

# Spartanburg

DAY SCHOOL

## Middle School Student/Parent Handbook 2016-2017

# ***THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM***

## *Our Vision*

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 passion is to equip and inspire students to a life of learning and service through their intellectual curiosity and empathy for 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
- A commitment to excellence

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 (respect is inherent)
- 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 Makes the Difference*

Our middle school teachers recognize the challenge before them when students walk into their classrooms. Middle schoolers progress through a time of tremendous personal transition. They enter the middle school as elementary school students and they exit as high 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 mercy and loving with 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 the school the best it can be. It is this blend of talents that makes the difference at SDS.

## *Our Program Makes the Difference*

Each facet of the Day School's Middle School academic program contributes to our goal to provide students with a highly-integrated, experientially-based, and academically rigorous curriculum as we seek to fulfill our mission of developing thoughtful, conscientious, hard working, and educated young people. Developmental Designs for Middle School program (DDMS) works to provide a framework and focus for the social and emotional development of each student. The alignment of our academic curriculum and Developmental Designs for the Middle School focuses our attention on blending the rich and strong academic tradition of the Day School with the best educational practices in the field. 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, each grade level takes a two or three 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.

## Typical Courses for Middle Schoolers

<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
<b>Math</b>	<b>Math</b>
<b>English:</b> Literature and Writing classes are taught separately	<b>English:</b> Literature and Writing classes are taught separately.
<b>Science:</b> Human and Ecological Systems	<b>Science:</b> Earth and Life Science
<b>Social Studies:</b> Ancient Civilizations	<b>Social Studies:</b> Medieval to Modern
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>Spanish</b>
<b>Introduction to Music Theory, Recorders</b>	<b>Latin</b>
<b>Art</b>	<b>Band</b>
	<b>Art</b>
	<b>Ballroom Dancing</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
<b>Math:</b> Prealgebra 7, Algebra 1	<b>Math:</b> Prealgebra 8, Algebra I or Geometry
<b>English</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Science:</b> Life and Environmental Science	<b>Science:</b> Introduction to Physical Science
<b>Social Studies:</b> United States History, Part I/Civics	<b>Social Studies:</b> United States History, Part II, Public Speaking
<b>Latin I, Part A</b>	<b>Latin I, Part B</b>
<b>Spanish I, Part A</b>	<b>Spanish I, Part B</b>
<b>Art</b>	<b>Art</b>
<b>Band:</b> Concert and Jazz bands	<b>Band :</b> Concert and Jazz bands
<b>Technology</b>	<b>Technology</b>
	<b>Theater, Garden, Life Skills</b>
<p><i>Please note: Each grade level completes health education units during their science classes in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. Also, all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are required to participate in at least one team sport each year.</i></p>	

## *MS Student Life*

Developed relationships are among the most important components of the middle school experience— among students as well as between students and teachers. Teachers and students develop these relationships inside and outside of the classroom. Interactions among students are consistently monitored, albeit not completely as students are encouraged 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 1

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 student, each year is 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 twelve 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.

### **Middle School Government**

Middle School Government’s (MSG) function is to organize a range of student activities (e.g. social events, fundraisers, community service projects), to communicate student perspectives to the community at large, and to provide hands-on leadership opportunities and experiences for middle school students.

In addition to the three eighth grade officers who are elected in a division-wide vote in May of the prior school year, MSG is composed of a representative from each advisory in grades five through seven who are elected at the beginning of the school year. The officers and representatives meet regularly with faculty representatives to organize their work. Student representatives have the responsibility of communicating pertinent MSG information to their respective grade levels, actively participating in the planning and

execution of MSG projects and events, and effectively demonstrating the values inherent in the honor code through word and deed.

An installation ceremony is held during the first few weeks of school to honor the elected officers and representatives.

### **Service Learning**

When thinking about serving our community and beyond, we strive to incorporate a service learning model into our thinking and action. Designed to promote awareness, understanding, and action, service learning is a natural fit for middle aged students. Whether serving classmates, school, community, nation, or the world, we must recognize problems, imagine solutions, and feel compelled to act. Through projects, students develop their planning, organization, problem-solving and many other types of skills. Through the experience of working with others, students develop appreciations for the common human experience among diverse individuals and in the process gain greater understandings of who they are.

## ***EXPECTATIONS OF MS STUDENTS***

### 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.

### Social Contract

As a part of a community built on such an honor code, middle school students in all grades will participate in the building of the social contract for the year. This contract will be built through consensus at each grade level. This contract will guide much of our interactions with students related to their behavior, performance, and treatment of others.

Students will demonstrate their commitment to this contract by signing it and should regularly reflect on ways to demonstrate that commitment. The MS Social Contract will remain posted in all classrooms throughout the year to remind us of characteristics of a community towards which we strive.

### Expectations

The following list provides students with some specific descriptions of how they might live up to the social contract but is by no means exhaustive.

- 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.
- 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 hurt someone and you regret doing so.
- 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 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.

**Holding students accountable.** We strive to consistently hold students to high standards and sweat the small stuff. Helping students understand what is acceptable and what is not begins with verbal correction and encouragement. We recognize that middle school students do not always understand how they should respond to 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

language and various forms of redirection serve as effective interventions most of the time. If a student continues to make poor or disruptive choices, they 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.

For most repeated infractions of rules and expected behaviors, one day of detention served after school will occur. For frequent and repetitive infractions, a social conference will take place involving the student and his or her advisor or teacher. If further intervention is needed, the Division Head will join the discussion and parents will be notified.

Physical 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 in which the act of aggression occurred. 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:**

##### **Before School:**

Students may be dropped off at the curb in front of the 300 and 400 wings each morning after 7:30a.m.

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 8:00am, he or she should sign-in on the sheet in the MS office( room 11). Students may be tardy up to three times per quarter without penalty. Students and parents will be notified when a student reaches that threshold. Upon the fourth and all subsequent tardies, a student will be required to serve a detention during recess within a day or two of the tardy.

#### **The School Day:**

The school day will begin promptly at 8:00a.m. 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.

Signing Out: Before leaving school due to an appointment, illness, etc. a student's parent must sign out their 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 all the classroom teachers that a student is leaving (in advance if possible) and have your child get his or her assignments.

### **After School:**

Classes end at 3:00p.m. each day. Middle School students have four options:

- Proceed to the carpool lane in front of the 300 and 400 wings to be picked up by a parent or guardian. **They will not be ready for pickup until 3:05pm.**
- Attend a planned tutorial with a teacher in his or her room.
- Attend study hall with one of the middle school teachers on duty. There is a 5th/6th grade study hall and a 7th/8th grade study hall on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Wednesdays are reserved for faculty meetings and study halls are not offered. Sports practices begin on Wednesdays at 3:15 instead of 4:15.
- Study hall ends at 4:00p.m. Parents are asked to please respect the study hall proctor's time by arriving promptly for this pick up.
- At the end of study hall, students who are playing a team sport will report to their respective athletic practices. (Students playing a sport will be allowed to leave study hall ten minutes prior the start of practice. In other words, if practice begins promptly at 4:00, students playing that sport will be dismissed from study hall at 3:50).
- At 4:00, students who are in the 5th and 6th grades may join our Aftercare program in the Lower School. Students who are in the 7th and 8th grades may go to the library until 4:30 p.m. ***Seventh and eighth grade students who are not playing a sport but who need to remain on campus later than 4:30 must meet with the Division Head to design a plan for the time between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m.)***

### **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 Division Head.

### *Clothing*

- 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. No T-shirts.
- 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, crocs, and similarly casual shoes are not permitted. Activities may be limited without proper footwear.
- Pullovers and sweatshirts over are permitted.

### *Headgear*

- Hats and hoods 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. Hair should be 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.

### *Girls*

- Collared or collarless blouses/shirts must cover the shoulders and back. The tops may not reveal midriff, be low cut or excessively tight.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts should fall at a 5” inseam or longer. Leggings and jeggings may 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. Dress code infractions will also result in after school detention.**

#### **Cell Phones:**

Cell phones may be brought to school, but cannot be used during the school day without permission of a teacher. Cell phones should be off and stored in the student's backpack. Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in detention along with the loss of the privilege of having the device (for a period of time determined by the Division Head).

ANY PHONE USE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY without teacher permission is considered to be a behavioral infraction. If usage occurs during the taking of a test or quiz, it could easily be construed as a violation of the honor code. Since phones are not to be on during the school day, there should be no question.

#### **Hallways and Breezeways:**

The hallway is to remain neat and clear. Book bags go in the 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. See Coach Harrell if you need a locker assigned in the gym. Students will have 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 keep our school looking clean.

#### **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 electronic device (laptop, iPad).* Please direct all questions concerning acceptable devices to Dr. Matt Mosley at [matt.mosley@sdsgriffin.org](mailto:matt.mosley@sdsgriffin.org).

All students are required to use a daily assignment planner provided by the school. *Seventh and eighth grade students may choose a planner of his or her own preference in place of the school provided planner. This 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 doing this.

**Lockers:**

Lockers are to be kept neat at all times. Locker inspections will be occur periodically. Lockers must be free of open drink containers or cups at all times. Eating on the hall is allowed during indoor recess only. 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 lockers.

**Transitions and Class Times:**

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:**

Eighth graders may eat outside on nice days as long as a duty teacher accompanies them. All other students will eat inside the Dining Commons. All students must ask for permission from one of the **duty teachers** to leave lunch to return to their locker, stay in a classroom, etc. Students are to use appropriate manners. They are not to throw food, ice, etc, and they are to pick up after themselves. Each day, a group of students will be assigned to clean tables after lunch.

**Recess:**

All students should be out on the fields (or in the Dining Commons-- 7th and 8th only) during recess unless given permission to do otherwise by the duty teacher. Students may be on the hall ONLY if they are working with a teacher.

Students are to follow all the rules set down by the teachers on duty. In general, students should not engage in games nor 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. They may bring a snack from home or purchase a snack from the Dining Commons during this time.

### **Back-to-School Night**

Back-to-School Night is held shortly after the beginning of the year and is designed to give parents an opportunity to meet their child's teachers and receive information about each course and what their child can expect. Parents assemble in the Dent Gallery and then follow an abbreviated schedule of classes as they spend approximately 10 minutes in each class.

### **Conferences:**

Middle school advisors hold two conferences with parents each year. The conferences occur in the fall and spring. Advisors are responsible for scheduling appointments on those days. Most do so by posting sign-up lists on their classroom or office doors or sending a sign up roster via email. Other conferences will occur as needed.

### **Who to contact for what...**

*MS Staff Assistant, Mary Hutchins, ext. 2011, [mary.hutchins@sdsgriffin.org](mailto: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 regarding 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 is responsible for any missed work and should consult with his or her teacher to make arrangements. The grade level online homework calendars should be a tremendous help for them, however, students must communicate with subject specific teachers as well.

### *Your child's advisor*

Your child's advisor is an important vehicle for the school to communicate information, concerns, or successes to the parents as well as for the parents to communicate to the

school. The advisor is charged with monitoring the whole child, looking for patterns in behavior and performance that emerge in multiple places.

*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*

You should always feel free to call, email, or stop by to discuss any concerns you have. However, it is important that those concerns are addressed directly with teachers and advisors as well. Miscommunication often forms the root of frustration and taking the step to communicate directly with teachers can clear up those misunderstandings.

**Grade Level Parents:**

Grade 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.

- GL 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.

**Parties.** GL parents are responsible for planning and providing refreshments for social events throughout the year.

- Notifying all parents in the grade of plans regarding parties, dances, or other social events.
- Arranging appropriate numbers of chaperones.
- Reserving space on-campus as needed.
- Providing refreshments

**Transportation.** GL parents provide invaluable support to teachers by arranging suitable transportation to off-campus events or field trips. When making plans, GL parents should:

- Make sure all drivers have completed the Approved Driver form posted on the web under Parents/Forms. Mary Hutchins is able to assist with this process.

**Communication.** GL parents might be used for a variety of communication efforts including communicating information to all parents through email and/or phone and meeting with the Division Head once a month to provide parental perspective and feedback.

**Accounting.** GL parents collect money from each family to offset the cost of social events. It is imperative that a careful and detailed record is kept of collections and expenses.

**Food Allergy Policy:**

The Day School strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all our 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 allergen 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.
- Teachers will encourage frequent hand washing, particularly before and after meals.
- Teachers will discourage sharing of food from lunch boxes or snacks.

**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 your 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 to 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.

#### **Classes:**

#### **Homework**

Homework is an important 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.

#### **Homework and Assignment Calendar**

Each teacher will post assignments on a daily basis (by 3:15pm). While this is an extremely helpful tool, reliance on this should not take the place of the student's accountability regarding his or her written recording of assignments throughout the day.

### **Tests**

Teachers are expected to give ample advance notification to students and post tests on the assignment/homework calendar. Tests and the accompanying processes of preparation and post-test 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 for the test. They will be challenged appropriately during a test with a good mix 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 the test.

### **Extra Help**

If a student has been absent or is struggling with a concept, a tutorial may be scheduled. The most frequently available time for extra help is after school from 3:15-4:00p.m.

Ultimately, our goal is for students to take ownership for their learning and seek extra help when needed.

### **Accommodations**

Accommodations for students with documented learning disorders 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 (ext. 2418) and Middle School Head.

### **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, in college 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 or the Head of the Middle School. 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	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	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 in the core courses

**Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Report cards are viewable online using our online grading portal at the end of each quarter—October, January, March, and May. Comments are written for all students twice a year. An end of year letter is also written to each child by his or her advisor with feedback from all teachers. Progress reports are issued to all students earning a C+ or below in core subject areas at the midpoint of the second and fourth quarter. Report cards and comments are viewed through our online grading portal. An end of year mailing contains a paper copy of a student’s year end report card, standardized test scores, and advisor letter.

**High 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 8<sup>th</sup> grade, a student must pass 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) and enter into Latin II or Spanish II in Upper School. French 1 may be taken in 8th grade, and the student must pass for the year and enter into French II in Upper School for high school credit.

**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, the teachers and parents should be notified.

**Snow Days:**

In case of snow/inclement weather listen to local radio or television stations to find out if our school is closed.

**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 Dr. Matt Mosley.