiant Church

- Treat the church facilities and property with respect and care at all times. Clean up after yourselves.
- Be mindful of church staff and other groups using the building; maintain a quiet and respectful demeanor in shared spaces like hallways and restrooms.
- Supervise children closely to ensure safety and minimize disruptions outside of class.
- Food and drinks should be consumed only in the Lodge, XFactory, Cabin, or out at the playground, unless other approval has been given for special situations.
- Report any issues or damages promptly to SAL staff or church personnel.
- Remember that we are guests in the church, and our behavior reflects on SAL and our families.

Building Expectations at PPLD Library

- Treat the library facilities and property with respect and care at all times. Clean up after yourselves.
- Be mindful of staff and other groups using the building; maintain a quiet and respectful demeanor in shared spaces like hallways and restrooms.
- Supervise children closely to ensure safety and minimize disruptions outside of class.
- Food is not permitted in Library, except for prepackaged pouches and dry snacks for children in the Children's area only or in Meeting Rooms (not study rooms). Most SAL classes are in Meeting Rooms, but please do not consume food during classes.
- Drinks are only allowed in containers covered with a lid or cap.
- Report any issues or damages promptly to SAL staff or Library personnel.
- Remember that we are guests in the Library, and our behavior reflects on SAL and our families.

SAL Dress Code

To maintain a respectful, family-friendly learning environment, all participants are expected to dress modestly and appropriately during SAL activities. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Clothing should be modest and suitable for a diverse group of families.
- Avoid wearing items with inappropriate, suggestive, scary, or morbid imagery.
- Clothing with offensive or explicit language is not permitted.
- Do not wear excessively worn, torn, or revealing clothes, including:
 - Garments with large holes or tears
 - Clothing that exposes undergarments
 - Pajamas or sleepwear
 - Hoods over the head
- Avoid wearing anything overly distracting, overly-sized hats, jingly necklaces, tall mohawks, or similar attention-grabbing styles—except on designated “crazy hair” or special event days.

Thank you for helping us create a comfortable and welcoming space for everyone.

SAL Class Language Policy

Our goal is to create an authentic Spanish immersion environment that maximizes language acquisition for all participants. These classes are designed to mirror the way toddlers acquire their first language—through consistent exposure, visual and situational cues, and active participation without constant translation. Research shows that relying on translating everything into English slows down the learning process, while receiving direct input in the target language accelerates comprehension and fluency. Because of this we ask all Parents/Guardians, Students, and Instructors to adhere to the following:

1. Spanish-First Environment
 - English should be kept to an absolute minimum during class time.
 - Parents, guardians, and visitors are asked to model this expectation by speaking in Spanish as much as possible while in the classroom.
 - If it becomes necessary to speak with a student in English, please step outside the classroom to avoid disrupting the immersion environment.
2. No “Giving the Answer”
 - Parents/guardians should not provide the answer to any student—whether in English or Spanish—during class activities.
 - Instead, allow instructors to provide the necessary support, guidance, or wait time so the student can work through the response independently.
3. Supports for Communication
 - Students will have a cheat sheet of sentence starters they can insert in the back of their name card holders to help them communicate in Spanish when needed. At times, Parents/Guardians will be asked to help their students come up with more sentence starters they would like to add throughout the week. These supports are primarily intended for students who can read, but younger learners will receive teacher guidance and visuals to assist them.
 - Instructors will offer additional supports such as visual aides, cognates, modeling/rephrasing, starting the words/phrases, or leading them to ask “Cómo se dice_____?” along with other methods to help students express their ideas without reverting to English.
 - Please don’t hesitate to communicate with the instructors (outside of class time) if your students are struggling, discouraged, or if you need more supports in some way. We want this to be a positive and fun experience!

SAL Behavior Management Plan

We believe every student can make good choices and succeed. When behavior needs correction, after normal redirection in class, we follow these steps:

1. Warning

- Instructor speaks with the student at their level, using eye contact. This will be done in English, unless the student is fluent enough to understand Spanish.
- Rules and expectations are reviewed.
- Student is reminded that continued behavior will lead to Step 2.

2. Parent Involvement

- Parent/guardian is asked to take the student out of the classroom and have a talk with the student. (If parent/guardian was not present when the behavior occurred, the instructor will call the parent to the room and first share something positive about the student and then explain the incident before asking parent/guardian to take the student out of the room for a minute or two to go over expectations again).
- The student may return to class after this and may be given supports to help the student avoid repeated behavioral incidents (ie. a sensory fidget, different seating arrangement, etc.)

3. Removal from Group

- If behavior continues to occur, student will be asked to sit with the parent/guardian in class or be taken out of the classroom by the parent/guardian for the remainder of the class period, depending on the severity of the situation.
- After class or over phone/email that week, the instructor will work with the parent/guardian (and possibly SAL Director) on a possible behavior plan or reward system for this student in order to help prevent further class disruptions or future behavioral incidents.

Note:

- Any injury caused to another student, explicit defiance towards the instructor, or damage to property will result in immediate removal from the room with parent/guardian (step 3) for the duration of that class period and a note will be made in the student's record. Serious or repeated incidents may result in dismissal from the program.

Dame Cinco (Give Me 5!) 🖐️

Dame Cinco is our special signal to get everyone's attention. When the teacher says "Dame Cinco," students prepare by focusing on these five body parts as we count down from 5 to 0:

- Boca 🗨️ (Mouth) — Quiet and ready to listen.
- Manos 🖐️ (Hands) — Still and calm, not distracting.
- Pies 🦶 (Feet) — Quiet on the floor, ready to sit or stand nicely.
- Ojos 👁️ (Eyes) — Looking at the speaker or activity.
- Oídos 🦻 (Ears) — Listening carefully to what is being said.

When all five are ready, students are focused and ready to learn!

Bathroom Policy

Radiant Church

SAL abides by Radiant Church's building policies, and one of their requests is that we never have just one adult alone with any children (unless that adult is the parent of those children). Because of this, we send students on their own to the bathroom (or with a parent) and expect them to return promptly. If a child does not know how to find the restroom independently, either two adults will go to show the way or the parent will be contacted. If the age of the child is so young that he or she requires assistance, a second adult will always be present.

PPLD Library

Because the classes at the library are only 50 minutes, we ask that all students use the restroom facilities before or after class. In case of an unusual urgent need, teachers will contact parents to take their own children to the restroom for safety reasons. If a parent cannot be found quickly enough on the premises, the whole class will go to the hall near the restroom that the student will use, and the teacher will check the restrooms before sending the student in there and wait in the hall with the class for the student to return.

SAL Sickness Policy

Students may not attend SAL activities if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever 99.9 degrees and higher (this includes the night before/morning of the session) ~ No fever for 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication. If you had to give your child medicine the night before then that still means they cannot come to the session the next morning.
- Rash ~ Unexplained rash ~ Consult doctor/Need a note stating your child is not contagious.
- Vomiting or/and Diarrhea ~ All symptoms must be gone and no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.
- Strep Throat ~ Consult doctor/Need a note. Child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours and be without a fever without medication for it.
- Flu/Bronchitis/Pneumonia ~Clearance from medical provider. (This usually takes about 2-3 days before they can come back to tutoring. Must be on antibiotics and no fever for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication.)
- Ear Infection ~ Child must be on antibiotics and no fever for 24 hours before returning.
- Conjunctivitis (red eyes with yellow discharge)/Pink Eye ~ Child must be on eye drops/antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Head Lice ~ When all nits have been removed and child is cleared by the doctor. (Usually takes 24 hours to treat head and house.)

Common Cold Policy

Children suffering from a common cold will be assessed on an individual basis. Factors of consideration include the developmental level of your child in congruence with the ability to limit the spread of germs. The younger the child, the more difficult it is to keep the spread of germs down. For example: hand to face contact, mouthing of toys, uncontrolled nasal discharge, uncovered sneezing and coughing etc.

A child may return when he or she is free from symptoms and no longer infectious. The child should also be well enough to actively participate throughout the day. In the case of serious or unexplainable illness, a doctor's medical clearance may be required prior to admission back into care. If you have any questions concerning this policy and whether your child should attend, please contact Bethany Fischer or your child's instructor.

Guest Policy

To maintain a safe and effective learning environment, classroom observation is reserved for paying parents/guardians only.

Special circumstances may allow for other visitors (such as grandparents visiting from out of town, extended family members interested in seeing the program, or friends curious about the language-learning process or interested in possible future enrollment). However, these visits must be:

- Pre-approved by SAL leadership in advance.
- Limited to one visitor per family per semester (except in rare approved cases).
- Limited to one visitor per classroom on the same day in order to preserve space and minimize disruption.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep classrooms focused, safe, and welcoming for all students.

Photo Policy

We love to celebrate learning and community through photos. SAL may use photos of teachers and students during classes or events for promotional and communication purposes, such as our website, flyers, social media, or newsletters.

Our Photo Guidelines

- Photos will never include identifying personal details (names, addresses, etc.).
- We assume opt-in permission unless a parent or guardian notifies us otherwise in writing.
- Teachers and parents may take photos for personal use only and may not share them publicly without written permission from families.

To opt out of photo use for your family, email us at sal@teachers.org

Inclement Weather Policy

Radiant Church

SAL does **not** follow local school district closures or delays. Instead, we follow the closure and delay decisions made by Radiant Church.

If the church closes due to severe weather, families will be notified promptly via the BAND app and email. To make up for any missed classes, an optional snow day is reserved at the end of the semester on **May 12th**.

In the case of a delayed start (likely beginning at 10:00 AM), classes will be adjusted to fit within the shortened schedule.

PPLD Library

SAL does **not** follow local school district closures or delays. Instead, we follow the closure and delay decisions made by PPLD Library.

If the library closes due to severe weather, families will be notified promptly via the BAND app and email. To make up for any missed classes, an optional snow day is reserved at the end of the semester on May 14th for Thursday evening classes and on May 15th for Friday morning classes.

In the case of a delayed start (usually beginning at 11:00 AM at the East Library as it normally opens at 10:00 on Fridays), all classes will be cancelled for the week.

Communication

We use the BAND App to share weekly class information between parents and teachers. Teachers will post in class folders some of the resources used in class, and any optional homework or additional learning opportunities. Teachers may also share reminders in the class chat. Additionally, parents can message teachers privately if they have questions or concerns. Copies of this handbook and other program handouts will be posted in a folder on the app to view or print as you see fit. The app includes a digital calendar that can be synced with some calendar apps.

General announcements will be emailed. For time-sensitive information, such as room changes or in class emergencies, parents will be contacted by phone.