



Spencer Center

Upper School: Grades 7-12

Student and Family Handbook

2023-2024

Equity

Innovation

Wonder

Love

Creativity

Personalization

Frequently Asked Questions: Spencer Upper School Edition

Fees:

- **How do I pay my student's fees?**



- The Cincinnati Public School District assesses each child an annual fee to help defray the cost of instructional materials. The fees are assessed on a sliding scale based upon family income, grade level, and the number of children per family. **CPS does not accept personal checks for payment.** Please send the CPS form and cash or money orders, made payable to Spencer Center, to your child's Advisory teacher or the Main Office no later than the second Friday in October. **All monies must be sent to school in a labeled, sealed envelope.** For your convenience, fees may also be paid online via www.PayForIt.net or by credit card in the main office. Unpaid fees accumulate until a student graduates, at which time they must be paid in order for the diploma and transcript to be released. If a student transfers to another Cincinnati Public School, the school will hold the student's transcript until the obligations are paid. Final report cards will be held until fees are paid.

Technology:

- **Do students need to purchase their own devices/laptops?**

- No. All students are assigned a school device/laptop and charger with a case. **Students are responsible for bringing this device fully charged to school each day.** There will be no loaner devices or chargers issued to students, with exceptions being made for students whose devices are broken and are currently being fixed or on testing days. Otherwise, students are expected to bring their own devices and chargers to school each day.

- **What happens if my student misuses their assigned school device?**

- Students will sign an MOU at the beginning of the school year, which outlines the expectations for appropriate device use, including appropriate use of the internet, applications, and preventing inappropriate downloads. Students will also agree not to use class time to engage in non-academic/non-assigned tasks. Students who do not meet this expectation or fail to follow the MOU will lose their device for a given amount of time. During this time, all work will be assigned and provided via paper.

- **What is the school's policy on student cell phone or personal device use?**



- For more information please see the PBIS Section. **Students will be expected to turn their cell phones (and possibly their wifi enabled watches, if used in a distracting manner during class) into teachers at the beginning of each class period.** They will be kept in a secure clear numbered pocket system. If, for some reason, students will need cell phones in their lesson, teachers will notify students of this and allow them usage. **Students who do not turn their cell phones in and are found using their cell phones during class, will have their phones taken.** The first time, students will be returned their cell phones at the end of the bell. The second occurrence will lead to cell phones being kept until dismissal. **The third occurrence will require parental pick-up of the cell phone from school.**

Arrival, Dismissal and Transportation:

- **What time does school start? What time are students dismissed?**
 - Beginning with the 2023.2024 school year, our school day will begin at 8:50am and we will dismiss at 3:50pm. **Students may be dropped off no earlier than 8:35am and are expected to be in class, on time, at 8:50am.**
- **Where do I drop my student off at arrival?**
 - Upper School students should be dropped off at the Alms Place main door between 8:35am and 8:45am; please do not block yellow buses. For drop off procedures, please review the Arrival and Dismissal Procedure section.
- **Where do I pick my student up at dismissal?**
 - **ALL students in grades 3-12, who are dismissed to cars will be dismissed via the Chapel Street exit. Families MUST use the car line for pick up.** Please remain in your vehicle, entering the lot via the gate on Chapel Street. Students will be safely dismissed to their vehicles from this door. Students will not be permitted to cross the street on their own. **Students are not permitted to exit the main doors at dismissal.** Please read the Arrival and Dismissal Procedure section for more details.
- **How do I report an absence for my student?** Please use the school website under the Contact Us tab to locate the Absence Reporting form; **absences are to be reported by 8:30am.** Please remember that **a written note explaining the absence is required when your child returns to school.** This could include letters from the student's doctor or other care provider in the event of an excused absence.
- **What does the school or District do in the event of severe weather?**
 - The Cincinnati Public Schools' severe weather policy aims to minimize the loss of instructional time while being mindful of student and employee safety. When severe weather is predicted, parents should check the CPS website or local television or radio stations, for announcements about school closings or delays. Alerts also are available on the CPS mobile app. The most complete and detailed information is available on the CPS website, including answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the procedure. CPS rarely will dismiss schools early, but it does happen occasionally. Please make sure your child's school office has correct emergency contact information. We know that start delays and no-school days for snow or extreme cold represent an inconvenience to parents, so we do our best to declare them only when necessary.
- **Where do student drivers park and how do they go about driving to school?**
 - Upper School students will all enter via Alms Place. Those arriving by car should be dropped off at this door and enter the main doors. Cars should line up with their passenger doors nearest to the school building to safely drop off students. **Students who choose to drive to school do so at their own risk. Students who drive themselves to school must request a parking permit from the Main Office and register their vehicle.** Parking is not permitted in the Chapel Street lot (accessible via Alms Place) nor is it permitted in the Park Avenue parking lot. **Student drivers have two parking options: they may park across the street in the Brown AME Chapel parking lot or to use street parking in the neighborhood.** Students should plan to utilize street parking on Alms Place (on the opposite side of the street as the



school to make room for buses), Chapel Street, Park Avenue or Myrtle Avenue (again, across the street so as to make room for morning drop-off and bus routes). Parking at school is at the risk of the student and it is advisable to remind students not to leave any valuables in the car (whether visible or hidden). Students will need to parallel park in many situations.

Student Dining:

- **Is my student eligible for free or reduced price school lunch?**
 - Every year, families have to complete a new FRPL application, regardless of previous status, (by submitting the paper application to the Main Office or online via SchoolCafe.com) to determine whether the student is eligible for free or reduced price school lunch.
- **How does my student pay for lunch?**
 - Students pay for lunch via their school accounts. Families should add money to student accounts, which can then be accessed by students using their account codes. Please review your lunch expectations with students, as both lunch and snacks can be purchased.
- **Is breakfast provided to students?**
 - Breakfast is free for all students.
- **Where do students eat lunch?**
 - There are two locations where students are permitted to eat lunch (weather permitting). Students may eat in the cafeteria, or in the outdoor courtyard—an outdoor space on the interior of the building. Eating in the courtyard has the same behavioral expectations of the cafeteria. **Students who do not meet these expectations (remain seated, talk quietly and respectfully, clean up after yourself) will not be permitted to dine outside.**
- **May I order food delivery for my student or can my student order food via delivery?**
 - No. Food deliveries, Door Dash, etc are prohibited. Students may pack and bring their own lunch, or purchase their lunch in the school cafeteria. If a food delivery is made, the parent will be notified that it is available for parent pick up in the main office. The student will not be called. Please do not text your student telling them to go to the office for their food. It will be held for parent pick up only until the end of the day. If the food is not picked up, it will be discarded without replacement or reimbursement.
- **Can my student(s) celebrate their birthday at school?**
 - Please hold birthday and other celebrations at home or over a weekend. Please refrain from sending cakes, balloons, or flowers. If sent, they will be kept in the main office for student pick up at the end of the school day.
- **Are students permitted to bring their own breakfast to eat in class?**
 - No. Upper School students should either eat school breakfast or eat prior to arrival in the morning. **Students do not have permission to eat in the hallways or in their classrooms.**



Graduation and Course Planning:

- **How do I check on my student's progress in their courses?**
 - Both PowerSchool and Schoology are updated frequently. PowerSchool is our primary data management system, which contains student grades, school history, etc. In PowerSchool you can see if an assignment has been graded, is missing, or has yet to be collected. Schoology is a great landing page to see what is going on in your student's class. Assignments, activities, notes, and resources are stored here. Logins for families are available through the Main Office if you do not have your accounts set up.
- **How do I contact my student's teachers?**
 - The best way to contact teachers is to use email or contact the Main Office. We recommend emailing teachers—their addresses are all available on the school website. Due to their busy daytime schedules with students, we do not call into their classrooms during the school day, however, we can connect you to a teacher's voicemail or take a message. Please allow 48 hours, from receipt of message, for a return email or phone call.
- **How do I check on my student's progress towards graduation?**
 - Graduation progress checks/audits can be arranged with our School Counselor. Appointments can be made at any time to confirm your student's progress towards credits, test requirements and seals in order to ensure they are on target for their graduation pathway.
- **How do I pay for graduation?**
 - **Graduation Fees will be posted at the beginning of a student's senior year. The fees total \$75.00 and are due by November.** This fee does not include caps and gowns which are purchased separately through our vendor. Please see the Graduation letter sent home over the summer for more information about fees associated with Senior Year and its events.



Athletics, Clubs, Extracurriculars and Social Events:

- **Can my student attend prom and other dances?**
 - Information about dances and social events will be shared via email and directly with students at school. Prom is a junior and senior only event at Spencer Center—for students and their guests. Ticket sales, where applicable, will occur at school so that all interested students can purchase their tickets. Please sign up for our PTSO email notifications to receive additional information. Contact spencercentercommunications@gmail.com to add your name to the PTSO newsletter.
- **How do I register my student(s) for clubs, extracurricular organizations and athletic opportunities?**
 - Information to register for clubs, extracurriculars and athletics can be found via our biweekly newsletter and is distributed to students at school. Information can also be found via our Athletic Director/Extracurricular Director: information will be shared once school begins. Some clubs are sponsored by PTSO, so it is a good idea to follow their site and join their newsletter to stay abreast of any new or upcoming clubs.

Spencer Center Vision

Who are we?

Spencer Center is a school founded upon six pillars:

- Equity
- Innovation
- Wonder
- Love
- Creativity
- Personalization

What do we do?

Spencer Center provides students innovative learning programs aimed at developing capacity to actualize their vision for their future. Students will graduate Spencer with the capability and confidence to pursue their passions, with the skills and empathy to lead and collaborate, and with a love for and drive to do great things. Our dedicated staff meets students where they are and personalizes their learning environment to challenge and promote individual growth.

We are a PACK.

<p>P</p> <p>Problem Solvers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We commit to owning and learning from our mistakes.• We accept and implement feedback.• We communicate our feelings responsibly.• We listen to all sides of a disagreement and seek a mutually agreeable solution.• We use creativity to improve our community.
<p>A</p> <p>All In</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We commit to putting our best effort into our work.• We believe that learning time is sacred.• We believe in the power of the collective: we are a team.• We welcome challenge; it makes us stronger.
<p>C</p> <p>Caring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We believe that every member of our community matters.• We seek to learn from others.• We extend help to those in need.• We follow the platinum rule: we treat others the way <i>they</i> want to be treated.
<p>K</p> <p>Knowledge Seekers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are curious about the world.• We ask questions to help us understand.• We believe that we each can make a positive impact on our community.• We seek to understand before being understood.

Student Life: Daily Schedules and Expectations

Students are the center of our mission; they are the reason parents and educators collaborate to give the best education available. Students are powerful individuals who largely control their educational process by the attitudes they bring and decisions they make. It is important that parents/families prepare their children for success by instilling a positive attitude toward learning. When students are excited about learning and are successful in their academic pursuits, the school is a joyful place.

We want to facilitate this joy and collaborate with each of you to provide an excellent education that addresses the unique needs and strengths of our students.

Student Schedules

Upper School Bell Schedule	
8:35am - 8:47am	Arrival Window
8:50am - 9:44am	Bell One
9:47am - 10:38am	Bell Two
10:41am - 11:32am	Bell Three
11:35am - 12:26pm	Bell Four
12:29pm - 1:59pm	Bell Five (includes 30 minute lunches)
2:02pm - 2:53pm	Bell Six
2:56pm - 3:47	Bell Seven
3:47pm - 3:50pm	Dismissal

Spencer Center Upper School Lunch Schedules

Bell 5 Lunch A	12:29pm - 12:59pm	Grades 9-10
Bell 5 Lunch B	12:59pm - 1:29pm	Grades 7-8
Bell 5 Lunch C	1:29pm - 1:59pm	Grades 11-12

Secure Arrival to School:



All Spencer Center Upper School students will enter the building via the main entrance, located at Alms Place. Students should begin unzipping their bags and may have to wait in line to have their bags and persons checked by security. Students will place their bags on the table to be searched and will walk through metal detectors to ensure that students are not bringing any unsafe or contraband items into the building. **Students will not bring any prohibited items to school, including those that could be used to harm themselves or others, alcohol, drugs or tobacco products, including vapes, and those that could create unsafe conditions for other students.**

Student Dress Code Policy:



While we are not a uniform school, we maintain expectations of student dress in order to support a safe and focused learning environment. **The primary purpose of the school is education, and all matters of dress and grooming must be weighed against that single objective. To that end, students should dress appropriately and in a manner that does not create a safety concern for themselves.** We will have private conversations with students who arrive at school and whose clothing does not meet the stated dress code. We may need to call home to have a change of clothing brought to school. Exceptions must be approved in advance by an administrator. An administrator will make the final judgment on the appropriateness of student dress. **For the safety of students, we ask that students wear full-footed shoes to prevent slipping, particularly on days when students have physical education.**

Some examples of inappropriate appearance:

Key: * students who come to school in the following clothing choices, will be asked to change, which may result in a phone call home.

1. Hats, hoods or headgear not religious in nature (in class or assemblies)
2. Underwear worn as outerwear *
3. Clothing that exposes cleavage, breasts, buttocks, or midriff; students must be covered from shoulders to mid-thigh (approximately four inches above the knee), this includes shorts, skirts and dresses*
4. Pants which expose undergarments or skin*
5. Leggings or tights worn as pants (unless covered to mid-thigh)*
6. Clothing with offensive slogans, cartoons, illustrations or diagrams, that depicts or promotes illegal activities, products, or violence*
7. See-through, spaghetti strap or strapless tops or dresses: sleeveless shirts should fully cover the shoulder*
8. Clothing with rips or tears above the knee*
9. Sleepwear, including slippers*
10. Any clothing items that detract from the educational process*
11. Students may not wear wheeled shoes*

Social Experiences: After School Event Participation and Student Behavior

Spencer students are expected to follow all school procedures and policies as they pertain to behavior for all after-school events. **If, for any reason, inappropriate behavior occurs, parent/guardian will be notified and the student(s) will be required to leave the after-school event.**

Care of Textbooks, Library Books, Technology and Other School Materials:

Scholars and parents are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued during the school year. If books are lost, the full replacement cost will be charged. A fine will be charged for a damaged book. Scholars are also responsible for the use of technology throughout the school day. If technology is purposefully damaged or damaged due to student negligence, the student will be fined the cost of fixing the piece of technology. All Spencer Center students are assigned a device for the school year. They are responsible for bringing their fully charged device to school each day. They are responsible for carrying them to each of their classes. If they arrive at school without their device a replacement will not be provided. Students will complete a short digital course on appropriate technology and internet use and sign an Acceptable Use Policy Memorandum of Understanding in order to participate in our technology program.

School Supplies:

Every teacher or grade team has their school supply list posted on our school website. Part of being prepared for class every day involves having all supplies that the teachers have requested. Please make sure your child has everything he or she needs to be successful for school. Please check with the teacher if you are unsure of your child's school supply needs.

Lost and Found:

Lost articles will be placed on the table across from the cafeteria. Please check there for your child's missing things, after signing in on the LobbyGuard monitor in the Main Office. Please put your child's name on all of their belongings. Please check monthly at the PTSO meetings for lost items. **At the end of each quarter, all remaining items will be collected to be donated.**

Lockers and Student Personal Possessions: Use of Combination Locks

All students in the Upper School are expected to utilize lockers for the academic and personal belongings while at school. **Students will be assigned a locker on the first day of school. Securing their locker is the responsibility of the student.** Students should utilize a combination lock. To prevent the necessity of removing locks, students should record their locker combination and it will be secured on a list in the Main Office. In the event that they forget their locker combination, we will reference this list. Using combination locks prevents the issue of losing a key and having to destroy the lock to remove it.

Extracurricular and Athletic Participation:

Spencer Center works with its staff, parents and outside providers to bring options for extracurricular activities to our students. The enrichment chair of the PTSO manages many of these partnerships and is a great resource for questions or if you are interested in bringing in a new program to Spencer Center. For more information, please email spencercenterenrichment@gmail.com. Our Student Activities/Athletic Director also helps to manage many of our after school and enrichment clubs. If a student is unable to participate in an extracurricular program due to financial circumstances, please contact our Resource Coordinator who will work to determine whether scholarships are available. Our PTSO has a policy that any partner or agency looking to bring before or after school programming to Spencer must offer at least one scholarship opportunity to a Spencer Center student.

Student Technology Use Policy

Student Cell Phone and Personal Device Policy:



We believe that the hours spent in school are critical to students' academic development. Research supports the rise in anxiety and distraction from over-use of cell phones. Students have access to a school-issued device that they can use throughout the day. Because we strive to have a rigorous, joyful and safe learning environment free of distractions, we have chosen to make our classrooms a cell phone free zone. **Students will be expected to turn their cell phones (and possibly their wifi enabled watches, if used in a distracting manner during class) into teachers at the beginning of each class period.** They will be kept in a secure clear numbered pocket system. If, for some reason, students will need cell phones in their lesson, teachers will notify students of this and allow them usage. Students who do not turn their cell phones in and are found using their cell phones during class, will have their phones taken. The first time, students will be returned their cell phone at the end of the bell. The second occurrence will lead to cell phones being kept until dismissal. **The third occurrence will require parental pick-up of the cell phone from school.**

Student Technology

All students will be assigned a laptop device. It is the responsibility of the student to use the device safely and in the manner it is designed. Students must sign the acceptable use policy each year to continue to use their device. Teachers will closely monitor computer usage. **These devices are property of Cincinnati Public Schools and all activity is monitored closely and recorded.**

Student Technology-Use Rules

We are a one-to-one device school, where all of our students have an assigned device that they are responsible to fully charge and bring to classes daily. During the school year no loaner devices or chargers will be available to sign out by the students. Loaner devices will only be provided during state and district mandated testing or if their assigned device is present and malfunctioning. The students are responsible for the safe and responsible care and use of this device each day. To support their continued access to this technology, CPS has a policy known as "Student Acceptable Use Policy and Internet/Network Safety Agreement." This policy is in line with the Cincinnati Public School's Code of Conduct K-12 and addresses many issues that can arise from the use of technology in a school setting. The goal of this policy is to provide a safe and secure learning environment that allows students to grow into responsible users of technology. Use of this technology does require a commitment from the students to use the equipment responsibly for the school-related purpose or assignment defined, and within the rules established. Since computer technology can have a major impact on the lives, privacy, and security of so many people, the rules governing its use and penalties for its abuse can be severe. Students must learn and follow the Rules listed below:



The following activities are COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY VIOLATIONS and are subject to disciplinary action:

Category-1

1. Using the network/internet in such a way that deters from teachers expectation or that will disrupt others' use.

2. Playing non-educational games without permission from the staff member responsible for the technology.
3. Intentionally changing computer settings.

Category-2

1. Installing or removing software such as downloaded games (Geometry Dash, Osu!, etc.), extensions, or virtual private networks (VPNs).
2. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others online.
3. Using network-ID & password of another, or trespassing in another's folders, works or files or allowing another to use your ID and password.
4. Intentionally or maliciously modifying or damaging computers. Computer systems, networks, software, and/or hardware.
5. Using the network for any illegal activity including violation of copyright laws or other contracts.
6. Sending, writing or displaying messages or pictures using obscene language and/or inappropriate images, or any images promoting or referencing violence or illegal actions.
7. Employing the network for financial or commercial gain.
8. Students may not buy or sell anything over the internet.
9. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities. Use or possession of "hacking" tools and other programs which can be used to obtain unauthorized information or access to computers, networks, internet sites and their contents.

Consequences and Penalties

Once it has been determined that a student has violated the "Acceptable Use of Computer Technology" rules, then a corrective strategy will be implemented in accordance with procedures developed by the Technology Sub-Committee. Listed below are disciplinary guidelines used by teachers and/or administrative staff for violations. Violations are tracked building wide.

Category-1*	Category-2*
2 Verbal Warnings	3 Day Removal
Bell Removal	5 Day Removal
Full Day Removal	10 Day Removal
3 Day Removal	Full Semester Removal
5 Day Removal	Full Year Removal
Full Semester Removal	
Full Year Removal	

***Serious violations of either category can alter the consequences.**

Please see detailed explanations of these consequences below:

Category	Offense #	Corrective Strategy/Action
1	1st	Verbal Warning
	2nd	Verbal Warning
	3rd	Loss of network and device access for the bell. Computer-dependent class access allowed (per loaner device from teacher)
	4th	Loss of network and device access for the day. Computer-dependent class access allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	5th	Loss of independent network and device access for 3 school days. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	6th	Loss of independent network and device access for 5 school days. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	7th	Loss of ALL network and device access for balance of semester. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	8th	Loss of ALL access for balance of the school year. Computer-dependent class access or make-up work might not be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
2	1st	Loss of independent network and device access for 3 school days. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	2nd	Loss of independent network and device access for 5 school days. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	3rd	Loss of independent network and device access for 10 school days. Computer-dependent class access might be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	4th	Loss of ALL network and device access for balance of semester. Computer-dependent class access or make-up work might not be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting
	5th	Loss of ALL access for balance of the school year. Computer-dependent class access or make-up work might not be allowed (per loaner device from teacher) Computer stored with Ms. Otting

PBIS and Systems for Supporting Discipline

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at Spencer Center:

Each school in the Cincinnati Public School District works to develop a plan to support the behavioral needs of the school community. The plan shall include rules for student conduct in the form of school-wide *expectations* for behavior across all school settings, *consequences* for violating the expectations, *positive recognition* for those who exceed expectations and will outline *responsibilities* of parents, teachers, administration and staff. The plan will be aligned with current district strategies, and approved annually by members of the entire staff. We will be utilizing the PBIS App this year to reward and recognize students who meet our key three behavioral expectations: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Show PACK Pride. Each month we will celebrate one of the key VIA Character Strengths and recognize a student from each grade who demonstrated that strength throughout the month and set an example for others. This year, we will be focusing on the following strengths: Zest, Leadership, Hope, Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence, Love of Learning, Gratitude, Teamwork, Kindness, Perseverance, and Bravery.

Please review our PBIS Handbook for specific information outlining our approach to discipline, behavioral development, as well as our programming supports, incentives and consequences.



Spencer Center Local School Discipline Plan

Our goal is to be consistent and logical in our application of consequences so that students may learn from their mistakes and improve their behaviors moving forward. In collaboration with families, we seek to help students reflect on their choices and how they can contribute positively to their school community. Please see the chart below for a basic breakdown of misbehaviors and our progression of consequences. When behaviors such as these occur, the witnessing adult will contact the family to discuss the incident and the assigned consequence.

Common Infractions	1 st Offense	Aggravated or Repeated Offense
Academic Dishonesty (Cheating, Violating Testing Protocol, Plagiarism)	Loss of Credit Counselor and Parent Notification Administrator Notified	Loss of Credit Parent Conference and Counselor and Administrative Referral Saturday School/ALC/Promis Ctr
Class Cutting: Unexcused Class Absence beyond 15 minutes	Thursday Detention for Each Bell Missed	Saturday School/ALC/Promise Ctr
Disobedience/Refusal to Obey School Personnel/Disruption	Thursday Detention Saturday School ALC Parent Shadowing	Saturday School/ALC/Promise Ctr
Distributing or Posting Unauthorized Printed Material	Confiscation	Thursday Detention Saturday School

Eating in Unauthorized Area	Lunch Detention Thursday Detention Work Detail	Thursday Detention Saturday School
Fighting	10 Days A2S and SRO Notified	Promise Center and SRO Notified
Fraud/False Identification/Failure to Identify Forgery	ALC	ALC Promise Center Saturday School
Harassment (Sexual) Harassment (Electronic Intimidation) Harassment (Bullying)	Parent Notification Removal SRO Notified	ALC Promise SRO Notified Court Referral
Improper Dress (See Dress Code)	Obtain Appropriate Dress (Parent Contact, if necessary)	Obtain Appropriate Dress (Parent Contact, if necessary) Thursday Detention Saturday School
Leaving School Grounds without Permission	Saturday School + One Thursday Detention for each bell missed/ALC + One Thursday Detention for each bell missed	Saturday School + One Thursday Detention for each bell missed/ALC + One Thursday Detention for each bell missed
Littering	Work Detail (contact PO to schedule)/Thursday Detention	Work Detail (contact PO to schedule)/Thursday Detention
Loitering on Campus/Unauthorized Presence	Warning and Parent Notification	Thursday Detention, Revocation of Late Arrival/Early Dismissal Privilege and Parent Notification
Profanity	Warning, Parent Notification and/or ALC	ALC/Promise Center
Reckless Driving	Temporary Suspension of Parking Privileges, Thursday Detention	Elimination of Parking Privileges, Saturday School, ALC, Promise Ctr
Tardiness to School (unexcused)	Warning, Parent Notification, ALC for Late Bell	Detention and/or Saturday School/ALC
Tardiness to Class	Noted	3rd Offense in a Quarter leads to Thursday Detention/Saturday School
Tobacco Products Possession or Use	ALC	ALC/Promise Center

Alcohol or Drug Possession or Use	Promise Center and SRO Notified	Promise Center and SRO Notified
Truancy (<i>multiple or habitual unexcused and unauthorized absences (off campus)</i>)	Thursday Detention, Saturday School, ALC, PC, Referral to SSW	Thursday Detention, Saturday School, ALC, PC, Referral to SSW
Display and/or Use of Electronic Communication and/or Entertainment Devices (<i>we recommend that all devices be turned into teacher at the start of class</i>)	1. Confiscation and return at end of bell	1. Confiscation and return at end of day 2. Confiscation and return only to parent 3. Confiscation and return only to parent (with 3 day waiting period) and Assignment to Thursday Detention/Saturday School
Unauthorized Sales	Confiscation and Referral to Administration	Confiscation and Referral to Administration, Thursday Detention, Saturday School
Unserved Detention	Saturday School or ALC	Saturday School or ALC or PC

Academic Honesty, Cheating and Plagiarism:

It is essential that Spencer Center students embrace honesty and integrity in all academic endeavors. Our school motto, *Sapere Aude* (Dare to be Wise) calls on all students to embrace challenge as a key factor in the learning process. Our work is designed to provide opportunities for students to struggle productively and receive feedback in order to improve their practice and understanding. **There is no tolerance, therefore, for cheating or plagiarism of any kind at Spencer Center. As stated in this handbook, and in the CPS Districtwide Code of Conduct: “A student must not use, submit, or attempt to obtain data or answers dishonestly, by deceit or by means other than those authorized by the teacher. These are examples of acts of cheating/plagiarism; any inappropriate copying, literary theft, falsification, counterfeiting, piracy, fraud, or unsupervised possession of any federal, state or district mandated test(s). Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying word for word from references such as books, magazines, research materials or the internet.”**

Any technology or other resources that a student accesses during a test which is not authorized is considered cheating. Students are not permitted to communicate with one another during tests or assessments of any kind. Students must use proper citation protocol when including quotations from the work of others.

Violation of the Academic Honesty Policy may result in a “0” for the assignment with no opportunity for make-up. In addition, the parent will be contacted and the incident placed on the student’s record. For a second offense, time in the Alternative Learning Center will be assigned. Further incidents will result in progressively longer suspensions.



Displays of Affection:



In keeping with reasonable rules of appropriate conduct, students will refrain from actions involving touching of a sexual nature (i.e. kissing, lap sitting, etc.) with or without consent of the other party. Respect for one another and good taste in manners should be exhibited at all times. Violation may result in disciplinary action. It is best practice for students to keep their hands to themselves.

After-school Detention and Other Consequences:

After-school office detentions may be assigned to students for class or excessive unexcused tardiness, littering, inappropriate language, or other misbehaviors. **Detention precludes all other after-school activities and students are responsible for securing their own transportation.** Families will be notified by paper and phone call of a detention assignment, however, it is the responsibility of the student to engage in a conversation with their parent/guardian about the cause of the detention and in order to prevent future assignments. Lunch detentions may also be assigned to students for small misbehaviors. Students who skip detention may be assigned to Friday Detention.

Bullying

Bullying Policy: Bullying and Other Aggressive Forms of Behavior (Board Policy 5517.01)

The following policy shall be in accordance with applicable State and federal laws.



Bullying, harassment, and intimidation, of any student, by any means, by any student or school personnel, on school property, at a school-sponsored event, or on school-provided transportation, is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary action, including the possibility for suspension or expulsion, will be taken against any student found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying.

“Bullying, harassment, or intimidation” means either: violence within a dating relationship; or any intentionally written, electronic act (an act committed through the use of cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device), verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibit more than once, toward another particular student(s) and the behavior both:

Causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s); and,

- a. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

“Bullying, harassment, or intimidation” includes, but is not limited to, conduct that is based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, religion or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the district or state educational agency. This also includes association with a person or group with one or more of the above mentioned characteristics, whether actual or perceived.

Students and parents/guardians should report prohibited incidents and conduct of bullying, intimidation, and harassment to any teacher, school administrator, or staff member; any incident may be reported anonymously. Any school personnel receiving a complaint shall promptly document the prohibited incident or conduct in writing, including all information provided, and report it to the school principal or other designated administrator. All reported incidents must be

investigated and verified promptly under the leadership of the school principal or other designated administrator. Steps will be taken to protect a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and from retaliation following a report. The custodial parent or guardian of any student involved in a prohibited incident shall be notified and, to the extent permitted by FERPA and section 3319.321 of the Revised Code, have access to any written reports pertaining to the prohibited incident.

Students are prohibited from deliberately making false reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying; disciplinary action will be taken for any student responsible for deliberately making a false report of that nature.

Equity and Nondiscrimination

Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity Policy: Board Policy 2260

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, disability or age in its programs, activities or employment.

Further, it is the policy of this District to provide an equal opportunity for all students, regardless of race, color, creed, disability, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, national origin, place of residence within the boundaries of the District, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this District.

Cincinnati Public Schools is committed to creating a safe environment for all staff, students and families. With respect to students who are transgender, Spencer Center will work closely with students and families to ensure their individual needs are met on a case-by-case basis. The following recommendations were created based on the best practices suggested by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (“GLSEN”); National Center for Transgender Equality; American Civil Liberties Union (“ACLU”); Gender Spectrum; Human Rights Campaign Foundation; National Center for Lesbian Rights; and National Educational Association.

Access to Gender-Segregated Facilities / Restrooms

While there are an increasing number of school facilities designed with gender-neutral facilities, most CPS schools maintain sex-separated restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities.

Students should be allowed to use the restroom according to the students’ gender identity.

Students should not be required to use gender-segregated facilities that correspond only to their sex/gender as determined at birth or that are inconsistent with their gender identity. Students, whether transgender or not, who are uncomfortable using shared facilities shall, upon request, be allowed to use gender-neutral facilities in the school as available (i.e., staff or visitor restrooms).

Dress Codes

Schools may enforce a dress code pursuant to Board policy. To the extent practicable, schools should avoid gendered differences in dress codes. Students should be allowed to dress in accordance with their gender identity within the constraints of the dress code.

Names and Pronouns

Upon request, schools should address a student by the student’s preferred name and pronoun reference that corresponds with the student’s gender identity regardless of whether the student has legally changed the student’s name or started transgender medical treatment.

Physical Education, Intramural Athletics, and Interscholastic Athletics

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education and intramural sports in accordance with the students' gender identity. All students shall be permitted to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity in interscholastic sports, under the guidelines established by the state interscholastic athletic association.[1]

School Records

Upon request, schools should update educational records in accordance with a student's gender identity. Records of a student's birth name and gender should be kept separate to the extent practicable.

Privacy of Student Information

Students' personal records and medical records are confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). A student's transgender status, sex at birth, and legal name are all confidential records.

School Dances / Graduation Attire

Schools are encouraged to avoid sex-separated school traditions and to adapt to gender-neutral practices. Schools shall allow transgender students to participate in all school traditions, including sex-separated traditions, in the gender category that matches the student's gender identity. For example, schools that have different graduation attire for male and female students should allow students to wear the attire that matches a student's gender identity.

[1] The Ohio High School Athletic Association ("OHSAA") currently allows transgender males to participate on boys interscholastic athletic teams, regardless of whether the student is undergoing testosterone treatment. If the student is undergoing testosterone treatment, the student's doctor must certify that the student's muscle mass and hormone levels are not greater than the averages for boys of the same age. Transgender females may always participate on boys teams. However, to participate on girl teams, transgender females must have either (1) completed at least one year of hormonal treatment or (2) a doctor must certify that the student does not have physiological or hormonal advantages over genetic females of the same age group.

Equity and Excellence in Education: Board Policy 2255

Our students, staff and stakeholders bring their personal backgrounds into our schools and the District is richer for it. Each of them has a legitimate expectation to have a barrier-free learning environment counteracting the contemporary and historical impact of bias, prejudice and discrimination which for generations has produced a predictability of learning outcomes based on race, class, socioeconomics, gender, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cognitive/physical ability, diverse language fluency, and religion.

It is the obligation of the District to embrace the diversity within our District while actively eliminating practices that perpetuate the disparities among our students so that all students have the opportunity to benefit equally. These disparities are unacceptable and are directly at odds with the Board's Vision that Cincinnati Public Schools "is a community that ensures equitable access to a world class education unleashing the potential of every student."

Transportation and Attendance

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Morning arrival for all students begins at 8:35AM. Students will not be admitted or supervised before 8:35, unless they are registered for the Before School programming provided by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission or other partner organization. The Cincinnati Recreation Commission opens at 7:30 each morning and students utilizing it should enter through the Myrtle Street entrance. All students are expected to be in the school building by 8:47 AM for the start of first period. **Students who are late MUST stop by the office before proceeding to their first period classes for a late pass.**

Arrival Procedures

Arrival by bus:



If your child rides the bus to school in the morning, they will be dropped off in the front of the building at the curb. One bus will unload at a time. All children will exit the bus in an orderly fashion and enter the school building through the main doors. **After exiting the bus, students must enter the building and may not use this time to visit local businesses.** Upon entering the building, students will be greeted by staff members who will direct students to their first bell class.

Arrival by car:

Upper School students will all enter via Alms Place. Those arriving by car should be dropped off at this door and enter the main doors. Cars should line up with their passenger doors nearest to the school building to safely drop off students. **Students who choose to drive to school do so at their own risk.** Students who drive themselves to school must secure a parking permit from the Main Office and register their vehicle. Parking is not available in the Chapel Street lot (accessible via Alms Place) nor is it available in the Park Avenue parking lot. **Student drivers have two parking options: they may park across the street in the Brown AME Chapel parking lot or to use street parking in the neighborhood.** Students should plan to utilize street parking on Alms Place (on the opposite side of the street as the school to make room for buses), Chapel Street, Park Avenue or Myrtle Avenue (again, across the street so as to make room for morning drop-off and bus routes). Parking at school is at the risk of the student and it is advisable to remind students not to leave any valuables in the car (whether visible or hidden). Students will need to parallel park in many situations.

Walkers:



Your child may enter the school building between 8:35am and 8:47am. Your child will be directed to the proper location to begin their day. Children will not be allowed to enter the building due to the fact that there is no staff available to supervise the children until 8:35am. **Please do not drop your children off before 8:35am.**

Late Arrivals:

Tardy time begins at 8:51am. Students who are late MUST stop by the office before proceeding to their first period classes. Breakfast is closed at 9:15am.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal of all children will take place beginning at 3:47pm. If your child is not picked up by 4:00, they will be taken to the office for dismissal: late pick-up time for any student will end at 4:05pm.

At that time, you must park and come into the office to sign out your child for dismissal. **Early dismissals should be communicated in advance to the office by 2:30. For early dismissals, we will call students out of class upon arrival of their ride. For end of day early dismissals, please arrive by 3:20pm. Dismissal is run out of the main office. Arriving at dismissal time to request a pick up is not permitted.**



Dismissal by Bus:

ALL bus riding students will remain in their classrooms and listen for bus numbers to be called over the PA beginning at 3:47pm. We will make at least three calls for each group of buses and ask that students remain as quiet as possible during these announcements to assist with dismissal. Our staff will be in the halls and outside in the boarding area to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal.

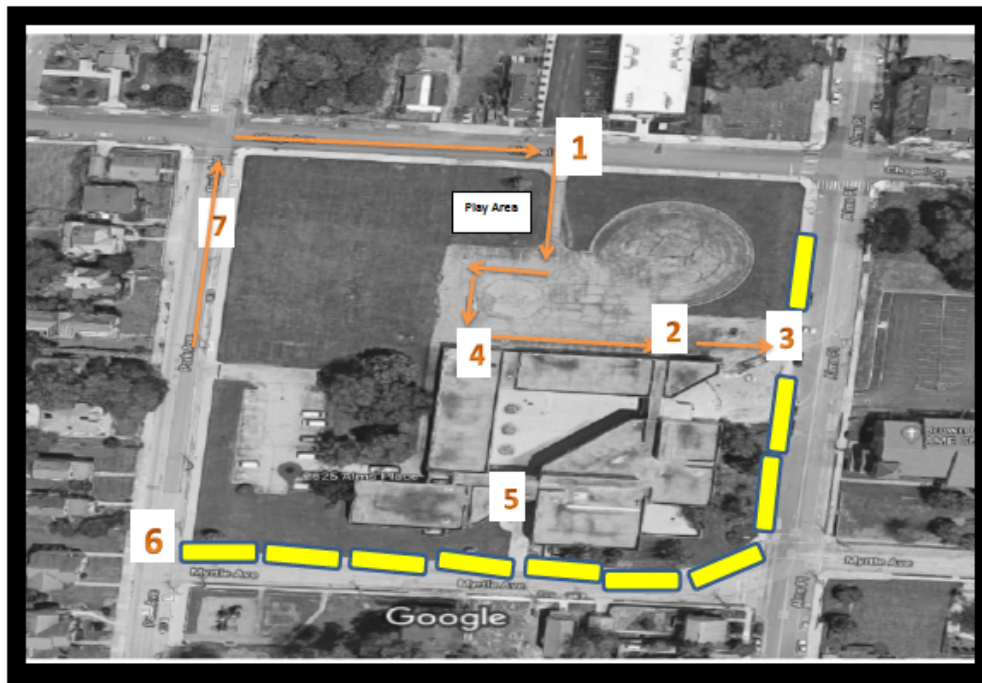
Dismissal by Car:

ALL cars should line up on the Chapel Street side of the building for pick up and enter via the gate on Chapel Street. You will be directed through the pick up line (please see the map below). ALL families must use the car line to pick up their student(s) at dismissal. For the safety of all students, please remain in the car line and do not ask your student to meet you elsewhere. Students will not be released to cars that do not enter and utilize the car pick up line. In the first two weeks of school, this process may take up to fifteen minutes, however, by the first quarter, car line will take no more than 10 minutes. **Our staff are committed to ensuring all students exit the building safely, and exiting by one door and by one method allows us to do this.** Please do not pass other cars and stay in the car line. Staff will come to your car and ask you who you are picking up and then will call for your child to be brought out to your car. Please stay in your vehicle. In the event of adverse weather conditions, students will line up inside and walkie talkies will be used to assist with dismissal. **No students are to exit the building through the main entrance on Alms Place.**



Walkers:

If your child has permission to walk home or take the Metro bus home by themselves, please note that in your beginning-of-the-year information.



Key:

— Car Rider Driver Path

— Bus Line Up

1- Car Rider Driver Entrance (Entrance Opens at 3:30)

2- Start of Car Pick Up Line (First Car Should Wait Here)

3- Car Rider Driver Exit to Alms Place (One Way Only 3:35-4:05)

4- Student Exit and Waiting Area for Car Pick Up Line

5- Student Exit for Bus Line

6- Bus Line Begins Here

7- Overflow Car Line Up

Early Dismissals:



Classroom instruction continues until the close of the school day. **Early dismissals are for unavoidable emergencies only, and should rarely occur.** Communication of necessary early dismissals should be communicated to the classroom teacher in writing (via note or email) so that the child is prepared for early dismissal. We will not call into the classrooms to interrupt instruction for unannounced early dismissals. **If you arrive before dismissal, we ask that you wait outside for the children or in your car until dismissal at 3:47pm..**

Parking:

Parents who wish to come into the office for any reason during dismissal should park in the Alms Avenue lot, nearest to the front door. Parking on Myrtle Ave creates a safety and traffic hazard.

Late Pick Up:



School dismisses promptly at 3:50pm. All students must be picked up at this time. *There are no staff members available to supervise children after dismissal.* **No exceptions can be made to this.** If you need information regarding available after school care options, please contact our Resource Coordinator at 513. 363.5836 or contact the Cincinnati Recreation Commission directly by calling 513-281-1286 and asking to speak with Vanessa Henderson about the CRC Program at Spencer Center.

Dismissal Timing and Leaving School:



Students must leave the campus at dismissal at 3:50pm when not in an authorized activity. Students who remain on campus past dismissal must be involved in an authorized activity, and no student is to be on campus without adult supervision. In the event a parent is delayed picking up his or her student, (late pick-up ends at 4:05pm), the student must wait in the Main Office or Main Office Atrium. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a student's inability to stay after school. Because we are a city-wide high school, a large percentage of our students ride the bus to and from school each day. The expectations of behavior and safety that apply to school also apply to the bus ride, bus stops and while boarding and exiting the bus. If you have concerns about bus safety, please report them to the office, the bus company or to Cincinnati Public Schools' Department of Pupil Transportation.

Transportation

Bus Transportation:

All Spencer Center students (grades 7-12) who live within the CPS bus routes are routed onto yellow bus routes.

A. Yellow Bus Transportation Eligibility

A CPS street guide and quadrant information is available on-line at the CPS website (<http://www.cps-k12.org/slg/school-lookup.asp>). Students not using scheduled yellow bus transportation will be removed from the service roster after two weeks of non-use. If you have any questions about transportation, please call the Transportation Office at (513) 363-RIDE (7433).

B. Bus Safety

A safe, efficient, and equitable transportation service requires teamwork from pupils, parents, school bus contractors, drivers, teachers, and administrators. In order to provide for safe and efficient transportation service, the following plan has been established.

Pupil behavior that distracts the driver jeopardizes the safety and welfare of all passengers. Therefore, misbehavior on the part of pupils shall be sufficient reason for refusing transportation services to those individuals.

Parents should see that their children arrive at the bus stop well before the scheduled pick-up time to avoid missing the bus. The bus company requires students to be present at their stop a minimum of 10 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time. Parents are reminded that responsibility for the supervision of their children between the home and the bus stop and while waiting for the bus arrival, rests with the parent or legal guardian (BP 3541.2).

One of the primary obligations of the school bus driver is to maintain order. A disorderly bus is an unsafe bus. Drivers will issue verbal warnings when appropriate. Continued misconduct on the bus will result in the bus driver filing a conduct report for administration action. A copy of the conduct

report will be sent home with the student. Remember, while pupils are being transported, the school bus driver is responsible for supervision.

C. Bus Suspension Reminder Chart

- Referral #1 - Warning and written conduct report sent to parent
- Referral #2 - Warning and written conduct report sent to parent and conference with student
- Referral #3 - Removal from the bus for 3 days
- Referral #4 - Removal from the bus for 5 days
- Referral #5 - Removal from the bus for 10 days
- Referral #6 - Removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year

A student may be suspended from the bus immediately by the administration for any violation that jeopardizes the safety of anyone on the bus. Violation of the district Code of Conduct while riding is also cause for suspension/expulsion from school. The school bus driver cannot suspend a student from the bus.

SUSPENSION FROM THE BUS IS NOT NECESSARILY SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL. PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSPORTING THEIR CHILDREN TO AND FROM SCHOOL WHILE UNDER BUS SUSPENSION.

If incidents involve the police, either to remove a student from a bus or to restore order, the following procedure will be applied: Students will be suspended immediately from future bus service pending a conference to be held at the school that includes all students involved in the bus incident, their parents, the school administrator, and a representative from the bus vendor.

D. Transportation Changes

Please notify the office in advance or advise the teacher if there will be a change in your child's transportation. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of getting home each day. According to legal guidelines, we cannot and will not accept verbal notification of changes from a child. Please put such notices in writing to avoid confusion. The note should indicate the exact change of plans.

Note: Temporary yellow bus route changes are NOT available. Yellow bus service route deviations are made on a permanent basis only. Route changes typically take two weeks to go into effect.

Attendance

Absences:

Attendance Policy and Procedure: Please know that our Upper School students will have their attendance taken in every bell. We work hard to make each day at Spencer Center engaging and full of opportunities to learn and grow. Missing school interferes with a child's development both academically and social-emotionally. All students are expected to be in attendance each day unless they are ill or a family emergency arises. Parents/Guardians, please visit our school website,

<https://SpencerGifted@cps-k12.org> and complete the Absence Reporting Form under the 'Contact Us' tab before 8:30am on the day your child is out of school. Please remember that a written note explaining the absence is required when your child returns to school. This could include letters from the student's doctor or other care provider in the event of an excused absence.

Children are required by law to attend school and arrive on time every day. Parents are required to provide, within three (3) days, a written explanation of each absence. The student will be considered unexcused unless a written note is provided within 3 days. Notes should contain the following: 1) the date written, 2) the date of the absence, 3) the reason for absence, 4) home and work/cell phone number, and 5) the parent or guardian signature. Phone calls to notify teachers of absences are appreciated but do not replace the written note. Please use the Absence Reporting Form on our school website for all absences.



Students with excessive absences will be referred to the School Social Worker. The Spencer Center School Social Worker works with students and families to make sure that students attend school regularly and on time every day. The School Social Worker can connect parents/guardians with community agencies, services, and programs that can help make school attendance more regular. The School Social Worker also makes court referrals when students are habitually or chronically tardy and/or absent.

In accordance with Spencer Center School Policy and State of Ohio Law:

Habitual Truancy A student is considered to be an habitual truant if he/she has UNEXCUSED ABSENCES that meet any of the following benchmarks:

- 30 hours of consecutive unexcused absence This is approximately 5.5 days for an elementary student and 5 days for a middle school or high school student.
- 42 hours of unexcused absence in one month This is approximately 7.5 days for an elementary student and 7 days for a middle school or high school student.
- 72 hours of unexcused absence in one year This is approximately 13 days for an elementary student and 11.5 days for a middle school or high school student.

If a student reaches the threshold for habitual truant, the District is required to develop and implement an Absence Intervention Plan.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted to participate in the development of the Plan.

If a student fails to participate or make satisfactory progress with the intervention process or if the student continues to miss school, the district is required to make a complaint against the parent/guardian and/or the student with Job & Family Services and/or Juvenile Court. For support in developing an attendance plan, please reach out to our School Social Worker for support.

Tardiness:

We understand that emergencies may happen or life events come up, however, it is expected that students will arrive at school on time and ready to learn. . Classes convene at 8:50am, and instruction begins by 8:52am so that students have a chance to gather and set up their materials, settle into their lockers and listen to the morning announcements. If a student arrives after 8:50am, they must report to the office for a late slip and then go directly to their classroom. The teacher will keep the late slip with the class records. **Students with excessive unexcused tardies will be assigned after school detention and parents will be contacted.**

Sudden Illness or Injury:

If a child becomes sick or injured at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided.

Thank you, families, for keeping the emergency contact information up to date. We need to be able to contact you if your child ever becomes sick or injured while at the school. If a parent is out of town, and their child becomes ill, the care provider needs written documentation that he/she may act on the parent's behalf.

Changes to After School or Dismissal Plans and Telephone Calls to Students:

Phone calls and messages to students will be limited to conveying changes in plans related to emergencies only. If you need to request a change to a student's dismissal plan, please contact the Main Office by 2:30pm via phone or by note. **Please be sure that you speak with someone directly (please do not rely on voicemails or emails, as we cannot ensure that these will be checked prior to dismissal)** and we will notify your student. Please contact the Main Office by 2:30pm in order to ensure these changes can be made.



CPS Severe Weather Policy

The Cincinnati Public Schools' severe weather policy aims to minimize the loss of instructional time while being mindful of student and employee safety.

When severe weather is predicted, parents should check the CPS website or local television or radio stations, for announcements about school closings or delays. Alerts also are available on the [CPS mobile app](#). The most complete and detailed information is available on the CPS website, including answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the procedure.

CPS rarely will dismiss schools early, but it does happen occasionally. Please make sure your child's school office has correct emergency contact information.

We know that start delays and no-school days for snow or extreme cold represent an inconvenience to parents, so we do our best to declare them only when necessary.

General and Safety Information

Breakfast and Lunch Programs:

Breakfast is free to all students and is served in the cafeteria from 8:35-8:47am each morning. Students who arrive late by bus may access breakfast until 9:15am. Lunch is provided—at cost—to all students. Families should complete the FRPL forms distributed at the beginning of the school year to determine qualification for free or reduced-price lunch programming. **Food deliveries, Door dash, etc. are prohibited.**

Allergy Notice:



In order to ensure that Spencer Center is a safe place for all students and staff to learn and grow, we work hard to be cognizant of the risk that some foods and materials may present to students with allergies. **For this reason, all food must be eaten either in the cafeteria or in the courtyard with adult supervision. No food should be consumed in the hallways, or any classrooms. Students should take care not to eat meals at the specific food allergy table, unless they must do so to protect themselves.** Further, **our hallways are nut-free zones. Please do not open or consume any food containing nuts in the hallways of Spencer; again no food should be consumed outside of the cafeteria or courtyard. Students with allergies should work with the Main Office, teaching staff and School Nurse to develop a School Health Plan to reduce the risk of illness. Please speak with your student's teacher about any allergies of which we need to be aware.**

Emergency Drills:

The safety of all students is a primary concern at Spencer Center. It is with this in mind, that students participate in numerous drills throughout the school year so they will be prepared in case of an emergency.

- Fire drills require students to exit the building by walking quickly and silently in single file lines. It is important that students remain calm and walk in order to prevent the tripping hazards that can occur with panic and running. Silence is required so students can hear instructions clearly. When the drill is over, students are to re-enter the building in the same manner.
- Tornado drills require students to travel quickly and silently to the ground level of the school building, then kneel on the floor with heads touching the wall and hands covering their heads. Students remain in this position until staff members tell them that the drill has ended. Our tornado shelter is the gymnasium, in addition to selected hallway spaces which are away from glass windows.
- Lock-In Drills requires that no doors to the outside may be opened. These drills are used to practice in case of a potentially dangerous situation in the surrounding area. During these types of drills, students and staff may maintain usual activity within the building, but no one may enter or exit the building. Parents, please explain to your children the need to be prepared if an emergency arises and encourage them to follow drill procedures with full cooperation.
- Lockdown drills seal a school, preventing anyone from entering or leaving the building during an emergency situation. During a lockdown, students usually are kept inside classrooms and out of hallways and common areas. Main doors, and if necessary, classroom doors, are locked and windows secured. Students are instructed in the ALICE approach to Lockdown drills, in which students hold an object which can be used to distract or disorient any potential intruders. Staff and students listen for announcements to determine whether remaining in the classroom or designated place or evacuating is the safer option. All lockdown drills will be conducted with the support of our Cincinnati Police Department School Resource Officer.

Searches:

The Cincinnati Public School District is committed to providing a quality education for students in an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the health and safety of the entire school community. Since 1994, when the Cincinnati Board of Education approved a policy on the use of security devices, including metal detectors, the district has found that searches have drastically reduced the number of incidents of weapons in our schools.

To protect your child's rights, searches may only be conducted under two conditions:

1. Random or Systematic Searches. These searches are conducted in a random and systematic manner, without specific suspicion, to keep students from bringing contraband or weapons to school. The method of the search is predetermined and random in nature, prohibiting race and gender bias. Once the random method is selected and the search is begun, it is not changed unless reasonable suspicion occurs. If reasonable suspicion is aroused, then the action listed below under "Reasonable Suspicion" will be taken. Some examples of random search methods include: locker searches, students caught in a hall sweep, selected classrooms, and vehicles in the parking lot.
2. Reasonable Suspicion. This type of search is conducted when there is reasonable evidence pointing to a specific individual(s) who may be in violation of criminal statutes or school rules. The following types of searches are examples of Reasonable Suspicion Searches: lockers, personal; limited clothing; pat down; request to empty pockets, purses, backpacks, boxes, etc.; or vehicle.

School administrators and security personnel are fully trained in the proper use of metal detection equipment. All searches are conducted within the guidelines of the law and the Board of Education's policy 5144.1, "Rights of Privacy."

If students fail to cooperate with a search, they will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action.

Medication Administration:

The school staff cannot administer medicine or pain relievers of any type without the expressed written consent of both the parent and the physician. Students who need to take prescribed medication must have a "Dispensing Medication Form" that has been signed by both the physician and parent on file in the nurse's (medical/health room) office before the medication can be brought to school. Medication to be administered at school must remain in the nurse's (medical/health room) office. **Students cannot transport medications to school themselves; this includes cough drops, lotions, cold medicines, prescription medications, etc. All OTC medication must be accompanied by the appropriate documentation and stored with our nurse. Students cannot bring a one-time dose of any medication to school themselves; a parent must come to the school and administer the one-time medication to their student. If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse at 513.363.5821.**



Counseling Services:

Counseling services are provided for our students with our partner Best Point, and with the assistance of our School Social Worker and School Psychologist. Parent/Guardian permission is required for students to work with the counselor. Talk with your teacher if you have concerns and would like to refer your child to counseling services. The counseling and therapy services are typically charged through the student's/family's health insurance. Our school-based therapist is Emily Alic and we are excited to have her at Spencer Center. Referrals can be completed by parents/guardians, school staff or students themselves, but no services will be scheduled without parent/guardian approval. For more information on Best Point and their services, please visit <https://bestpoint.org/>.

Grading and Other Academic Policies

District-wide Grading Policy for Students in Grades 7-12:

Semester grades will now be calculated using a fifty point percentage model:



- A=100-90%
- B = 89-80%
- C= 79-70%
- D= 69-60%
- F= 59-50%
- X (Failing with excessive absence) = 50%
- I (Incomplete)= 50%.

Semester grades are calculated from two quarter grades and a semester exam/assessment grade. Each quarter will now be 40% of the semester grade and the final semester exam/assessment will be 20% of the grade. The new formula for calculating semester grades will be: $(Q \times .4) + (Q \times .4) + (E \times .2) = \text{Semester Grade}$

Percentages for final quarter grades and the semester exam/assessment percentage will also automatically round up to the nearest whole percentage at the half percent mark and higher. For example, a student who has a quarter one percentage of 89.5% will round up to a 90%. This recommendation was reviewed by the District's Grading & Assessment Committee and approved by the Educational Initiatives Panel and the Board's Student Achievement Committee in the Spring of 2019.

Spencer Center Upper School Grade Maintenance and Academic Intervention Planning:

The Spencer Center offers programming specifically designed to accelerate and challenge gifted and exceptional students while meeting their unique learning needs. A vital skill, required of all students



in a unique, project-based and accelerated learning environment is an independent motivation to learn. **Students at Spencer are expected to maintain no less than a C in any subject.** Students are expected to maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0, while meeting school-wide expectations for etiquette.

If the student is earning failing grades (D or F) in two or more core content (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Sciences, Social Studies/History and Foreign Language) classes for longer than two complete academic weeks or at the end of one quarter, the student will be placed on a generalized academic intervention plan for four to six weeks.

1. The plan will consist of the following:
 - a. The student will be paired with an academic support teacher.
 - b. The teacher team will complete CPS-4 form (see Department of Student Services page for electronic copy).
 - c. The student will have academic or behavior areas identified and be provided specific supports (as detailed on CPS-4 form) for four weeks.
 - d. There will be weekly meetings where progress/data is reviewed regarding student progress.
2. After completing the four-week academic intervention plan, the student's progress will be assessed through a panel meeting. The panel will consist of an administrator, a teacher and a Specials teacher.
3. The panel will develop recommendations which could include but not be limited to:
 - a. Completion of academic intervention plan
 - b. Continued interventions
 - c. Dismissal from the Spencer Center program (at the conclusion of the term, see Note below)

Note:



- **Students who fail two or more core content subjects in consecutive semesters must enroll in another school of choice.**
- **Students who fail a semester of one or more core content subjects will be required to attend summer school (given available CPS Summer School Resources for the failed courses or Semesters)**
 - **Failure to do so will result in removal from The Spencer Center.**

Petition to Return to Spencer Center:

Any student who left Spencer Center may petition to return by completing the criteria listed below. Please submit the materials to the main office in the final week of May. A committee will read petitions in June and inform families if they are invited to return.

1. The student must maintain A's, B's and C's in all academic courses at his/her current school. Students in grades 9-12, please submit a completed transcript. Students in grade 8, please submit your final report card.

2. Please submit a copy of your discipline log from Power School.
3. The student must submit a 250 word essay addressing this prompt: Why do you wish to return to Spencer and how you are now better prepared to be successful.

Right-to-Return from Digital Academy

Yes, there is a right to return, if the following conditions are met:

- a. Have all academic requirements at Digital Academy been fulfilled? Is the student in good academic standing at Digital Academy?
- b. Does Spencer have space available in the requested grade?
- c. Is this transfer in the best interest of the student?
- d. Principal to Principal conversation: What has been happening with the student? Is the student having problems signing in? Have any supports been put in place?
- e. There is a right to return but it does not have to be at this time.
- f. Has a return meeting been scheduled with family, administration, student and school counseling to discuss course history, scheduling and learning needs?

Academic Advisory:

We strive to be as responsive as possible to the needs of our collective student population as well as to individual student needs. In reviewing student data, we noticed that our students have gaps in their executive functioning and personal organization skills which detrimentally affect their grades. Additionally, we believe that building small communities within our broader community can help students to establish meaningful mentorships with teachers and their peers, as well as provide opportunities to practice leadership skills. With this in mind, for the school year, all 7th-8th grade students will have a full Academic Advisory block during Bell 5. This time will be utilized for structured study hall, grade checks, explicit organizational strategy instruction, as well as the Advisory and Second Step curricula and occasionally for recreational play. We are excited to have this unique opportunity to build skills that will pay dividends for our students.

Transcript Request:

Official Transcripts can be printed for students at a cost of \$5.00 per copy. Please allow three days to receive your transcript. Official transcripts should be requested through the Counselor, Main Office, School Cashier or Senior Support Specialist. Request forms are available in the Main Office.

Family Engagement at Spencer Center:

Family Communication:

Classroom teachers post class updates in Schoology or send newsletters home by email on a bi-weekly and quarterly basis to provide families with an overview of classroom learning goals, events and experiences.

Biweekly the Principal will send a Family Bulletin to the email address on file in PowerSchool. If you do not receive this email, please check your demographic and contact information in Power School or check with the Main Office to confirm your email address is up to date. In the event of emergencies or critical reminders, the Principal will utilize robo calls through the phone numbers listed in PowerSchool.

The PTSO will publish monthly calendars, and send home email newsletters to families who sign up to receive the information.

Many publications and updates are published on the Internet. To access this information, log onto the web page <https://spencergifted.cps-k12.org/>.

Updating Contact Information:

If your phone number, email address, employer information, or address change, families are able to update this information from home through the PowerSchool demographics and contact tab. It is imperative for student safety and for family-school communication that we have updated family contact information. If you are unable to update this information, please contact the Main Office and we will update it for you. **If your physical address has changed, please contact the main office as soon as possible for the necessary documents. Please note, an address change during the school year will effect student busing.**

Guidelines for Calling a Staff Member:

When calling a staff member, be sure to leave your name, your child's name, the reason for your call, and your phone number(s) with the person taking the message. A message will be placed in the staff member's mailbox. Please call the Main Office at 513-363-5800 to be directed to a teacher's voicemail, or utilize teacher email addresses for initial communication. **All teacher and staff email addresses are available on our school website.**



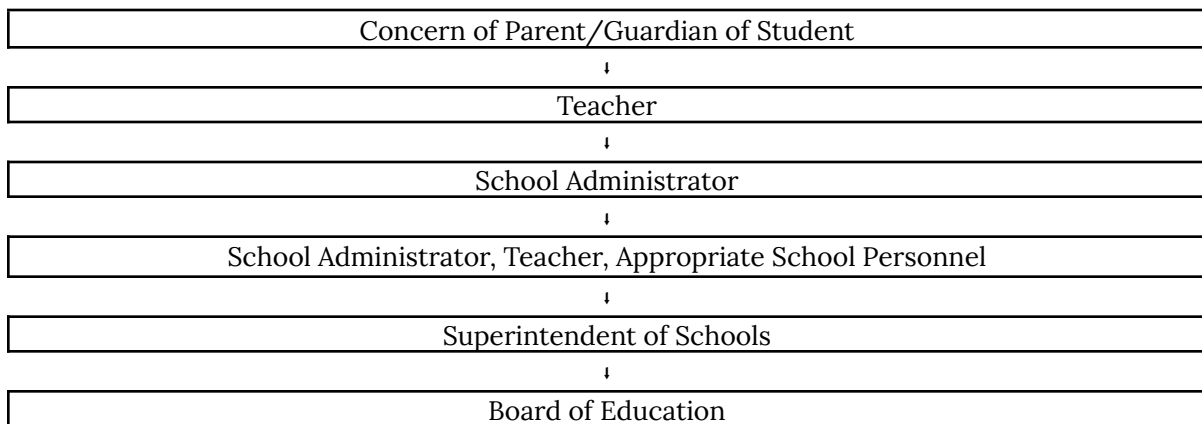
Note: Staff members frequently have meetings before and after school and may not receive messages until the following day but your call or email will be returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Chain of Communication:

Class-related issues, such as grades or assignments, should always begin with the classroom teacher. If such an issue remains unresolved, the parent can contact the Principal. The Principal is the final adjudicator on all academic situations and disputes. The Principal will be involved in matters that deal with the broader academic policy of the school or if the parent /guardian requests the principal's attention to the matter.

We understand that there are many reasons that you might need to contact your child's teacher by phone, e-mail or notes. We have established reasonable time frames for teachers to respond:

- For calls, e-mails or notes regarding the child's physical or emotional state, you can expect the teacher to reply within 24 hours of receipt of the message.
- For calls, e-mails or notes regarding the child's work or miscellaneous concerns, you can expect the teacher to reply within 48 hours of receipt of the message.



If you do not hear from your teacher, please call the main office and leave a message for the Principal.

Visiting Spencer Center:

Security Badges and Background Checks:

To ensure the safety of students and staff, Cincinnati Public Schools requires security badges for anyone entering CPS' buildings. - Board Policy No. 8475



One-time visitors receive a temporary security badge with a photo generated from the Lobby-Guard machine (pictured) in each building.

<https://www.cps-k12.org/families-students/student-safety/employee-badges>

All visitors should enter through the Main Office and check in with office staff. Observations of classrooms should be scheduled in advance with teachers and with at least 24 hours notice, at a mutually agreeable time, so that assessments or other major classroom events can be taken into consideration.

School Tours:

Tours are scheduled multiple times during the months of October- mid-April, on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning at 10:00 AM. Tours can be scheduled by calling the Main Office. Please check the school website for scheduled dates and times.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Communication is an essential part of student success in school. We feel it is very important for parents to keep in close contact with their child's teacher concerning his/her progress. Some parents like to "drop by" the school and try to "catch" the teacher for an impromptu conference; however, unscheduled conferences keep teachers from fulfilling their teaching duties and interrupt the educational process for all students. **Please remember to schedule a conference or observation in advance so that a time that is convenient for all can be established; at least 24 hour notice is required according to Board Policy.** Four conference days are scheduled annually, and are printed on the Spencer Center quarterly and annual Family calendars; however, conferences may be scheduled at any time that is agreeable to both the parent and teacher. We will be working to pre-schedule conference appointments with at least one of your student's teachers each quarter. Due to limited time, it is possible that not all students and their families will have a conference every quarter. We will do our best to accommodate all requests. It is our goal for conferences to include student voices whenever possible. If you are unable to meet on these evenings, please reach out to your student's teachers to schedule a mutually agreeable alternative meeting time.



Spencer Center Community:

It takes a village to run an effective school and we value the contributions of our many stakeholders, including our students, staff, families, and community members. In order to create a community in which everyone has a voice, we participate in a distributed leadership model including our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and our Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC).

- **Instructional Leadership Team (ILT):** Spencer Center is a team-based school. Team-based schools are required to establish an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). ILTs are composed of at least 60 percent teachers. A Team Leader represents each team of teachers. The principal, two parents, and two non-teaching staff members are also included on the ILT. During the school year, the ILT makes decisions about issues that hold the potential to impact instruction; these issues can be items such as proposed changes to the school program or calendar. The ILT also approves the school budget, and makes recommendations for spending funds that are allocated from the Central Office on a per-student basis. The Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC) must then approve budget decisions recommended by the ILT.
- **Local School Decision Making Committee (LSDMC):** The LSDMC is the primary governing body for the school and comprises four major constituency groups: parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, including the principal, and community members, with a minimum of 12 members. Each group has equal representation and therefore, equal voice in the decision-making process. One Partner in Education representative also has a seat on the LSDMC. The LSDMC sets school goals, develops a plan for meeting those goals, and



monitors progress toward goal attainment by conducting mid-year and end-of-year assessments. The LSDMC makes school budget decisions, submits changes in the local school's program, and participates in the selection of the principal. LSDMC meetings are typically held on the second Tuesday of the month. For your convenience, additional information is available on-line at <http://lsdmc.cps-k12.org>



- **Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO):** An important goal of the PTSO is to support the staff and students of Spencer Center by planning and sponsoring activities throughout the year, supporting fundraising efforts, and helping families to focus on the realization of our six pillars. PTSO meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday of every month and are noted on the annual Family Calendar. The PTSO Board meets at 6:00, and the General Assembly meets at 7:00 in the cafeteria (with a virtual option available as well via Google Meets). All parents and staff members are encouraged to attend.

Spencer Center ILT Communication Form:

Our ILT includes two elected parent representatives who attend each meeting and represent the needs and interests of our family group. Our parent representatives report at PTSO meetings and are voting members of the ILT. Should you have a concern or question that you would like to be discussed at our next ILT meeting, please request the ILT Communication Form (or access it from the school website) and submit by email or school mailbox to Ms. Ginocchio or to the ILT parent representatives. They will work with the ILT team to resolve and address your concern in a timely manner.

Walnut Hills Area Council and Community Partners:

We are located in a thriving community of Cincinnati. The Walnut Hills neighborhood is rich in assets, history, vibrant community members, arts, civic engagement and partnerships. We are pleased to connect with many of these partners, including the Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the Walnut Hills Redevelopment Foundation, Walnut Hills Historical Society, the Walnut Hills Branch of the Public Library, the Bush Recreation Center (our local affiliate of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission), Douglass Elementary School, and the Walnut Hills Area Council. The Council meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 in the Bush Recreation Center on Kemper.