

SDS Middle School Student – Parent Handbook 2018-2019

“Middle School is its own unique and distinct division. Our faculty loves teaching this age group. We honor the fragility of this time in their lives along with the need and importance for students to have some fun throughout our days together. A few of our many hopes for students are that they leave our Middle School with a multitude of varied experiences, friendships, self awareness and acceptance, curiosity, the ability to problem solve, and a strong base of knowledge. We want them to see and believe in their value and potential during these middle years. In short, each of us wants middle school to be better for our students today than it was for each of us many years ago! ”

***Farrar B. Richardson, M.Ed.
Head of Middle School***

Dear All,

Welcome to 2018-19! Whether you are a returning parent or student or a new parent or student, the beginning of the year often brings, along with excitement and hope, a bit of anxiety and unease. At least, it always did and always does for me. My hope is that this handbook, full of too many words I realize, might offer you a few answers and reminders to help ease any of those early twinges of angst or even midyear confusion.

I adore the middle school and I am excited to welcome you back to our halls or onto the halls for the first time. I have made a few changes to things that I think you may want to know and review, so take a bit of time between now and the first of the school year to read through these pages and begin the process of putting your parent or student hat back on again. It will be okay!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me by email, set up a time to meet in person, or call. It is our goal to make this year a really important one.

Best,

Farrar or Mrs. R. (farrar.richardson@sdsgriffin.org)

Philosophy and Overview

By the time students leave the middle school, they will have experienced a thorough grounding in academics, arts, and athletics coupled with intentional consideration of themselves and others. Our efforts to do so focus on the growth and development of each student's *character, knowledge base, and essential learning skills* while considering the individual's unique combination of strengths, weaknesses, life experiences, and life view.

We strive to develop the ***character*** of each child by promoting:

- A commitment to integrity in all interactions
- A healthy self-image
- A heart for others
- A strong sense of personal responsibility
- An ethic of service
- The strength to persevere

We strive to develop the ***knowledge base*** of each child by providing:

- An appropriately challenging academic program
- A focus on understanding and applying what has been learned
- Engaging and inspiring learning environments
- Authentic, relevant, multidimensional, and diverse curricular experiences

We strive to develop ***essential learning skills*** by enhancing each child's ability to:

- Ask meaningful questions and find pertinent answers
- Express ideas, feelings, and opinions through various means
- Understand and interpret the ideas of others and assess their validity
- Recognize the essential elements of tasks, concepts, and perspectives
- Construct defensible arguments, draw reasonable conclusions, and make appropriate inferences
- Solve problems creatively, collaboratively, effectively, and efficiently
- Develop and demonstrate his or her talents

Our Faculty

Our middle school faculty recognize the challenge before them when students walk into their classrooms. Middle schoolers progress through a time of tremendous personal growth and transition. They enter the middle school as lower school students and they exit as upper schoolers. Throughout their time in the middle school, students are

continually faced with emotional, physical, social, and academic challenges as they seek to understand who they are and how they fit into the world. It is frequently difficult to know what outward behaviors are caused by which challenges. In order to attain the goals we have laid out for our students, teachers must continually seek to navigate a series of delicate balances: between dealing with symptoms and addressing the underlying problem; between setting high expectations and making sure they are achievable; between providing support and promoting independence; between enjoying the unpredictability of the age group and encouraging greater degrees of focus and maturity; between loving with compassion and grace and also discipline and accountability; between providing concrete learning experiences and developing abstract thinking. Our middle school faculty has the rare blend of high levels of academic expertise, deep care and concern for each child, keen understandings of middle school students, and a heartfelt commitment to making middle school so much better than it was for each of us.

Our Program

Each facet of the Spartanburg Day School's Middle School academic program contributes to our goal to provide students with a highly-integrated, experientially-based, and academically appropriate curriculum as we seek to fulfill our mission of developing thoughtful, conscientious, hard working, and educated young people. The artful and creative integration of academics and life experience provided by a dedicated and expert faculty offers an environment for students that is second to none.

Grade Level Trips

Each year, every grade level takes a two, three or four night trip. These trips afford our students the opportunity to develop stronger relationships with one another, greater understandings of themselves and their environment, and more pertinent connections between what they learn in the classroom and the real world. Our fifth and sixth grades seek team building and exploration through a variety of outdoor education centers, recreation facilities and camps. Our seventh graders trek to Williamsburg, Virginia to explore this historic city and eighth graders travel to Washington, DC for a bit of everything. Year after year, class trips rank as one of our students' favorite things about middle school.

Typical Courses

5th Grade	6th Grade
Math	Math
English: Literature and Writing classes are taught separately, keyboarding	English: Literature and Writing classes are taught separately, keyboarding
Science: Human and Ecological Systems	Science: Earth and Life Science
Social Studies: Ancient Civilizations	Social Studies: The Middle Ages
Physical Education	Physical Education
Spanish	Spanish
Introduction to Music Theory, Recorders	Band
Art	Art
Topics in Middle School	Ballroom Dancing
7th Grade	8th Grade
Math: Pre-Algebra 7, Algebra 1	Math: Pre-Algebra 8, Algebra I or Geometry
Literature and Writing	Literature and Writing
Science: Life and Environmental Science	Science: Introduction to Physical Science
United States History, Part I	United States History, Part II
Latin I, Part A	Latin I, Part B
Spanish I, Part A	Spanish I, Part B
Art	Art
Band: Concert and Jazz bands	Band: Concert and Jazz bands

*Please note: Each grade level completes formal health education units during their science classes in 5th and 6th grades and 7th and 8th grade students are exposed to a variety of outside speakers and workshops on topics of health and wellness. Technology and digital citizenship are also integrated into all classes throughout their middle school curriculum. **Also, all 7th and 8th graders are required to participate in at least one team sport each year.***

Wellness Wednesdays

Most Wednesday afternoons, students and faculty in the Middle School observe Wellness Wednesday. Students can participate in a variety of activities (yoga, drama, coding, knitting, ultimate frisbee, etc.) and engage with other MS students in a variety of grade levels. The goal is to continue to promote curiosity and encourage a love of learning and overall balance and wellness. Students may wear SDS t-shirts (untucked), sports practices typically begin early on Wednesdays, and no homework is assigned so families may enjoy an evening together.

20 Time

Part of a 7th and 8th grade student's experience in history class is a year long project that allows them to deeply pursue a creative interest they otherwise would not experience in our academic program. Projects must benefit an audience by fulfilling a need. Students brainstorm, research, pitch proposals, blog, seek out mentors, and 8th grade students make final presentations in a 20time Finale scheduled one evening in April or May.

MS Student Life

Developed relationships are among the most important components of the middle school experience. Interactions among students are consistently monitored and students are encouraged and expected to treat one another with dignity and respect. Throughout the year, we provide a variety of venues, activities, and structures in which students and teachers can get to know each other and build community. The following quote from Linda Crawford and Scott Tyink captures our thinking:

“When the doors open in September, if there aren’t any structures to support healthy, inclusive communication and relationship-building, they won’t happen. Community and trust don’t occur just because we all came to the same school and everyone is following the same schedule. They are built deliberately, piece by piece, out of every encounter between one person and another.”

-Guidelines for Developmental Designs for Middle School

One of the primary means used to develop supportive and positive relationships among students and between students and their teachers takes the form of Advisory. Each year, students are assigned to a teacher who serves as the advisor for that student. The role of the advisor is multi-faceted: mentor, guide, advocate, encourager. The advisory, consisting of about 12-15 students, serves as a connecting point for each student as bonds are developed, a sense of community is instilled, and a compulsion to encourage is ingrained. As students seek to gain the increasing degrees of independence for which we hope, the advisor serves as a partner with parents as they navigate these years—providing perspective, insight, and information.

Game nights, scavenger hunts, tech free day, the Sixth Grade Ball, Where’s the Love? Dodgeball, 7th and 8th grade buddies, and fall and spring dances for 7th and 8th grades are a few of our traditional community building events.

Service Learning

The Middle School works to connect service and learning. Whether serving classmates, school, community, nation, or the world, we must recognize problems, imagine solutions, and feel compelled to act. Through grade level and 20time projects, students develop their planning, organization, problem- solving and many other types of skills. Through the experience of working with others, students develop an appreciation for the common human experience among diverse individuals and in the process gain greater understandings of who they are.

The SDS Honor Code

“As a member of the Spartanburg Day School community, I agree that I must demonstrate respect both for myself and for every other member of the community. An important aspect of demonstrating respect is that I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I tolerate those who do.”

When a student is suspected of violating the honor code, every effort is made to fully understand the circumstances, provide ample opportunity for a student to reflect on and acknowledge his or her mistake, and orchestrate the consequences to promote growth.

Expectations of Middle School Students

The following list provides students with some specific descriptions of behavioral expectations in our middle school:

- Be honest even when it is uncomfortable for you.
- Make eye contact when speaking with students and adults.
- Be courteous looking for opportunities to greet friends, adults, and strangers on the hall, open doors for others, and help those who may be carrying an extra load.
- Develop the habit of introducing yourself to individuals who may not know you.
- Adhere to our cell phone policy.
- Respect and follow expectations regarding places where students are allowed to be on campus.
- Dress neatly and appropriately for school and all of its activities avoiding clothes that are revealing, ragged, unsafe, or disruptive.
- Practice good hygiene.
- Be punctual and reliable.
- Take the time to get to know others before making judgments.
- Avoid saying something about another person that you would not say directly to that person.
- Be an encourager of others.
- Apologize when you realize you have hurt someone.
- Take good care of all by keeping our school clean, caring for yourself and your belongings, and making the most of the opportunities you have to learn and to serve others and our community.
- Refrain from physical or verbal aggression with the intent to hurt another student.
- Respond positively to correction and constructive criticism.
- Enhance the learning of others by contributing actively to class discussions, appreciating your gifts and the gifts of others, and by working hard.

Consequences and Encouragements

The middle school faculty and staff will promote the development of the character and independent decision making of the students through a variety of means.

We strive to consistently hold students to high standards, and we sweat the small stuff. Helping students understand what is acceptable and what is not begins with positive modeling, verbal correction and encouragement. We recognize that middle school students do not always understand how they should respond or conduct themselves in particular situations, and we work with them to develop these understandings and the ability to monitor themselves. The use of appropriate teacher language and various forms of redirection serve as effective interventions most of the time. If a student continues to make poor or disruptive choices, he or she will lose privileges or receive a logical consequence for the poor choice. Our goal is to develop responsible independence in each student and equip them with the tools to monitor themselves accordingly.

Cell Phone Policy

Quite simply, cell phones are not allowed in the middle school. If a parent feels that his or her child must have a cell phone, phones are expected to be powered off and stored in a student's backpack from the point of arrival to dismissal.

If a student chooses not to respect or adhere to this policy, a student's cell phone will be taken and kept in the MS office until the end of the day when a parent is notified and permission is granted to return the student's cell phone.

Physical, Verbal, or Social Media Aggression Policy

Physical, verbal, or social media aggression with the intent to harm will result in a call home made by the teacher or Division Head and the student's immediate removal from the class or environment. A student will be invited to return when appropriate conversations, apologies, and plans for moving forward have taken place.

Decisions regarding school dismissal will remain at the discretion of the Division Head and Head of School.

Specific Guidelines, Procedures, and Expectations

The School Day

Students may be dropped off at the curb in front of the 300 and 400 wings each morning between 7:30 and 8:00 am.

After unpacking and preparing for the day, students may go to the Dining Commons for breakfast, report to an Advisory classroom, take care of any unfinished assignment, speak with a teacher, or congregate in the hall to play board games or socialize with friends.

Attendance will be taken during advisory each morning. If your child arrives at school after 8:00 am, he or she should sign-in on the sign in sheet in the MS office.

The school day will begin promptly at 8:00am with students in advisory. Advisory is an important time designed to prepare students for learning, to establish and promote a learning community among students and faculty, to provide important information regarding schedules and school events, to celebrate student or team accomplishments, and to develop a comfortable bond between the student and his or her advisor.

After School

Classes end at 3:05pm each day. Middle School students have four options:

1. Proceed to the carpool line in front of the 300 and 400 wings to be picked up by a parent or guardian.
2. Attend a planned tutorial with a teacher in his or her room.
3. Attend study hall with one of the middle school teachers on duty. There is a 5th-8th grade study hall Monday through Thursday from 3:10-4:00.
4. Report to any athletic practices beginning at 3:15.

Students who choose not to follow the above expectations for after school will lose the privilege of being on campus after 3:10pm.

At 4:00, students who are in the 5th and 6th grades may join our Extended Day program in the Lower School building. Students who are in the 7th and 8th grades may go to the library until 4:30pm. Students who are playing a school sport with a 4:00 or 4:15 start time may proceed to the locker room or practice fields. **Any 7th or 8th grade student**

who is not playing a sport must work out a plan with his or her advisor, parent, and division head if staying after 4:30 is needed.

Signing Out

Before leaving school due to an appointment, illness, etc. a student's parent must sign out his or her child in the MS office. This may be done by having the student present a note to Mrs. Hutchins or by speaking with Mrs. Hutchins in person or by phone. Please try to inform your child's advisor and Mrs. Hutchins, or have your child inform his or her classroom teachers that he or she is leaving (in advance if possible) and have your child gather his or her assignments.

The Dress Code

Concern for personal appearance is an indication of self-respect and of courtesy toward others. All dress should be evidence of appropriateness, modesty, and good taste. We ask that parents take responsibility to make sure that their children adhere to the dress code guidelines of SDS. The following guidelines are provided but should not be viewed as an exhaustive list. The determination of appropriateness and neatness rests with the Advisor and Division Head.

- Clothing should be clean, in a good state of repair, and fit properly – no frayed ends, no holes in clothes, etc.
- Students should avoid clothing that is excessively baggy or excessively tight.
- Undergarments should not be visible.
- Shirts should not display any writing other than small logos. Offensive messages and advertisements for alcohol and tobacco will not be permitted.
- T-shirts are not allowed except for Wednesdays when SDS t-shirts are permitted.
- Jeans are permitted, but athletic (shorts, sweatpants or jerseys) attire and fatigues are not.
- Shoes should provide an appropriate level of comfort, support, and protection for the varied activities of the school day. Flip-flops and similarly casual shoes are not permitted. Pullovers and sweatshirts are permitted.
- Hats should be removed inside the building except on special occasions approved by the division head.
- Scarfs and other head adornments should not cover the head, but exceptions are made for religious purposes.
- Hair should be neat and clean and styled so that eyes are visible.

Boys

- Shirts must have a collar and sleeves. Turtlenecks and mock-turtlenecks are allowed.
- Shirts without a collar may be worn under a sweater or a sweatshirt. Shirts should not display any writing other than small logos.
- Shirts must be tucked-in unless they are button downs.

Girls

- Collared or collarless blouses/shirts must cover the shoulders and back. Tops may not reveal midriff, be low cut, reveal undergarments, or be excessively tight.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts should fall at a 5" inseam or longer. Leggings and jeggings may only be worn under skirts and dresses that fall at the length of one's fingertips when arms are stretched downward.
- With this dress code, there are some parameters that are difficult to define precisely. The only path to consistency, short of a uniform, is for the Advisor or Division Head to be the ultimate judge of whether an item of clothing meets the standards of the dress code. The first few weeks of school will be considered a learning process for the areas of the dress code that are less clearly defined. Please be patient and understanding when your child's Advisor or the Division Head's definition is different than your own.

In light of the need to keep parents informed and a supportive part of the process, some violations of the dress code during the first few weeks of school will only result in a note home to help students and parents understand the parameters. However, as soon as we believe students and parents understand the expectations, we will ask students to resolve any dress code violation before attending class by calling home and having clothes that meet dress code standards delivered to school.

Hallways and Breezeways

The hallway is to remain neat and clear. Book bags live in lockers. Band instruments are to be taken to the band storage room. Athletic bags that cannot fit in the lockers should be taken to the gym and locked in a locker. Please speak with athletic director, Mrs. Joy Couch, if you need a locker assigned in the gym. Students will need to supply a lock for athletic lockers and are encouraged to keep gym lockers locked when not in use.

We encourage and expect students to walk in the halls or covered walkways in a way that makes travel around our campus safe and enjoyable for all. In addition, it is the responsibility of each of us to care for our environment and to respect the work done by others to care for our grounds and our school.

*****Consequences for students who do not care for our school property in some way will be time and effort working in whatever area was disrespected. For example, if a bathroom is not cared for properly or vandalized, plans will be made for that student to work alongside a member of our facilities staff to properly clean such bathrooms or other misused space.***

Textbooks and School Supplies

Seventh and eighth grade students purchase all textbooks. All school supplies for grades fifth through eighth are included in tuition and will be distributed on the first day of school.

Seventh and eighth graders must also bring their own laptop.

All students are required to use a daily assignment planner provided by the school. Seventh and eighth grade students may choose a planner of their own preference in place of the school provided planner. Those will need to be purchased by the student and will not be reimbursed by the school.

If a student loses a purchased book during the year, replacement copies can be ordered through the Wofford Bookstore. Students are responsible for replacing the book in a timely manner.

Lockers

We encourage students to keep lockers neat at all times. Locker inspections will occur periodically. Lockers must be free of open food and drink containers. Eating on the hall is allowed during indoor recess and morning breaks. Students may personalize the inside of his or her locker only. Lockers are the personal property of the individual student. Students may not open another student's locker without permission. Violation of this expectation is considered an honor code violation. Locks are not allowed on middle school hall lockers.

Transitions and Class Times

Students enjoy five minutes of transition time between each class. Students are expected to use the times between classes to use the restroom, wash hands, drink water, and gather materials for the next class.

Lunch

Lunch is designed to be at time of enjoyment, nourishment and socialization. Most days, students sit with their grade level for lunch. Eighth graders may eat outside on nice days as long as a teacher on duty accompanies them. All students must ask for permission from one of the teachers on duty to leave the Dining Commons to return to his or her locker, work in a classroom, etc. Students are expected to use appropriate manners and to clean up after themselves.

Recess

All students are encouraged to be out on the fields during recess unless given permission to do otherwise by the teacher on duty. We value time each day for movement, socialization, friendly competition and play as well as fresh air. Students are expected to bring appropriate outerwear for the weather as recess happens every day.

Students are to follow all behavioral expectations and agreements set by teachers on duty. In general, students should not engage in games or activities that would easily lead to injury to individuals or harm to property.

Fifth and sixth graders will use the field on the side of the 400 wing. Fifth and sixth graders who would like to enjoy a snack during recess may bring one from home. Purchasing a snack from the Dining Commons is a seventh and eighth grade privilege.

Seventh and eighth graders will have recess on the Dorrance Plaza and the fields below and sometimes on the 400 wing recess fields. 8th grade students are allowed to work on the 400 wing halls during recess if needed. If earned, this privilege may be granted to 7th grade students for the second semester. They may bring a snack from home or purchase a snack from the Dining Commons during this time.

MS Parents' Night

MS Parents' Night is held shortly after the beginning of the year and is designed to give parents an opportunity to hear from the division head, meet their child's teachers and receive information about each course and what their child can expect, and socialize with each other.

Conferences

Middle school teachers hold two conferences with parents each year. The conferences occur in the fall and spring. Students do not attend school on Conference Days. Parents are encouraged to sign up with two to three subject area teachers of their choosing and the process of signing up for conferences takes place online.

Who to contact for what...

MS Administrative Assistant, Mary Hutchins, ext. 2011, mary.hutchins@sdsgriffin.org

Mrs. Hutchins is a tremendous resource for a variety of information related to the middle school. Please contact her regarding any issues related to your child's attendance, tardiness, or off-campus appointments.

- If your child is sick or you know your child is going to be late to school due to an appointment of some kind, please call or email Mrs. Hutchins and copy your child's advisor with this information. For late arrivals, please instruct your child to go to the MS office to sign-in.
- If your child needs to leave school early, he or she must sign-out at the MS Office and present a note to Mrs. Hutchins.

Your child's advisor

Your child's advisor is an important vehicle for the school to communicate information, concerns, or successes with the parents as well as for the parents to communicate with the school. The advisor is charged with monitoring the whole child and looking for patterns in behavior and performance that emerge in multiple places.

You will receive an email from your child's advisor just prior to the start of school with information about how to contact him or her.

Your child's teachers

As we move students towards responsible independence, it is imperative that teachers and parents maintain active communication about a student's effort, behavior and performance. This communication should not replace the communication between students and teachers which should be encouraged at every turn. Additionally, parents are encouraged to speak directly with their child's teachers whenever concerns arise while keeping the advisor in the communication loop.

MS Head, Farrar Richardson, ext. 2012, farrar.richardson@sdsgriffin.org

Parents should always feel free to call or email Farrar to ask questions or discuss concerns that cannot be easily answered or solved by a teacher or advisor. If an in person meeting is desired, please contact Mary Hutchins who will set up a time on Farrar's calendar to meet.

Grade Level Parents

Grade level parent volunteers serve an important function in the life of the middle school. They support the efforts of the teachers and advisors by organizing and supporting a variety of activities such as arranging parent drivers for off-campus events, planning and providing refreshments for social events, and facilitating communication between the parents and the school.

Grade level parents will meet regularly with the Division Head for a variety of purposes including organizing efforts to support MS functions, communicating commendations and recommendations about the functioning of the middle school, and fostering strong communication.

Class dues are included in tuition and will be used at the discretion of the grade level parent and Division Head.

Homework

Homework is a part of the learning process and teachers work to ensure that it is well planned, pertinent, and appropriately challenging. Our goal is for homework to enhance student learning without requiring an unreasonable commitment of time. Students in the middle school may have homework on the weekends to prepare for Monday. Middle School students will not have homework on Wednesday evenings as outlined by Wellness Wednesdays.

Assessments

Teachers are expected to give ample advance notification to students and post assessments on the assignment/homework calendar for each grade level. Assessments and the accompanying processes of preparation and post analysis should be viewed as equal partners in the learning process. To that end, students are guided in developmentally appropriate ways towards effective means of preparation. They will be challenged appropriately with a variety of questions from many levels of Bloom's taxonomy and other measures of cognitive demand. Students can expect to be given timely feedback and significant opportunities for reflection following assessments. If there is a concern regarding this routine in a particular class, it is important that the student and parent first contact the teacher to set up a time to meet. If an inconsistency continues, it is appropriate at that point to notify the Division Head.

Student Absences and Missed Assignments

If a student is absent due to illness, it is expected that he or she first take care of his or her health. Students may not attend school while running a fever and must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to campus. When students are well enough to return to school, they are granted the number of days they were absent to make up missed assignments and assessments.

Teachers will place classwork that cannot be accessed online or in a textbook on the front of a student's locker by 3:05 the day he or she was absent. It is the student's responsibility to make time to meet with teachers upon his or her return to plan for making up work and taking missed assessments.

In the case of extended absences due to illness, advisors will work with both students and teachers to assist a plan for making up school work. At that time, modifications to assignments may be made and those decisions will be made by individual teachers.

Planned absences such as family trips, athletic or academic competitions, etc. **follow a different set of expectations.** Those absences must be communicated ahead of time by the student to each teacher and work is expected to be completed either prior to the absence or upon the student's return. Students will have up to two days to make up assessments missed. If the assessment occurs on the day of the student's absence, the student will be expected to make up that assessment upon his or her return. If the *review for the assessment* occurs on the day a student is absent, he or she will have one extra day to make up that assessment.

Extra Help

If a student has been absent or is struggling with a concept, a tutorial may be scheduled. The most logical time for extra help is after school from 3:15-4:00 pm when all middle school teachers are available for students in their classrooms.

Ultimately, our goal is for students to take ownership for their learning and seek extra help when needed, however, we are also aware that middle school students frequently need support in asking for help and arranging these opportunities.

Accommodations

Accommodations for students with documented learning differences will be made at the discretion of the Head of the VISTAS Program in consultation with the Head of the Middle School, educational specialists and psychologists. Classroom accommodations are provided to make learning more accessible to the student with identified disabilities. Accommodations do not change the expected academic standards a student is working toward.

In order to develop an Accommodations Plan, there must be a full psycho-educational evaluation on file at Spartanburg Day School, and it must be current within three years of the evaluation date. The information provided in the psycho-educational evaluation is used as the basis for determining the accommodations for which the student is eligible. There must be a documented diagnosis of learning disorders. The Head of the VISTAS Program will formulate an accommodation plan that will be submitted to the Head of the Middle School for agreement. The plan will be discussed with the student and teachers will be informed of the student's accommodations after final approval.

If you wish to discuss the question of accommodations, please set up an appointment with the VISTAS Director, Tara Greer.

Tutoring and Academic Support

Our goal at the Spartanburg Day School is for every student to develop the tools he or she needs to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Teachers focus on our students as individuals. If a student needs assistance beyond the classroom, there are a number of options available to provide him or her with the necessary support.

Students who are experiencing academic difficulties may qualify for an on-campus tutor. Arrangements for this can be made through the VISTAS Director. On-campus tutoring is provided by screened professional tutors and is fee based. Learning Specialists in the VISTAS Program teach students who need regular and routine support to reach their academic potential. The classes are designed with the needs of the learner first and foremost. Placement in the VISTAS Program involves a process which includes classroom teachers, parents, the SDS Educational Consultant, VISTAS teachers, and the student. The VISTAS Program focuses on the overall academic progress of students. This includes teaching organizational skills and study strategies; assisting in preparation for daily assignments, long-term assignments, quizzes and tests; communicating with classroom teachers; and facilitating accommodations. Students in the VISTAS Program have been accepted to Spartanburg Day School through the standard admission process and must complete all academic requirements. The VISTAS Program is an optional, fee-based service which is offered by contract and is billed through the business office.

Academic Grades, Comments, and Reporting

Grade Scale

The academic achievement grade indicates degree of mastery of a college-preparatory course:

- A High Honors Achievement, scores 90 – 100
- B Honors Achievement, scores 80 – 89
- C Quality Achievement, scores 70 – 79
- D Passing Achievement, scores 60 – 69
- F Failing, scores 59 and below

Scale: All students will receive letter grades based on the following percentage-based scale:

A+ 97-100
A 93-96
A- 90-92
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C 73-76 C-
70-72
D+ 67-69
D 63-66
D- 60-62
F 59 and below

Honor Roll

For each marking period, a student may receive one of two honor designations:

Honor Roll – a student who makes all A's and B's in the core courses: Math, English, Science, History, Latin, and MFL.

High Honor Roll – a students who makes all A's core courses

Report Cards

Report cards are sent out four times a year at the end of each quarter—October, January, March, and May. Comments are written for all students at the end of the first and third quarters. An end of year letter is also written to each child by his or her advisor. Grades and report cards are viewable through RenWeb, our online grading portal.

Upper School Credit achieved in Middle School

In the areas of mathematics and world language, students may earn high school credit in eighth grade:

Math: To achieve high school credit for Algebra 1 in the 8th grade, a student must achieve a C+ or higher for the year. Recommendations by the Algebra 1 teacher are also taken into consideration.

Latin and Modern Foreign Language: To achieve high school credit for Latin I or Spanish I, a student must pass both A and B (7th and 8th grades) with a C+ or higher and enter into Latin II or Spanish II in Upper School. French 1 may be taken in 8th grade as well.

Emergency Guidelines and Procedures

First Aid and Medical Emergencies

Middle School medical treatment is administered by the school nurse, Marilyn Burtnett or the athletic trainer. If a child needs to leave school due to illness, teachers and parents will be notified. Students may not call home and leave school due to illness or injury without going through our nurse, Marilyn Burtnett.

Inclement Weather

In case of snow/inclement weather listen to local radio or television stations to find out if our school is closed. The Spartanburg Day School does not follow another school or district when making these decisions. Inclement weather that occurs during our school day will be communicated through our all school text and email alert system.

Lightning Policy

The Day School uses both a lightning detection system and a sensory guideline to determine when outdoor activities are safely conducted. If lightning is seen or thunder is heard, outdoor activity is suspended for 30 minutes.

Emergency Procedures

The Day School has procedures in place for emergency situations such as fire, security threat, and tornado warnings. The faculty has been trained in those procedures and the entire school practices them multiple times each year. A school wide warning system that can be heard inside and outside the buildings indicates the nature of the emergency and initiates the appropriate procedures. If a parent would like to see copies

of those procedures, he or she should contact Sheila Cash at sheila.cash@sdsgriffin.org

Food Allergy Policy

The Spartanburg Day School strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students. Ensuring the safety of our students will take the collective efforts of all constituencies: students, parents, food service, and school. We follow these guidelines in an attempt to create that secure atmosphere, recognizing that we cannot guarantee that our school is completely free of food or other allergens that might cause a reaction.

Children's allergies must be documented with the school nurse on health forms provided at school opening and throughout the school year. This documentation should include allergens and symptoms of reaction, along with directions for administering medication in the case of a reaction.

School

- The school nurse makes every staff member aware of the use and availability of the EpiPen.
- The school nurse will make school personnel familiar with the allergies significant to his/her classroom or other points of contact with students.
- Frequent hand washing is encouraged.
- Sharing of food from lunch boxes or snacks is discouraged.

Parents

- Parents will be informed if your child is a member of such a class that you refrain from packing peanuts or specific nuts in your child's lunch or snack. Furthermore, we suggest that you be mindful of this designation when you plan classroom activities and celebrations.
- Parents should be mindful of other foods to which individuals may have serious allergies: dairy, egg, glutens, and corn. Each of these allergens can be found hidden in foods, and can therefore become a danger to our children with these allergies. In response to this concern, we will be posting on our website a list of safe foods associated with the specific allergy, along with a list of items found in ingredient lists that mask the presence of that allergen in the food. On occasion we will update these lists and offer some considerations for planning party foods

for these classes, such as: cross-contamination can be a problem when preparing foods for both non-allergic and allergic children. A spoon used to serve an allergen food item should not be used to serve a safe food, as it can pass particles from one to the other. *If you are informed that a child of yours is in a class with a student who has a serious food allergy, we will encourage you to refer to these lists before you send snacks for the class or plan party foods for that class. On a daily basis we will be asking that you pack lunches and snacks for your child only, thereby limiting the likelihood of causing harm to another child accidentally.*

- Parents are asked to speak with their child about being a good school citizen – being aware of the needs of their friends, remembering not to share their food with classmates that have allergies, making small sacrifices for the wellbeing of their friends. Help them understand the importance of this issue by educating them in the way you think is best.

Food Service

- Our food service makes every effort to avoid serving foods that contain peanuts, or tree-nuts or contain traces of such foods. Other foods such as shellfish, eggs, or milk may be served, and noted on the signs in the service line.
- The food service will work to ensure tables are cleaned and other cafeteria work surfaces between meals and after food service each day.
- We must recognize that while we are making every effort to keep the environment of a nut sensitive student nut-free, we cannot monitor food that is prepared in a home or restaurant that is not a nut-free environment, and will do everything we can to be prepared for the incidental allergic reaction.