

# Welcome to the 2019-2020 School Year!

Dear Scintilla Charter Academy family,

As we begin our third school year, we are honored to partner with you in your child's education. The SCA Board, staff and families, share the belief that education should inspire children to seek answers, to continually question, and to love learning for the sake of acquiring knowledge to better themselves and their community. My personal belief is that a child will not be successful academically until their social and emotional needs are met.

Our very talented faculty and staff are eager to develop a relationship with your child and help them reach their full potential. At the same time, the most essential aspect of scholar success is an effective partnership between school and family. That's where YOU come in!

We want every family to be actively engaged in their child's education; and to that end we ask that you do three things:

- Read this handbook and refer to it often, as it outlines our policies and procedures
- Take every opportunity to learn more about our innovative programs and approaches
- Get involved, whether in the classroom or school-wide initiatives

When a child enrolls at SCA, the whole family becomes part of our school community. This community of dedicated teachers, staff, volunteers, parents and families all work together to ensure the success of every scholar. We look forward to working with you and your input, involvement and support are greatly appreciated. Please know that you can reach out to me anytime with questions or concerns. It is my goal is to see your scholar thrive and have a positive experience at SCA.



*Mandy Avera, Dean of School*  
*mavera@scintillacharteracademy.com*

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# School Background

## **Mission**

The mission of SCA is to increase scholar achievement and develop social responsibility through educational innovations in a safe community of involved families and educators.

## **Vision**

SCA will guide all scholars, with special attention for locally underserved and underperforming scholars, to reach their full potential through social, emotional and academic growth in an engaging and innovative learning environment.

## **Scintilla Beliefs**

At SCA we believe every child should be encouraged, motivated, and challenged daily. Our unique mixture of innovations will provide challenge while also providing intensive support to all scholars. As scholars experience success, a passion for learning will develop. School-wide character development goals and cultural practices will prepare our scholars to be successful both at SCA and in future school settings. We know that given the right environment, children can achieve at high levels but we also know the development and implementation of an innovative and blended curriculum that will enable these results must be focused and strategic. Our curriculum will facilitate scholars in their learning because it is developmentally appropriate at all levels and seeks to meet the naturally inquisitive nature that all children possess.

## **What is a Charter School?**

Charter schools are public schools of choice that have greater flexibility in implementing different teaching methods and philosophies. A charter school operates according to the terms of a charter, or contract, that have been approved by, in SCA's case, Georgia's State Charter Schools Commission. The charter school may request waivers from certain provisions of Georgia state law and any state or local rule, regulation, policy, or procedure relating to schools in the school district. In exchange for this flexibility, the charter school is bound by contract to be held accountable for meeting the performance-based objectives specified in the charter. Please visit our website at [www.scintillacharteracademy.com](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com) to view the complete charter agreement.

## **SCA Governing Board**

The SCA Governing Board of Directors is charged with the oversight of the affairs of SCA and shall pursue such policies and principles as shall be in accordance with law and any written charter entered into by the Board. The Board is responsible for carrying out the following duties and obligations:

- The Board shall uphold SCA's mission and vision and ensure effective organizational planning on the part of the school through an annual strategic planning and review process that will review and update SCA's short-term, mid-term, and long-range goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the mission and plans.
- The Board shall ensure the financial stability of SCA through regular monthly review of financial statements and reports and direct oversight of major financial commitments and decisions.

- The Board shall take an active role, either directly or through a Board committee, in resolving grievances and conflicts which may arise within the school community involving, scholars, parents, staff, administration, and Board members.
- Board Members will confirm annually that they have no inappropriate conflicts that would preclude them from serving SCA with fidelity.
- The Board will adhere to the Georgia Open Meetings Act based on the current requirements of this law.

### **SCA Board Members**

**Chairman Zachary R. Cowart** - Zachary R. Cowart was born in Valdosta and attended Valdosta City Schools graduating from Valdosta High School in 1996. He attended the University of Georgia for undergraduate and law school. He is a partner at Cowart and Perry, LLP law firm and wants the parents in our community to have public school options for their children.

**Vice Chairman Jeremy Baker** - Jeremy Baker is a native of Lowndes County. Jeremy graduated from Valdosta State University and St. Mary's School of Law. He is an attorney and an advocate for school choice in Valdosta/Lowndes County.

**Secretary Enid Santana** - Enid Santana has been a resident of Valdosta for 30 years. She is a licensed real estate agent and is employed as a Marketing/ Leasing Manager at Valdosta Mall. As the mother of two boys, she has become a passionate advocate for school choice.

**Treasurer Eric Tillman** - Eric Tillman was born and raised in Valdosta, Georgia. Eric graduated from Valdosta High School and Valdosta State University. Eric is a third generation CPA and is a partner of Tillman & Tillman, LLP.

**Jerry Jennett** - Jerry Jennett came to Valdosta 40 years ago to run a small subsidiary of an agricultural chemical firm. He bought the subsidiary and eventually added three other companies. He currently is the president and Chief Executive Officer at Georgia Gulf Sulfur Corporation. Thanks to the generosity of Jerry and his partners at Georgia Gulf Sulfur, many significant gifts have been made to Valdosta State University including Langdale College of Business Administration and several athletic programs.

**Garrett Copeland** - Garrett Copeland was born and raised in Valdosta and is a graduate of Lowndes High School and Valdosta State University. Garrett is the Valdosta Market President for The Citizens Bank.

## **Faculty & Staff Directory**

### LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

Jana Abbott-Kindergarten Paraprofessional-jabbott@scintillacharteracademy.com

Megan Ault-Paraprofessional-mault@scintillacharteracademy.com

Ashley Austin-Expedition Coordinator-aaustin@scintillacharteracademy.com

Mandy Avera-Dean of School-mavera@scintillacharteracademy.com

Melissa Baity-Teacher – 6th grade-mbaity@scintillacharteracademy.com

Lauren Baker-Expedition Coordinator-lbaker@scintillacharteracademy.com

Nancy Bass-Teacher – 3rd grade-nbass@scintillacharteracademy.com

Alicia Bellinger-School Nurse-abellinger@scintillacharteracademy.com

Kim Bennett-Teacher – 6th grade-kbennett@scintillacharteracademy.com

Michelle Bradford-Kindergarten Paraprofessional-mbradford@scintillacharteracademy.com

Stephanie Brock-Gifted Teacher-sbrock@scintillacharteracademy.com

Kyle Brock-Maintenance Director-kbrock@scintillacharteracademy.com

Emily Byrd-Teacher – 5th grade-ebyrd@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Kelly Clifford-Music/Band-kclifford@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Aarti Covington-Paraprofessional-acovington@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Kayla DeLaune-Teacher – 3rd grade-ldelaune@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Jennifer Denham-Director of Communications-jdenham@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Kimberly Dixon-Teacher – 4th grade-kdixon@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Melanie Ellis-Teacher – 4th grade-mellis@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Robyn Enchautegui-Teacher – 5th grade-renchautegui@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Hannah Erb-Summers-Art Teacher-herbsummers@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Margaret Evans-Teacher – 2nd grade-mevans@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Brandi Grow-Intervention Specialist-bgrow@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Staci Haire-Counselor-shaire@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Janice Hamel-Teacher – 1st grade-jhamel@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Kay Hardesty-Director of Student Information Systems-khardesty@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Keitha Hodges-Ignite Coordinator-khodges@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Jan Holmes-Kindergarten Paraprofessional-jholmes@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Kelsi Holmes-Teacher – 2nd grade-kholmes@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Katie Hon-Teacher – Kindergarten-khon@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Julie Kerrigan-Special Education Teacher-jkerrigan@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Brooke Knight-Instructional Guide-bknight@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Missy LeFiles-Intervention Specialist-mlefiles@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Sydney Leger-Teacher – 5th grade-sleger@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Matt McCoy-Teacher – 6th grade-mmccoy@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Michelle Parkerson-Teacher – 4th grade-mparkerson@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Merlin Paulk-Physical Education Teacher-mpaulk@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Heather Pickard-Teacher – 4th grade-hpickard@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Haley Price-Teacher – 1st grade-hprice@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Lindsey Ray-Teacher – 3rd grade-lray@scintillacharteracademy.com  
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Alyssa Wiggins-Teacher – 1st grade-awiggins@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Keri Wilkin-Director of Engagement-kwilkin@scintillacharteracademy.com  
Vanessa Williams-Custodian-vwilliams@scintillacharteracademy.com

## Calendar

### August 2019

1-6 – Teacher Pre-Planning  
5 – Open House  
7 – First Day of School

### September 2019

2 – Labor Day – No School

### October 2019

16 - Teacher In-Service - No School for Scholars  
17 – No School  
18 – No School

### November 2019

25-29 – Thanksgiving Holidays

### December 2019

18 – Mandatory Early Dismissal  
19-31 – Christmas Holiday

### January 2020

1-2 – Christmas Holiday  
3 – Teacher In-Service Days – No School for Scholars  
20 – MLK Holiday – No School

### February 2020

14 – No School  
17 – Teacher In-Service Day – No School for Scholars

### March 2020

13 – Teacher In-Service Day – No School for Scholars

### April 2020

6-10 – Spring Break

### May 2020

20 – Last Day of School/Mandatory Early Dismissal  
21-22 – Teacher Post Planning

## Admissions & Enrollment

**Attendance Zone:** Valdosta & Lowndes County, Georgia

**Admissions and Enrollment:** In accordance with O.C.G.A. 20-2-2066 (1)(A), SCA will admit scholars of any race, color, nationality and ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender. SCA shall enroll an eligible scholar, as defined by GADOE, who resides within the attendance zone and submits a timely application unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building. In such cases, all applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random lottery process. Scholars who live outside of SCA's attendance zone may apply/enter SCA's lottery, so long as they are residents of Lowndes County at the time of enrollment.

To be eligible for enrollment at SCA, scholars residing in the attendance zone must submit a timely application to SCA in accordance with the deadline set by the school. SCA may not use admissions criteria or applications that would not otherwise be used at a traditional public school, including requests for letters of recommendation, essays, resumes, or information regarding a scholar's school or community activities,

grades, test scores, attendance record, or disciplinary history. SCA may gather relevant information from scholars after enrollment is determined.

In order to enroll a scholar at SCA, parents/guardians must provide the following documentation:

- Mortgage or lease statement
- Two additional current proofs of residency
- Copy of original birth certificate
- Immunization certificate (or religious exemption)
- Certificate of vision, hearing and dental exam
- Social security card or waiver form (provided by SCA)
- Copy of parent/guardian driver's license
- Proof of legal guardianship (if applicable)
- Proof of legal custody (if applicable)

If the number of timely applicants received by SCA exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building, SCA shall ensure that such applicants have an equal chance of being admitted through a random lottery.

SCA shall hold a registration period (for the following school year) in January of each year. Parents seeking to enroll their children who do not currently attend SCA must register during the registration period. Parents of existing scholars must sign and return the Intent to Return & Sibling Enrollment letter each year. Registered scholars shall be enrolled for the following school year subject to the following process and in the following priority:

- Scholars who attended SCA during the previous school year;
- Statutory Priority includes: Siblings of scholars who attended SCA during the previous school year; scholars of teachers and staff at SCA; and
- Scholars of Governing Board Members;

Within each category listed above, if the number of registered scholars exceeds the available space, then the school shall hold a lottery to determine which scholars shall be enrolled in the school.

The school shall maintain a waiting list of registered scholars who were not enrolled in the school due to lack of space. The school may accept new applications for the waiting list outside of the enrollment period. The school shall follow the same preferences stated above for placing on the waiting list those applications received outside of the enrollment period. Openings created during the school year shall be filled from the waiting list.

Scholars who are offered the opportunity to enroll according to the above-stated procedures must complete all enrollment paperwork and provide all required documentation by the date given. Failure to enroll by the date and time provided will forfeit the child's spot and that spot will be offered to the next scholar on the waiting list.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is an essential component of a child's academic success. When a scholar is absent or arrives late, they lose important opportunities to learn. Excessive tardies and absences can significantly affect a child's ability to succeed academically and socially.

## **Instructional Day**

School Hours:

K-5th Grade - 7:30 am - 3:05 pm

6th Grade - 7:45 am - 3:30 pm

Office Hours: 7:30 am - 4:30 pm

The instructional day for scholars in kindergarten through fifth grade is from 8:05 am to 3:05 pm. The instructional day for sixth-grade scholars will be from 7:45 am - 3:30 pm. SCA attendance policy stipulates any scholar who arrives at SCA after 8:05 am (K-5th) or 7:50 am (6th) will be considered tardy and must be escorted into the building and signed in by an adult at the main desk. All scholars must arrive at school on time and be picked up promptly at the end of the school day.

The regular school day ends at 3:05 pm (K-5th) and 3:30 pm (6th). Scholars are expected to be picked up on time, between 3:05 pm and 3:30 pm (K-5th) and 3:30 pm and 4:00 pm (6th). We encourage parents to enroll your child in the after-school program if you cannot make the 3:45 pm deadline. If your child has not been picked up by 3:45 pm/4:00 pm you will be charged \$1 per minute to allow your child to participate in the after-school program until you arrive.

## **IGNITE - Before & After School Program**

SCA offers an in-house before and after school program, IGNITE, that is run by the school each day from 7:00-8:05 am & 3:30-6:00 pm. The goal of IGNITE is to build on the school's focus of interactive, hands-on projects that spark curiosity, promote active learning, encourage teamwork, build character, and capitalize on children's innate spirit of exploration.

The cost per scholar is \$40.00 per week (aftercare) & \$15.00 per week (before care), with discounts available for multiple children and monthly pre-payment. Visit [www.scintillacharteracademy.com](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com) for more information and to sign up.

For parents who choose to enroll their children in the after-school program, please note that the after-school program ends at 6:00 pm. The after school program will make every effort to contact you should your child not be picked up by 6:00 p.m. **Late pick-ups will be subject to the terms of the IGNITE program.** In order to ensure the safety of your child, please note that the school will contact the local authorities should a pattern of late pick-ups occur.

## **Attendance**

Your child(ren) must be in school every day as mandated by state law. Parents/ guardians have one week to provide a written or emailed excuse for an absence, failure to do so will result in the absence being unexcused. Scholars must be in school unless the absence has been permitted or excused for one of the following reasons:

- Illness of scholar
- Illness of immediate family member
- Death in the family
- Religious holidays of the scholar's own faith
- Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
- Scheduled medical or dental appointments
- Utilizing the Georgia Military Family Act



**1. After 3 unexcused absences:**

A letter will be sent home to the scholar's parent or guardian regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. This letter will require the parent or guardian to contact the school's designee regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. Possible home visit.

**2. After 5 unexcused absences:**

SCA's school resource officer will contact the parent/guardian regarding excessive absences, tardies or early dismissals and schedule a conference with the administration. According to S.B.O.E. 160-5-1-.10, a child is truant and subject to compulsory attendance who during the school calendar year has more than five days of unexcused absences. Possible referral to the Truancy Intervention Program.

**3. After 7 unexcused absences:**

A school social work referral will be generated by the Dean or Dean's designee listing specific school-based interventions (telephone calls, letters, conferences, etc.) that have occurred prior to making the referral.

**4. After 10 unexcused absences:**

Scholars and/or parents will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court, magistrate court and/or Department of Family and Children Services for truancy and/or educational neglect. Detailed information pertaining to the scholar, local school and school social work interventions will be necessary when filing a complaint with DFCS, juvenile and/or magistrate court.

**5. After 15 or more unexcused absences:**

Grade level retention will be considered \*See Promotion/Retention Policy.

**After 10 consecutive absences, scholars are subject to administrative withdrawal.**

See the chart below for specific actions:

ATTENDANCE	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	Failure to Comply
<p><b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</b></p> <p><b>NO NOTE IN 3 DAYS = UNEXCUSED ABSENCE</b></p>	<p><b>3 UNEXCUSED</b></p> <p>*Letter to Parent/Guardian</p> <p>*Parent/Guardian must contact school</p> <p>*Resource Officer or Designee - Possible home visit</p>	<p><b>5 UNEXCUSED</b></p> <p>*Parent Conference (Phone/School)</p> <p>*Resource Officer or Designee - Possible home visit</p> <p>*Possible Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) Referral</p> <p>*Possible Children In Need of Services (CHINS) Referral - Failure to comply with committee requirements may result in referral to Juvenile Court for a truancy hearing</p>	<p><b>ANY ADDITIONAL UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</b></p> <p>*Possible Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) Referral</p> <p>*Possible Children In Need of Services (CHINS) Referral - Failure to comply with committee requirements may result in referral to Juvenile Court for a truancy hearing</p> <p>Automatic Dept. of Family &amp; Children Services (DFACS) referral for elementary students</p>	<p><b>Failure to comply with CHINS requirements may result in a referral to Juvenile Court for a truancy hearing</b></p>
<p><b>EXCUSED ABSENCES</b></p>	<p><b>7 EXCUSED</b></p> <p>*Letter to Parent/Guardian</p> <p>*Parent/ Guardian must contact school</p> <p>*Resource Officer or Designee - Possible home visit</p>	<p><b>10 EXCUSED</b></p> <p>*Parent Conference to determine if a Truancy Intervention is needed</p> <p>*If a Truancy Intervention is needed, a referral will be made to the LODAC Truancy Intervention Program</p>	<p><b>15 EXCUSED</b></p> <p>*TIP Referral (Unless extenuating Medical conditions exist)</p>	<p><b>Failure to comply with CHINS requirements may result in a referral to Juvenile Court for a truancy hearing</b></p>
<p><b>TARDY (LATE ARRIVALS) EARLY CHECKOUTS</b></p>	<p><b>10 TARDIES/EARLY CHECKOUTS</b></p> <p>*Parent/Guardian will be contacted by letter.</p>	<p><b>15 TARDIES/EARLY CHECKOUTS</b></p> <p>*Parent Conference will be held.</p>	<p><b>16 TARDIES/EARLY CHECKOUTS</b></p> <p>*A referral to the Truancy Intervention Program program, unless extenuating medical conditions exist.</p>	<p><b>Failure to comply with CHINS requirements may result in a referral to Juvenile Court for a truancy hearing</b></p>

### **Tardy Policy**

A scholar in K-5th is tardy when he/she is not in the building at 8:05 am. A scholar in 6th is tardy when he/she is not in the building by 7:50 am. Scholars who arrive at SCA after 7:50 am/8:05 am will be considered tardy and must be escorted into the building and signed in by an adult at the main desk. Excused tardies are given for doctor's appointments with notes from the doctor. A doctor's note must be presented upon arrival in order to receive an excused tardy. Five unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence. Early check out (anytime before 2:30 PM) is considered the same as a tardy.

### **Early Checkout**

Parents/guardians may not check scholars out after 2:30 pm, please go through the car line. If the person picking up the child does not go through the car line, they will be required to wait until all scholars are called to the front lobby area at the end of pick-up. **Five unexcused early checkouts equal one unexcused absence. Checkouts prior to 11:30 will be counted as an all day absence.**

### **Friday Mandatory Early Dismissal**

Please reference the school calendar included in this handbook for mandatory early dismissal days. Dismissal will begin at 1:00 pm and all scholars should be picked up by 1:30 pm. Late pick ups on early dismissal days will be treated the same as a full school day. The \$1.00 per minute fee will apply after 1:45 pm.

### **Makeup Work**

Scholars who have an excused absence shall have the opportunity to make up work. It is the responsibility of the parent and scholar to contact the teacher(s) involved to determine make-up assignments and establish mutually agreeable terms for daily work and test makeup. Scholars will be granted the amount of time they were absent to make up work. Major project or assessments missed during suspensions will be made up within the same number of days as the length of the suspension.

## **General Information**

### **Transportation**

It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to ensure that scholars have transportation to and from school daily. SCA DOES NOT provide transportation for scholars.

### **Academy Drop off and Pick up Procedures**

#### Drop Off

Parents should drop off K-5 scholars between 7:30 and 8:05 am, but no earlier than 7:30 am (unless the scholar is participating in the Ignite Early Care Program). If you arrive before 7:30 am, your child should remain in your car until SCA staff is outside the building and accepting scholars - drop off does not begin until staff is present. The tardy bell rings at 8:05 am. Scholars will enter the building through the main school entrance. Scholars who arrive at SCA after 8:05 am will be counted tardy and must be escorted into the building and signed in by an adult at the main desk.

#### Pick Up

Drivers should enter the school and follow the direction of the staff on duty. Cars will loop around the back of the school and line up in front of the school.

Each scholar/family at SCA is assigned a number which is displayed on a placard. When you enter the car line, the staff member on duty enters your number into a program used by SCA called Safe Dismissal. Once the number is entered in the system, your child's name appears on the board in his/her classroom along with the name of a color (e.g. John Smith-Red). At that time, your child is dismissed through the front dining room door and will go to the cone that corresponds to the color he/she was assigned.

Your placard is required and should be displayed either on your rear view mirror or on the car's dashboard. Scholars will not be loaded unless the placard is present. If no placard is present, you will be required to park and come into the front office to check out your scholar. Do not leave your car unattended in any car loop lane during pick up and dismissal. **The safety of your children is our first priority. Please follow drop-off and pick-up procedures very carefully to keep all of our children safe.**

### **Change of Address and/or Phone Number**

Parent/guardian must complete a change of address form or log in to the Parent Portal and made changes immediately if an address or telephone number change occurs during the school year. Parent/guardian will also have to show valid proof of their new residence. It is essential that we have current phone numbers on record at all times.

### **Transfer or Withdrawal of Scholars**

When scholars transfer or withdraw from school, parents/guardians are required to come to the school and sign the necessary forms.

### **Communication**

SCA is committed to promoting communication between the school and those we serve (parents/ guardians, families, scholars, and the community). Parents are encouraged to ask questions and communicate concerns directly with school staff so that information provided remains accurate. Listed below are some of the formal ways SCA will communicate with parents/guardians, families, scholars, and the community regarding important announcements.

Intercom Announcements

Fliers/Handouts/Posters

Mailings

Newsletters (grade level)

Web Page : [www.scintillacharteracademy.com](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com)

Remind Text Messaging: to subscribe text @sparknews to 81010

Weekly SCA Email Newsletter

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

Monday Communication Folders

### **Emergency Procedures**

Your child's safety is paramount! We are required by law to hold fire, lockdown and inclement weather drills on a regular basis and have an up to date school safety plan. Our school safety plan is reviewed each year by our local FEMA representatives

*Inclement Weather:*

In the event of inclement weather, SCA will announce delayed start time, early dismissal or school closing via local news outlets and all in-house communication vehicles including our website, email, text, and social media.

*Fire:*

If the emergency is a fire, classroom teachers will escort their scholars to the emergency assembly area (outside open area) and follow all emergency procedures as outlined in our school safety plan.

*Lockdown:*

If the emergency is a lockdown, teachers will lock doors and move everyone away from windows. Teachers will remain indoors with scholars until an all-clear announcement is made.

**School Nutrition and Snacks**

The mission of Scintilla Charter Academy School Nutrition is to provide quality, nutritious and balanced meals every day to increase student satisfaction and participation in Scintilla Charter Academy Nutrition Program

Scintilla Charter Academy participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. These programs are regulated and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture with the School and Community Nutrition Unit of the Georgia Department of Education overseeing the program administration.

Menus are available online at [www.scintillacharteracademy.com](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com). Lunch brought from home should be clearly marked with your child's name. For health reasons, such as allergic conditions, children may not share lunches.

**The following Meal Charge Policies and Procedures will be in effect for the 2019-2020 school year: Breakfast cost is \$2.00 & Lunch cost is \$3.40.** Families with more than one scholar at SCA should send payment via cash or check separately for each scholar at Scintilla in separate envelopes.

**Checks should be made out to SCA Nutrition with scholar's name and four-digit lunch number written on the check.**

**Families may also check balances and make payments online through the Parent Portal located on SCA's website. Parent Portal access information will be provided at the beginning of each school year or may be obtained in person in the school's front office.**

**Unpaid Balance Procedure**

Scholars are allowed to charge the cost of two day's meals (2 breakfasts and 2 lunches). Families will be notified by balance due letters of unpaid balances each week. If a balance is not paid by the beginning of the next week, the child will be offered a replacement meal at lunch consisting of a sandwich and milk or, at breakfast, a pop tart and milk. Pre-payment by cash or check to SCA Nutrition may be made weekly or monthly in envelopes provided by the school. The scholar's name and homeroom teacher name must be on the envelope in order to credit the proper account.

**Non-Sufficient Fund Checks (NSF)**

Any non-sufficient checks must be picked up by the parent or guardian and paid. Any bank charges that have been assessed will be due as well.

### **Free or Reduced Price Meals**

Students may qualify for free school meals if they receive food stamps (SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or (TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). Families may also qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on family income.

Family applications rather than individual applications are used. Only one application per family is needed. Families must complete a new application each year to determine eligibility. Even if you have students at other schools receiving these benefits, you must complete an application for your Scintilla scholar separately but include ALL members of the family on that application.

Applications are available in the school's front office or online at [www.scintillacharteracademy.com](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com). All household members including all children must be listed on the application. Please make certain that your application reaches Sylvia Wade, the School Nutrition Director at Scintilla. A letter to confirm your eligibility status will be sent to each household. Please retain this letter for your records.

The Scintilla Charter Academy Nutrition staff members are available to scholars and parents for any food-related question, allergy concerns, or menu suggestions.

### **Outside Food/Drinks During Lunch**

Parents who are attending lunch with their child are allowed to bring take-out/fast food for your child. However, parents are not permitted to bring outside food for other children in your child's class.

### **Outside Food for Celebrations**

Parents may bring a small snack for their child's class during recess to celebrate birthdays. It is best to hold these celebrations after scholars have eaten lunch. Please be sure to coordinate with your scholar's teacher well in advance.

### **Recess**

SCA believes that unstructured break time is vital to children's development and academic success. Each grade level's schedule includes 30-45 minutes of daily recess times with a morning and afternoon recess in grades K-5. Sixth-grade scholars will participate in scheduled break time during each day. All staff members are provided directions concerning the responsibility for the supervision of scholars and the safety of our scholars is a priority at all times.

### **Fieldwork**

Fieldwork and experiences outside of the school are an important part of the curriculum and are encouraged. Under no circumstance will a scholar be allowed to leave the school grounds without a permission slip signed by the parent/guardian. When children travel, they are given a new perspective on the world around them. So much happens on fieldwork opportunities: the learning is social, emotional, and academic. Projects become more exciting to young scholars when experiences are provided beyond the classroom. Examples of SCA fieldwork might include, but not be limited to things like; Georgia ecosystems, government facilities, historical landmarks, art museums, and scientific and agricultural exhibitions. Experiences provided through fieldwork will support in driving learning expeditions.

Ample notice will be provided to parents prior to school/class/grade-level fieldwork opportunities. A permission slip signed at the beginning of the school year will cover all fieldwork opportunities. Some fieldwork opportunities may include a small fee for participation. However, SCA will not deny any child the opportunity to

attend a field trip due to financial limitations. Please contact the school or your child's teacher for more information. Parents and families are encouraged to attend but will be required to drive separately due to limited seating with bus transportation.

Scholars may only attend fieldwork if they are in good standing in the classroom. Scholars with three or more behavior referrals must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to attend the fieldwork opportunity.

### **School Supplies**

Scholars are required to buy their own school supplies as determined by their teachers. Please refer to your child's grade level supply list for specific school supplies needed. The list is available on our website under the parent resources tab.

### **Electronic Devices**

There will be times during the school year when it may be beneficial for scholars to bring their own technology device to school. Laptops and tablets may be brought to school during designated times of the year when instructed by the teacher(s). When a scholar's technology device is brought to school, it must remain turned off, stored in the child's bookbag and is to be used only at preordained times during the school day as directed by the teacher to support learning and instruction. Scholars who violate this rule will be subject to administrative consequences which may include confiscation of the device. SCA is not responsible for lost or stolen devices. Recording devices are prohibited at SCA.

### **Cell Phones**

SCA prefers that scholars not bring cell phones to school. The use of cell phones during the school day may disrupt teaching and the learning environment. However, if a scholar chooses to bring a cell phone it should remain turned off and inside their backpack unless they are given specific permission by a staff member to utilize it. SCA scholars may wear a smartwatch but the watch may not be connected to an activated cell phone while on the SCA campus. Scholars may use the office phone in the case of an emergency with a note from their teacher. Scholars who violate this rule will be subject to administrative consequences which may include confiscation of the device. SCA is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.

### **Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

SCA is excited to offer our scholar's the use of the academy's computer systems which includes, but is not limited to, classroom desktop computers, iPads, Google Expeditions VR Goggles, and Chromebooks. This access only includes individual Google accounts at this time for all scholars, not to be confused with google email. Scholars will be assigned unique log-in's specific to them in order for SCA to closely monitor all internet usage. To gain access to the internet using this technology, we are requesting parent permission. By signing the acknowledgment at the end of this handbook, you are stating that you have read and reviewed this entire document with your child and fully understand the terms and expectations of acceptable use stated below.

#### **Purpose**

SCA recognizes the important role technology plays in the mastery of content and standards as mandated by the Georgia Department of Education. In order to gain mastery of these standards, scholars and teachers will use technology to directly promote innovation and communication as well as foster an environment of successful learners.

## Privilege

The administration and staff at SCA believe that the use of technology resources at SCA is a privilege, not a right. **Any activity with technology that is deemed as inappropriate by teachers and administration may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities. Administration may revoke access to technology resources at any time.**

## Filtering and Monitoring

SCA internet usage can and will be monitored to ensure acceptable use of materials. SCA utilizes a web-filtering system to restrict unacceptable access. However, no filtering system is 100% safe. By scholars being assigned unique log-in and password information, SCA can monitor and hold scholars accountable.

Scholar's at SCA must adhere to the following rules that pertain to appropriate technology and internet usage:

1. I will only use technology as instructed by my teacher and with my teacher's permission.
2. I will be polite and show respect to others and never cyber-bully. I will never post or send messages or pictures to anyone that could hurt, threaten, or embarrass other people. If someone cyber-bullies me or sends me inappropriate pictures or messages, I will tell my teacher or parents right away.
3. I will not share information such as name, address, phone number, photos or any other information about myself to others while using the internet. If anyone on the internet tries to reach out to me, I will immediately tell my teacher or parent.
4. If I notice anyone opening an inappropriate website or breaking any other rules listed, I will immediately notify my teacher.
5. I will not use or type any obscene language.
6. I will use the computer and internet only for school purposes.
7. I will not use any type of chat or instant messaging.
8. I will not download anything without teacher permission.
9. I will not install any programs on school computers.
10. I will not change any settings on any computer.
11. I will not use any portable drives in a computer without teacher permission.
12. I will only use a computer when I have permission.
13. I will take care of SCA's technology resources so as not to cause damage.
14. I will only use my username and password and no other and will not share my login information with another scholar.
15. I will log off the computer when I am finished.

## School Telephone Usage

Scholars may use classroom or front office telephones for emergency purposes only with approval from their teacher or administration.

## Money and Other Valuables

Scholars should not bring money, property, or other valuables to school, except to purchase milk, breakfast, lunch, or for other special circumstances. Money should be sent in a sealed and labeled envelope or ziploc bag. If money is required for other reasons, scholars and parents will be notified. **The school will not assume the responsibility for any lost or stolen items.**

## Lost and Found

Any article that has been lost and returned may be claimed in the front office. Items that are not claimed after every nine weeks will be donated.



### **School Visitors**

All scholars, parents, and visitors must enter through the front lobby, sign in at the front desk, and wear an identification badge at all times. We welcome family involvement at SCA and want families to feel welcome here. With that being said, we also protect our scholar's instructional time intensely. If you would like to visit your child in his/her classroom, please communicate with his/her teacher(s) ahead of time and make arrangements to do so. You will not be permitted to "drop in" on your child's class or interrupt instructional time to speak with the teacher. If you need to speak to your child's teacher, please reach out to them to set up an appointment. Families are always welcome to eat lunch with their scholars and may come unannounced.

### **Celebration Procedures**

SCA's charter agreement with the state is very clear that instructional time will be highly protected. Parents may bring a small snack during recess to celebrate a child's birthday. Please be sure to coordinate with your scholar's teacher well in advance. Individual birthday parties will be asked to happen outside of the SCA academic day. If you choose to distribute party invitations at SCA, all scholars in the child's homeroom must be included.

### **Scholar Records**

School permanent records include all educational and disciplinary materials directly related to a scholar. SCA will maintain scholar records in a confidential manner and comply with all state and federal laws regarding the privacy of these records, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

## **Interviewing, Photographing, and Videotaping of Scholars by Staff or Media**

Scholars may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by school officials or the news media at school or school activity or events and such photographs, videotapes, and interviews may be published, including internet publication. If you, as a parent/guardian, object to your scholar being photographed, videotaped, interviewed or the display of their work the objection must be presented in writing to the school's front office within 10 school days after their first day of school (August 21, 2019).

## **Health, Medicine, and the School Nurse**

### **Medicine Administration**

SCA is committed to the health and safety of its scholars. Medication and/or medical procedures required by scholars should be administered by a parent/legal guardian at home. Under exceptional circumstances, prescribed medication and/or medical health-related procedures may be administered by the school nurse, designated staff member, or self-administered by the scholar per written physician's orders and written parent/guardian authorization. If your child receives daily or life-saving medication (epi-pen, inhaler, insulin) during the school day, you are required to provide the school nurse with up to date medications so that he/she has them on hand at all times.

School nurses or, in her absence, a designated staff member, may administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a scholar upon the occurrence of an actual or perceived anaphylactic adverse (allergic) reaction, whether or not such scholar has a prescription for epinephrine. Any school employee who in good faith administers or

chooses not to administer auto-- injectable epinephrine to a scholar in such circumstances shall be immune from civil liability, pursuant to Georgia statute.

### **Medical Records**

Scholar health records will be maintained in locked or password-protected files in order to maintain confidentiality. All health records will be managed by the school nurse and any appropriate, designated staff and will only be released to service providers as allowed and dictated by state regulations.

### **Medical Operations**

SCA has a licensed school nurse or designee on staff to provide services to scholars in accordance with state guidelines. The nurse participates in workshops, in-services and/or training.

### **Health Screenings**

Hearing and vision screenings are provided for all third-grade scholars by the Valdosta Junior Service League at the beginning of each school year. Hearing and vision screenings are performed by the school nurse on an as-needed basis.

As a proactive measure to implement a scoliosis screening program to meet the requirements of OCGA § 20-2-772 and the Department of Public Health rule 511-5-8., SCA's nurse will facilitate an annual scoliosis screening. Each spring, the nurse will examine each age-appropriate student for signs of scoliosis. A written notice will be sent to parents in advance and the option to exclude their child(ren) from the screening will be made available.

### **Lice Policy & Procedures**

Scholars exhibiting signs and symptoms of head lice will be sent to the school nurse. Possible symptoms are: itchy scalp, tiny gray or brown bugs in the hair, nits (tiny yellowish-white or brown oval eggs attached directly to the hair shaft), scalp rash.

**If live lice or nits are observed**, the school nurse will call the parent. The child will be given a lice treatment guideline packet. Siblings of infested child will also be checked. If siblings attend another school, that school nurse will be notified to check the siblings.

**In order for the child to return to school**, the parent will need to provide proof of treatment/clearance letter from the health department, physician's office or an approved lice treatment center. The nurse will examine the child for live lice and/ or nits. If no live lice are seen and the number of nits are diminished from the initial check, students may go to class.

**Students will be re-checked** for the presence of head lice after 7-10 days. Parents should remove all the nits from their child's hair.

## **Uniforms & Dress Code**

We strive to encourage unity among our scholars, faculty, and staff. Implementing a uniform dress code at SCA allows us to work towards this effort. The atmosphere of a school must be conducive to learning, and a scholar's appearance can positively or negatively impact the climate of a school. SCA scholars must adhere to the following dress code requirements:

**Tops:**

Monday - Red collared shirt with SCA Logo

Tuesday - Gray collared shirt with SCA Logo

Wednesday - Navy Blue collared shirt with SCA Logo

Thursday - Lime green collared shirt with SCA Logo

Friday - SCA Spiritwear (available from our uniform vendors)

**Bottoms:**

Khaki pants, shorts, scooters, jumpers, or skirts. Girls may wear polo style dresses.

**Shoes:**

Presentable shoes of any kind are acceptable. Because scholars have 30-45 minutes of recess time daily and learning opportunities outside are encouraged, we recommend scholars wear athletic or a similar type of shoe that will not hinder their participation.

**Outerwear:**

All outerwear (jackets, coats, etc.) are required to be solid in color and embroidered with the SCA logo or be a solid color without symbols, emblems, pictures, etc. if the outerwear does not allow for the uniform shirt to be visible. Hoods from hoodie sweatshirts or jackets may not be worn inside the building.

Scholars enrolled in the school after the first day of school will be given ten (10) school days to prepare adequately for the dress code policy. Until that time they may borrow uniforms from those available at the school or wear polo style shirts in the designated color without penalty. However, **scholars must wear a school uniform each day.**

All uniforms must be embroidered with proper school logos. For your convenience, all uniform wear will be available for purchase through outside vendors throughout the year. However, SCA's standing policy is to mitigate any financial obligation for those families for whom this presents an undue hardship. Parents and/or guardians who have concerns about the affordability of a school uniform should contact [info@scintillacharteracademy.com](mailto:info@scintillacharteracademy.com) and SCA will work to assist the family in identifying community resources.

**Dress Code**

The following types of clothing are considered inappropriate at SCA:

- Shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. The following are not permitted: shoes which damage the carpet or floors, bedroom shoes, shoes with wheels, or shoes with heels over 1 ½ inch in height.
- Hats, caps, sweatbands, and sunglasses worn inside the building are not permitted except on specified days or particular situations as determined by the school's administrators
- Halter tops, midribs, muscle shirts, net shirts, cutaways, pajamas, lounging pants, clothing with words across the seat, or any garment that shows the stomach or waistline in the back are not permitted
- Sleeveless tops must have a strap of at least two (2) inches in width across the shoulders. Revealing necklines are not permitted
- Spandex clothing and sheer garments worn as the primary garments are not permitted
- Pants must be worn at the natural waist. They cannot be poorly fitted or oversized and baggy, so as to allow sagging of the pants
- Clothing with suggestive words or pictures are not permitted
- Shorts and skirts must not be more than three inches above the top of the kneecap

- Shorts must be worn under skirts when the child is participating in rigorous physical activity
- Clothing that is torn, ripped, or unhemmed either by accident or style is not permitted
- No manner of clothing, jewelry, button, or pin may display drugs, cigarettes, sexually suggestive items, alcohol, weapons, profanity, gang-related logos or messages, or pictures or words that are determined to be distracting or demeaning to others by the school's administrators

### **Noncompliance Procedures**

Scholars will strive to achieve full compliance with the guidelines of the Uniform Dress Code Policy. Since noncompliance interferes with the smooth operation of the school, the plan listed below has been developed to address scholars who do not comply with the required uniform and dress code procedures.

If a scholar comes to school out of uniform, the following measures will be taken:

If available, a uniform will be provided to the scholar which will be returned at the end of the day as well as:

1st Occurrence ~ The teacher will send home a letter from the administration.

2nd Occurrence ~ The teacher will send home a letter from the administration and call the parent or guardian.

3rd Occurrence ~ A conference will be set up between an administrator and the parent to address the problem and develop a solution.

4th Occurrence ~ Administration will notify the parents and they will be required to either bring the proper uniform to the school or pick the scholar up from school.

5th & Additional Occurrences ~ Parents will be contacted and appropriate consequences will occur.

*\*\*Additional themed dress up days may be added and appropriate notice will be given.\*\**

## **Our Educational Approach**

The educational approach at SCA is based on a combination of deeper learning and arts integration. Deeper learning skills — critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication and learning how to learn — are the core focus of instruction and supported through the use of the EL Education curriculum and model. The EL Education model provides guidance and resources to support SCA's vision. EL Education believes that to prepare scholars for success in college, career, citizenship, and life we must embrace a broader and deeper version of what high achievement means. Mastery of knowledge and skills, character, and high-quality work are all critical for success. Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

### **Elective Opportunities**

SCA offers a unique blend of elective classes each week. In addition to physical education, art, Spanish music education and music performance/theater, SCA also integrates technology instruction to support grade-level activities. Scholars rotate through five elective classes each week. Teachers of elective classes collaborate with classroom teachers to create integrated lessons/units and to support classroom instruction and scholar learning. Sixth-grade scholars will participate in two electives each day. One of the electives is interest-based and could include band, theater, health and PE, and STEAM. Scholars will participate in these electives for a semester or the entire year. The second elective will change every nine weeks and could include art, entrepreneurship, engineering/technology, agriculture education, or world culture.

## SCA Grading Rubric

SCA uses a standards-based grading system. SCA scholars will work through the standards collaboratively or individually, according to their individual needs, and have multiple opportunities for mastery. Standards-based report cards will also represent an ongoing reporting tool that will be used to drive instruction and provide support.

## SCA Grading Principles

SCA Principle #1-Grades and reports should be based on clearly specified learning goals and performance standards.

SCA Principle #2-Evidence used for grading should be valid- scholars are assessed on what they are taught. There are no trick questions and no surprises.

SCA Principle #3-Grading should be based on established criteria, not on arbitrary norms

On a math assessment scholars are graded on the math standards assessed, not on arbitrary norms such as no name or poor handwriting.

SCA Principle #4- Not everything should be included in grades. Scholars are not graded as they are learning the information, but after the learning has occurred. Scholars need to have enough “practice” in order to be successful in the “game, ” i. e. practice is learning time. (not graded) and the game is to show what you know. (graded).

SCA Principle #5- Teachers will use standards-based grading to assess scholar achievement.

SCA Principle #6- Focus on achievement and report other factors separately. Students’ math grades will reflect their math achievement. However, their work habits and responsibilities during math will be reported separately.

## Promotion/Retention Policy

The following criteria will be utilized to determine promotion/retention for each scholar. If a parent/guardian disagrees with SCA’s decision to retain, a committee will be formed consisting of the parent/guardian, teachers, and administration. The committee decision to **promote** should be unanimous, if not the scholar will be retained. If a unanimous decision is made to **place** a scholar in the next grade, the decision should be based solely on the team’s consideration that given appropriate interventions (and the implementation of a plan) the scholar should master the next grade-level standards by the end of the following year.

Kindergarten- 5th grade **mandatory**:

- 80% mastery of ELA standards
- 80% mastery of Math standards
- Teacher recommendation

Kindergarten-5th-grade **additional information considered as applicable**:

- MAP scores (scholar performance throughout the entire year for ELA and Math)
- GMAS scores showing at least proficiency level for 3rd Grade (ELA) and 5th grade (ELA and Math)
- Attendance
- Age, grade, current placement

Scholars who fail to meet the promotion criteria listed above will be recommended for **retention**.

## **Grading Reports**

Four times a year, scholars and families in all grades will receive the Standards-Based Report Cards. The end of term report provides academic and related information on a scholar so that support and attention may be enhanced, maintained, or altered to help the scholar achieve maximum growth and learning.

## **Communication Folders**

Communication folders and graded material will communicate progress and any concerns regarding mastery. Folders will be sent home each Monday and parents will be required to review, sign and return the folders on Tuesday. Families are encouraged to utilize this folder to communicate with teachers, request conferences, or ask questions.

## **Scholar Assessments**

Teachers and administrators use multiple assessments throughout the year. There is not a single assessment that can be used to define a child's success. Assessments are essential to understanding the development of individual scholars and to assist in making decisions to best meet their needs. Some of the formal assessments used by SCA are as follows:

### **Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)**

The Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) is a year-long, performance-based assessment aligned to the state-mandated content standards. The goal of the assessment program is to provide teachers with information about the level of instructional support needed by individual scholars entering kindergarten and first grade. GKIDS will allow teachers to assess scholar performance during instruction, record scholar performance in an online database, and generate reports for instructional planning, progress reports, report cards, SST, and/or parent conferences. Throughout the year, teachers may assess scholars and record GKIDS data based on their school's curriculum map or report card schedule. At the end of the year, summary reports and individual scholar reports will be generated based on the data the teacher has entered throughout the year.

### **Georgia Milestones**

As a public school, SCA is required to participate in the Georgia Milestones End of Grade Assessment in grades 3, 4, and 5. Scholar assessment score reports are mailed home to families following their arrival to the school. The score reports are accompanied by a cover letter that further explains the tests and a guide to interpreting the score reports.

## **Academic Parent and Family Conferences**

If needed, a conference will be scheduled by the homeroom teacher and/or grade level team to discuss a scholar's academic achievement. If the teacher cannot contact the parent, then the teacher will notify the administration. Parents and families should communicate with their scholar's homeroom teacher if they would like to schedule a conference.

## **Homework**

Homework is assigned at the teacher's discretion. Scholars are expected to meet the deadlines given by their teacher.

SCA believes that it is important for scholars to become increasingly responsible for directing their own learning. Homework is a time to practice skills that have already been taught in the classroom at some point in the year. Teachers may send home additional work at their discretion.

We encourage families to be involved with homework. This might look or sound like:

- Listening to your child read
- Making a connection to and asking questions on what is being read
- Making natural, real-world connections to math

To extend learning opportunities beyond homework we encourage you to help your child find **intrinsic and authentic** reasons for learning.

### **Makeup Work**

Scholars who have an excused absence shall have the opportunity to make up work. It is the responsibility of the parent and scholar to contact the teacher(s) involved to determine make-up assignments and establish mutually agreeable terms for daily work and test makeup. Scholars will be granted the amount of time they were absent to make up work. Major project or assessments missed during suspensions will be made up within the same number of days as the length of the suspension.

### **Textbooks, Technology, and Supplies**

All textbooks, technology, and supplies are loaned to scholars for their use during the school year. Scholars are responsible for exercising care in the use of SCA materials. Acknowledgment by parent and scholars of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy must be completed before utilizing these tools. Scholars are required to return books and supplies to teachers at the conclusion of the course/school year. Scholars will be charged for damaged or lost books and supplies before replacements are issued.

## **Student Support Services**

### **Student Support Team (SST)**

The purpose of the SST is to develop individual plans for each child's educational development, engage classroom teachers and parents in creating school-wide and individual plans, and create linkages to a consortium of service providers. SST is intended to support student achievement, socialization skills, attendance, and parental involvement.

### **Early Intervention Program (EIP)**

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is designed to serve students who are at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level. The purpose of the Early Intervention Program is to provide additional instructional resources to help students who are performing below grade level obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade-level performance in the shortest possible time.

### **Special Education Services**

SCA provides special services to individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for Special Education as outlined by federal and state guidelines through IDEA. Direct and related services are provided to those individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for autism, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment/deafness, mental delay, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impaired, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment/blindness. SCA staff regularly monitors each student's progress and provides support. Procedures for making referrals, conducting evaluations, communicating with families, writing and reviewing Individual Education Programs (IEP's), maintaining student records, and reporting progress are managed by SCA's Special Education Director. For further information regarding the special education process, contact your child's teacher.

For those identified with a disability through Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), the special education program at SCA works with scholars and families to meet scholars' individual needs by accommodating and/or modifying curriculum, instruction, and/or assessment. A (K-5) Special Education Director works with a team of special education teachers to oversee the services provided to scholars with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) so that scholars make progress towards their goals. As much as is appropriate, scholars with identified disabilities are included in classes with their peers, with classroom teachers working in consultation with special education teachers and/or with scholars working directly with special education teachers. SCA will follow state and federal guidelines to provide a broad spectrum of special education services to support the specific learning needs of all scholars.

### **English Learners (EL)**

Families are asked to complete a Home Language Survey as part of the registration process. Information from the survey will be used as a first-level screening to ascertain if the scholar may require an additional assessment to determine if he/she is eligible for ESOL services. In addition to providing ESOL services to scholars, SCA will provide interpreters for parent/teacher conferences and other Academy related activities as needed.

### **Blaze (Gifted & Talented Program)**

SCA complies with the state guidelines for identifying eligibility and placing scholars in the gifted education program. Once eligibility has been established, parents will be notified of the individualized learning plan created for their scholar. A state-approved model is made available and monitored by a gifted certified professional to support the specific learning needs of scholars identified gifted. Gifted scholars receive a minimum of five segments per week. Enrichment and advanced content instruction are determined by the subject-specific teachers working with gifted certified personnel.

## **Family Engagement**

### **Parental Contact Information**

Accurate parent and family contact information is crucial to scholar safety. Please always update the school with new contact information, including email addresses, phone numbers, home address, work numbers, and emergency contacts which will facilitate better communication between the school and family.

### **Contacting Your Child's Teacher**

If a parent/guardian would like to discuss a matter with any staff member, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The parent/guardian should schedule an appointment with the faculty member prior to the meeting date. It is possible that the concern may be resolved by a telephone discussion during the teacher's planning time. Please contact the teacher directly to schedule an appointment.
2. The parent/guardian must report to the office at the time of the agreed appointment and the main office staff will notify the faculty member and provide you with a visitor's pass and
3. Under no circumstances should a parent go to a classroom or interrupt a teacher's class without prior consent from the main office.

### **Communication Chain of Command**



SCA believes that relationships are of utmost importance, and communication is how we care for these relationships. SCA also feels that adults must be models of good character even in the most difficult situations. Except as otherwise provided in the General Public Complaints Policy for alleged violations of state or federal law, a parent with a grievance concerning a particular class, faculty member, or administration of the school, should resolve the grievance by following the chain of command. Issues that arise in a particular classroom should always be addressed to the **teacher first** since the teacher always has the most direct knowledge of the scholar.

1. The teacher. Parents should schedule a meeting with the teacher by calling the school or sending an email directly to the teacher. Except in emergency circumstances or situations involving imminent danger, parents shall not confront a teacher about an issue with any scholar present. If the teacher and parent agree that it is in the best interest of the scholar to have a discussion in the presence of the scholar, they may do so.
2. The Dean. If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent should discuss the matter with the Dean.
3. The School Board. If the grievance cannot be resolved after talking with the teacher or the appropriate party, then a parent must submit his/her grievance in writing to the chair of the board. Parental concerns and grievances may also be raised during the community comments portion of the Board of Directors meeting. The concern or grievance must be submitted in writing, and no more than two minutes will be granted. Grievances or discussions involving specific personnel will not be entertained at a public meeting. It is recommended that the concern or grievance be addressed in one of the aforementioned steps before using this option.

### **Parent and Family Behavior Expectations**

Parents and families are expected to dress appropriately and use respect and courtesy. They will address all employees, other parents and families, and all scholars in a polite and professional manner. Situations arising in reference to SCA policy/ teacher decisions/ administrative decisions should be discussed in a civil conference format. Raised voices, threats, interference with instruction, or school activities will warrant removal from the property by civil authorities. Severe and/or problematic behavior incidents will result in restrictions from the property and possible expulsion of the entire family.

### **Contacting Scholars**

If a parent needs to reach a scholar during the school day in the case of an emergency, the scholar will be pulled out of class and given the message. However, classrooms will not be disrupted for non-emergency messages.

### **SCA Volunteer Program**

Volunteers are a critical component to support SCA scholars and the mission of our school. We strongly encourage all families to volunteer in school-wide opportunities communicated throughout the year or you may reach out to your scholar's teacher to offer to help in their classroom. PTO is another great way to volunteer and support the entire school community.

### **Celebrations of Learning**

SCA recognizes the importance of an authentic audience in the learning process. Celebrations of Learning are exhibit nights that will be held multiple times a year as a culminating event and allow scholars to share their work with families and community stakeholders. Scholars will be active participants in the Celebrations of Learning as they display their work and discuss what they have learned with those who attend.

## **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)**

While the SCA PTO is a separate and distinct organization from SCA, all parents are encouraged to join the PTO. Membership dues are \$10.00. Membership allows PTO to support SCA by providing resources and support to our school community. The purpose of the SCA PTO shall be to support the mission statement of the SCA. This may include advocacy and educational support, in addition to, collaborative efforts deemed necessary by the scholars, parents, faculty, administration, and the governing board of SCA.

PTO Bylaws and Executive Board information can be found on the school's website:  
[www.scintillacharteracademy.com/pto](http://www.scintillacharteracademy.com/pto).

# **Behavior Expectations/Code of Conduct**

Our goal is to teach scholars the value and importance of following established rules and procedures in order to maintain a safe, orderly, and respectful environment both in our school and in the community. To that end, we will positively reinforce honorable conduct and good behavior as often as possible and will balance this with appropriate consequences for misconduct. We will continually provide encouragement and support to our scholars in self-management of behavior and control of actions.

- Be polite and attentive both inside and outside of class.
- Attend school consistently, be punctual, and take responsibility for making up any work when absent.
- Comply with the uniform and dress code.
- Be prepared for class.
- Follow directions.
- Follow all reasonable requests made by adults on the premises with a positive attitude, and show respect for self, others, and property.
- Cooperate with and demonstrate respect for the faculty and staff, including administrators, teachers, secretaries, custodians, and any other people working at the school.
- Communicate in an acceptable tone of voice using an acceptable choice of words.
- Follow dining room, playground, hallway, and individual classroom rules.
- Not use threats or intimidation against any other person.
- Respect the health and safety of others, safety rules, and not bring tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal substances to school.
- Not bring anything to school that could be used to harm another or that is illegal.

SCA uses Habits of Character and our Scintilla Standards to teach scholars the behavior that is expected at SCA.

## **Habits of Character**

### **Perseverance**

- I can set goals and work towards meeting those goals.
- I can stick with a task until completion.
- I can use feedback to produce high-quality work.

### **Responsibility**

- I can be responsible for my learning and work.
- I can be responsible for my attitudes and actions.

## Respect

- I can be respectful towards members of my school community.
- I can listen to my classmate's diverse opinions and remain open-minded.
- I can contribute to my group in a positive way.

## Service

- I can have a positive impact on my school.
- I can have a positive impact on my community.
- I can have a positive impact on my environment.

## Scintilla Standards

The Scintilla Standards are the foundation on which our school's culture is built. These standards are taught and modeled daily so that these fundamentals become second nature.

### Scintilla Standards:

1. When speaking to someone, make eye contact and be a good listener.
2. It's always polite to respond when someone is speaking to you.
3. Respect others opinions, ideas, and suggestions.
4. Always be a good winner and a better loser.
5. Always be respectful to others and don't roll your eyes or use disrespectful gestures.
6. It's okay to be happy when you do something well, but remember to not ask for a reward.
7. Saying thank you is one of the most important things you can say!
8. Use good manners in the hallway by being quiet and respecting of other scholars learning.
9. People feel important when you are able to remember their names.
10. Use your good manners in the restroom... wash your hands and remember to throw away your trash.
11. When someone is being reprimanded, remember it is not polite to stare.
12. Make sure to always clean up after yourself no matter where you are.
13. When someone introduces you to a new person, make sure to shake their hand and say "nice to meet you."
14. It's always polite to hold the door open for someone who is close behind you.
15. Use your best manners and be respectful at Community Circle and any other assembly.
16. Everyone makes mistakes!! When you do use them as an opportunity to learn and make better choices next time.
17. Being honest is always for the best in every situation.
18. It is NEVER okay to bully or meanly tease anyone!
19. Always do your best!
20. Try to see the positive things in all situations..look for the bright side and you will find it.

## Crew

Each morning, scholars will start their day in homeroom with a crew meeting. The purpose of this time is to build community in the classroom. Elements of crew meetings include news and announcements, preparing for a successful day of learning, greetings and focus on Scintilla Standards and Habits of Character.

## Community Circle

Community Circle is an opportunity for the entire SCA school family to come together and celebrate the week. Each Friday morning we meet in the Dining Room to highlight learning and character accomplishments from the week. Grade levels rotate in leading our weekly Community Circle. SCA families are always welcome to attend Community Circle.

## **Learning Environment**

Establishing a safe and orderly learning environment requires all members of the school community, teachers, support staff, scholars, and parents to model behaviors that show respect for each other and persons in authority. Personal responsibilities or standards of conduct for our scholars, teachers/staff, parents and families are listed below:

## **Teacher/Staff Responsibilities**

Teachers/staff are expected to model behaviors that are consistent with SCA's policies and school performance standards. Teachers/Staff are responsible to support the learning environment by exemplifying the following standards of conduct:

- Teachers and staff shall promote mutual respect between scholars and adults
- Teachers and staff shall be prepared to meet professional responsibilities associated with their respective positions
- Teachers and staff shall develop and use cooperative discipline strategies and a restorative approach, including the appropriate language of learning techniques and a consistent school-wide procedure to address conflicts and problem-solve with scholars
- Teachers and staff shall promote a sense of pride and community as evidenced by a friendly and inviting atmosphere, encouraging actions, and service in the school and community
- Teachers/administrators shall contact a scholar's parents/guardians in cases of serious infractions of the school code of conduct

## **Parent/Family/Guardian Responsibilities**

Parents, families, and guardians of scholars are expected to participate in their child's education in the following ways:

- Communicate often and routinely with their child's teacher
- Participate in their child's development by attending scheduled conferences
- Keep informed about school policies and requirements of their child's academic program, including homework and projects
- Ensure the child attends school regularly and is appropriately prepared
- Participate in school events for home reinforcement of study skills and specific instructional objectives
- Communicate concerns to school staff concerning specific problems or difficulties that may impede the child's learning or well-being
- Provide positive support to your scholar(s) as well as the school and its faculty and staff

## **Offenses and Levels of Disciplinary Action**

SCA uses the Responsive Classroom model and a restorative approach as well as other social and emotional learning initiatives to promote positive behavior and a healthy school environment. In a nutshell, this means that we try to repair the harm caused when a student acts inappropriately to another student, a staff member, or the school environment. We believe that these practices not only lead to a calmer more thoughtful environment but that they allow valuable opportunities for each student to learn how to correct their behavior in ways punitive consequences alone do not allow. There are several Restorative Practices that will be implemented this year at SCA.

**Restorative Mindset:** Believing that all members of a community are responsible to and for each other, welcoming multiple viewpoints and hearing all voices. Holding those that do harm accountable for taking an active role in repairing harm.

**Circles:** A way to build community, talk about issues affecting a classroom, school, or community. They can be used to celebrate, develop plans, or solve conflicts.

**Peer Conferences:** A process by which trained student mentors lead other students through the restorative problem-solving process in order to resolve a conflict.

However, unacceptable behavior may result in a consequence that requires administrative involvement. Though suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique, research has raised serious questions about its effects. Frequent use of suspension has many undesirable and unintended outcomes, including a less healthy school environment, lower academic achievement, higher levels of disruptive or antisocial behavior, and higher school dropout rates. In an effort to keep scholars in their classroom so that learning is not disrupted, SCA primarily utilizes a reverse suspension model. If the behavior occurs that requires an administrative consequence, SCA's administration may assign reverse suspension rather than the consequence of a traditional suspension. Reverse suspension requires the scholar's parent to attend school with the child for the assigned period.

SCA uses the Georgia Department of Education discipline matrix when determining levels of behavior infractions. SCA's Code of Conduct has three levels of infractions and they are determined by the seriousness of the act.

- Level I infractions are the least serious and will be dealt with by imposing less severe consequences than Level II and III.
- Level II infractions are more serious than the level I and require more formal disciplinary actions.
- Level III infractions are the most severe and are grounds for a consequence to be determined by the Dean.

#### LEVEL I

Minor acts of misconduct are those that interfere with orderly academy procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or the scholar's learning procedures. Scholars may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved or may be referred directly to the administration.

Possible interventions for minor acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reminders, redirections, loss of privileges, classroom exchange, and/or self-reflection
- Participation in Circles or Peer Conferences
- Conference/communication with parent/guardian, teacher and/or administrator
- Practice of desired behavior
- Development of an action plan
- Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused
- Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the scholar Code of Conduct and Scintilla Standards

#### LEVEL II

Intermediate acts of misconduct require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to the following:

- Repeated, unrelated acts of Level I minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety or well-being of others.  
Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given if not already provided.

Possible interventions for intermediate acts of misconduct include but are not limited to the following:

- Participation in Circles or Peer Conferences
- Participation in a conference with parent/guardian, teacher, and/or administrator
- Restriction from SCA programs or other activities
- Up to three days of reverse or out-of-school suspension
- Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused
- Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused
- Development/amendment of an action plan
- Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes SCA's Habits of Character

### LEVEL III

Serious acts of misconduct require administrative intervention and may require the use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. These offenses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature
- Serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, well being of others, or property.

Possible interventions for serious acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Participation in Circles or Peer Conferences
- Restriction from academy programs, classes, and/or other activities
- Reverse or out-of-school suspension for up to ten days
- Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused
- Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused
- Referral to tribunal hearing possibly resulting in expulsion

Frequent or persistent Level III infractions that lead to suspensions may result in the scholar entering the required Tribunal Process. SCA's Tribunal Policy is available upon request.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Discipline Procedure

Scholars' Level 1 infractions will be tracked using a 4-step discipline plan. The following description of Level 1 infractions can be found in the SCA handbook:

- "Minor acts of misconduct are those that interfere with orderly academy procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or the scholar's learning procedures. Scholars may be disciplined by the professional staff member involved or may be referred directly to the administration."

Each teacher will track behavior of a student in his/her classroom only. Infractions in one class will not be carried over into another classroom. The 4 steps are as follows:

- Step 1- The scholar will sign the first step of the classroom behavior tracker and receive a verbal warning to make sure that he/she is aware of behaviors.
- Step 2- The scholar will sign the second step of the classroom behavior tracker and the teacher will make a parent/guardian contact via phone call.
- Step 3-The scholar will sign the third step of the classroom behavior tracker and be required to complete a brief reflection sheet before recess to acknowledge his/her behavior. The teacher will make a parent/guardian contact via phone call.

- Step 4- The scholar will sign the fourth step of the classroom behavior tracker and the teacher will complete an office referral that will be directed to administration.

### **Prohibiting Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment and Intimidation**

Scintilla Charter Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. Our school has an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among students, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety of any student will not be tolerated. A student shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another student through words or actions.

Such behavior includes but is not limited to: direct physical contact such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; the use of electronic methods to harass, threaten or humiliate, and social isolation and/or manipulation.

The school district policy prohibiting bullying is included in the student code of conduct and includes but is not limited to the following:

- Any student who engages in bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant student or the parent of the student feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached after consulting the school principal, the student or the parent of the student should contact the local superintendent or his or her designee.
- The school system prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

All students and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation to the school principal or designee. School staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during a school-sponsored activity, by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system or acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic equipment

- 1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel,
- 2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
- 3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

Disciplinary action will be taken after each incident of bullying and upon a finding of guilt.

Disciplinary action after the first incident of bullying may include but is not limited to the following:

- Loss of a privilege
- Reassignment of seats in the classroom, cafeteria or school bus
- Reassignment of classes
- Reverse suspension
- In-school suspension

- Out-of-school suspension
- Detention
- Expulsion (through appropriate due process hearing)

If necessary, counseling and other interventions should also be provided to address the social/emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of students who are victims of bullying and students who commit an offense of bullying.

Students, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders may report incidents of bullying to an administrator, teacher, counselor or other staff members by using the school district's complaint procedures or by calling the Georgia Department of Education's 1-877 SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867) School Safety Hotline.

Please note: Any form of electronic bullying (cyberbullying) using school equipment, school networks, email systems or committed at school is strictly prohibited. The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, students and their parents will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year as part of the student code of conduct.
- The school shall keep a report of bullying and the results of an investigation confidential.
- Staff are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur or upon receipt of any report of bullying.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident to the school principal designee.

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

- 1.) Investigate: Upon receipt of any report of bullying, schools will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation should begin no later than the following school day. The investigation shall include interviewing the alleged perpetrator(s) and victim(s), identified witnesses, teacher(s) and staff members and reviewing video surveillance if available. School police, school counselors, school social workers and/or other support staff should be utilized for their expertise as determined by the circumstances of the matter.
- 2.) Notify: At an appropriate time during or after the investigation, parents/guardians of the accused and the victim must be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided and the parent/guardian should be notified immediately.
- 3.) Discipline: Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused student should be charged with bullying and given an age-appropriate consequence which shall include, at a minimum and without limitation, disciplinary action or counseling as appropriate under the circumstances. Schools should clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action.
- 4.) Follow Up: Follow up is important to the accused and the victim. Implement a planned method to provide after-care and follow up. Reiterate to all the previously stated prohibition on retaliation.



# Notification of Student Rights

## RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Date: August 7, 2019

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Scintilla Charter Academy would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's qualification, please contact the Dean of Student and Support, Mandy Avera at 229-244-5750.

Sincerely,  
Mandy Avera  
Dean of Student and Support

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMPLAINTS POLICY**

SCA Student, Parent/Guardian, or General Public Complaints Policy Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to students, parents/guardians, or members of the general public for filing complaints against the school or employee of the school on any and all matters including complaints concerning Federal Programs: Title I, Part A; Title I, Part C; Title I, Part D; Title II, Part A; Title III, Part A; Title VI, Part B; the McKinney-Vento Act; School Improvement 1003(a) and 1003(g) (SIG).

### Dispute Resolution

1. The complaints process may be initiated directly to the Dean.
2. Parents, Guardians, or Unaccompanied youth who initiate a complaint, must do so in writing.
3. Written notice should be complete, as brief as possible, and simply stated.
4. The Dean will provide a written response to the dispute within 5 school days.
  - a. The response will include a notice of the right to appeal, to an ad hoc Appeals Committee, the decision of the Dean.
5. If the Parent, Guardian, or Unaccompanied youth does not agree with the decision of the Dean, an appeal may be filed with the Appeals Committee.
6. The Appeals Committee will provide a written response to the appeal within 5 school days. The response will include a notice of the right to appeal his/her decision to the Governing Board.
7. If the Staff Member does not agree with the decision of the Appeals Committee, an appeal may be filed with the Governing Board.
8. Within thirty working days of receipt of the appeal of the Appeals Committee's decision, the Appeals Committee will present the matter to the Governing Board at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The Board will review the original complaint, the response of the Dean, the response of the Appeals Committee, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
9. The Governing Board will either uphold the recommendation of the Appeals Committee or require the school to take some other action in response to the complaint.
  - a. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Governing Board or as a separate written statement that will include the right to appeal to the Georgia Department of Education.
  - b. The Board will be the final reviewing authority within the school.
10. If the Parent, Guardian, or Unaccompanied youth is dissatisfied with the decision of the Governing Board, an appeal may be filed with the Deputy Appeals Committee of Teacher and Student Support at the Georgia Department of Education, 1854 Twin Towers East, Atlanta, GA 30334.

## **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

SCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. SCA also provides equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society) that wishes to conduct a meeting within the open or limited public forum offered by the school.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding these non-discrimination policies:

Mandy Avera

Dean of Students & School Support

229-244-5750

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, please contact the Office for Civil Rights:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Civil Rights  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605  
1-800-421-3481

### **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**

SCA, in order to fulfill the obligations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, is required to inform and provide full educational opportunities to all individuals with disabilities ages birth through twenty-one.

SCA needs your assistance to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities. This public awareness notice is to inform parents and other individuals/agencies of the availability of educational services and related services to all individuals who reside within the jurisdiction of the SCA and who are between the ages of birth through twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their disability. This includes individuals in all public and private agencies and institutions and highly mobile children with disabilities, such as migrant and homeless children, who reside within the legal boundaries of Lowndes County.

Anyone aware of an individual who may benefit from educational services and related services is encouraged to call SCA, at 229-244-5750.

### Public Information

SCA has the following documents available for review by parents of children with disabilities and to the general public:

1. Comprehensive Plan for Special Education.
2. IDEA Federal Applications for Funds.
3. Special Education Accountability/Monitoring Final Report.
4. Applications, evaluations, periodic program plan or reports relating to federal programs including auditor's reports, statements of assurance, budget, and grant materials.

For more information regarding IDEA, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact SCA's Special Education Coordinator:

Special Education Coordinator  
Sarah Ruddle  
229-244-5750  
sruddle@scintillacharteracademy.com

### **CHILD FIND**

SCA recognizes its responsibility to provide a free and appropriate public education to eligible students with disabilities within its geographical boundaries. SCA has a "child find" process that is designed to locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities residing within its geographical boundaries kindergarten through grade 5.

If you know a child who lives within the boundaries of the Scintilla Charter Academy School District and who

may be in the need of special education and/or related services, please contact the Scintilla Charter Academy's Director of Special Education for further information regarding the referral and evaluation process.

Scintilla Charter Academy's Child Find process extends to students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit a major life activity. Such students may be eligible for services or accommodations pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a Federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities and programs receiving Federal financial assistance. Please contact Scintilla Charter Academy's Section 504 Coordinator for more information regarding Section 504 eligibility and services.

Scintilla Charter Academy  
Special Education Coordinator/Section 504 Coordinator  
Sarah Ruddle  
229-244-5750  
sruddle@scintillacharteracademy.com

### **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a nondiscrimination statute enacted to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact SCA's Section 504 Coordinator:

Section 504 Coordinator  
Sarah Ruddle  
sruddle@scintillacharteracademy.com

### **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS TO PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Scintilla Charter Academy receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the Director of Student Information Systems a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Scintilla Charter Academy to amend their child's or their education record should write the Dean of Students & School Support, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their

right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Scintilla Charter Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for

purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))

- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

### **FERPA Directory Information**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Scintilla Charter Academy, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Scintilla Charter Academy may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the Scintilla Charter Academy to the contrary in accordance with Scintilla Charter Academy procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Scintilla Charter Academy to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;

- The annual yearbook; Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want Scintilla Charter Academy to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Scintilla Charter Academy in writing by September 30, 2018. Scintilla Charter Academy has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user’s identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

### **PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

· *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

*·Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –*

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

*·Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –*

1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Scintilla Charter Academy will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Scintilla Charter Academy will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Scintilla Charter Academy will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Scintilla Charter Academy will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.



- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

### **INFORMATION FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (the Act) ensures educational rights for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The primary goal is educational stability. The Act defines homeless students as those who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes:

1. Children and youth who are forced to share the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; live in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Children and youth who live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or,
4. Migratory children are considered homeless when they are living in circumstances set forth in items 1, 2 and 3. Unaccompanied Youth are students who are not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian and are living in a homeless situation.

Homeless students have certain educational rights and can:

- enroll without delay in school without proof of residency or permanent address, immunization, school records, or other documents or while documentation is being obtained
- choose between the local school where they are living or the school last attended before becoming homeless, when requested by the parent and determined by the district to be feasible and in the student's best interest
- attend school and participate in school programs with children who are not homeless; and receive all the school services available to other students including transportation services, special educational services where applicable, and meals through the school meals programs

If you believe your child may qualify for assistance under this policy, please contact your child's homeroom teacher or SCA's Homeless Liaison:

Amanda Miller, SCA Homeless Liaison  
Sarah Ruddle, SCA Character and Culture Coordinator  
2171 East Park Avenue  
Valdosta, GA 31602  
Phone: 229.244.5750  
Fax: 229.333.0283  
Email: [sruddle@scintillacharteracademy.com](mailto:sruddle@scintillacharteracademy.com)

## **TITLE IX GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Students, parents, and applicants for admission have the right to file a formal complaint alleging noncompliance with regulations outlined in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as follows:

### Level 1: Principal or Immediate Supervisor

A student or parent with a sex discrimination complaint may discuss it with the teacher, counselor, or building administrator involved. Level 1 of the grievance procedure is informal and optional and may be bypassed by the grievant.

### Level 2: Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator

If the grievance is not resolved at Level 1 and the grievant wishes to pursue the grievance, it may be formalized by filing a complaint in writing on a Compliance Violation Form. This form may be obtained from the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator.

The complaint shall state the nature of the grievance and the remedy requested. The filing of the formal, written complaint at Level 2 must be within fifteen (15) working days from the day of the event giving rise to the grievance or from the date the grievant could reasonably become aware of such an occurrence. The grievant may request that a meeting concerning the complaint be held with the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator. A minor student may be accompanied at that meeting by a parent or guardian. The Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator shall investigate the complaint and attempt to solve it. A written report from the Compliance Officer to the complainant regarding action taken will be sent within fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the complaint.

### Level 3: Dean

If the complaint is not resolved at Level 2, the grievant may proceed to Level 3 by presenting a written appeal to the Dean within ten (10) working days after the grievant receives the report from the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator. The grievant may request a meeting with the Dean or his/her designee. The Dean or his/her designee has the option of meeting with the grievant to discuss the appeal. A decision will be rendered by the Dean or his/her designee within ten (10) working days after receiving the written appeal.

### Level 4: Governing Board

If the complaint is not resolved at Level 3, the grievant may proceed to Level 4 by presenting a written appeal to the Chair of the SCA Governing Board within ten (10) working days after the grievant receives the report from the Dean. The grievant may request a meeting with the Board. The Board has the option of meeting with the grievant to discuss the appeal. A decision will be rendered by the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The grievant will be notified in writing of the decision within ten (10) working days after the Board's action. The procedure in no way denies the right of the grievant to file a formal complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, or other agencies available for mediation or rectification of rights grievances, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination.

## Addendum

The Scintilla Charter Academy Governing Board (“Board”) adopts the following policy which shall be effective on the date that the policy is adopted by the Board. If applicable, once adopted this policy replaces any previously approved school policy currently in place that provided direction on the items in this policy.

The following is the reporting process for students to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employee toward a student. This process shall not prohibit the ability of a student to report the incident to law enforcement authorities.

1. Any student (or parent or friend of a student) who has been the victim of an act of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a teacher, administrator or other School District employee is urged to make an oral report of the act to any teacher, counselor or administrator at his/her school.

2. Any teacher, counselor, volunteer or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school’s Dean of School, Assistant Dean or designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school’s Dean of School, Assistant Dean or designee within 24 hours. If the Dean of School or Assistant Dean is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the other.

C. Dean of School, Assistant Dean or designee receiving a report of sexual abuse as defined in O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall make an oral report immediately to the school counselor, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused. The school counselor shall report the accusation of sexual misconduct and/or sexual abuse to the local law enforcement agency believed to have jurisdiction in the case and to a child welfare agency providing protective services as designated by the Department of Human Services in the manner determined by such agency.

Reports of acts of sexual misconduct against a student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee not covered by O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5 shall be investigated immediately by school or system personnel. To protect the integrity of the process and to limit repeated interviews with the student, the designated system personnel is required to take a written statement from the student prior to any other person. If the investigation of the allegation of sexual misconduct indicates a reasonable cause to believe that the report of sexual misconduct is valid, the Dean of School, Assistant Dean or designee shall make an immediate report to local police authorities. The SCSC and the Professional Standards Commission Ethics Division must also be notified of any validated acts of sexual misconduct.

This policy shall be added to student and employee handbooks.

O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.7.(a)

# SCA Handbook Acknowledgement

## 2019-2020

### PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN IT TO YOUR OLDEST SCHOLAR'S HOMEROOM TEACHER

We/I have read and understand all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

Specifically, I have reviewed and understand the following policies and information and agree to comply with the guidelines and requirements outlined in each.

Please initial each section indicating you have specifically reviewed and sign the acknowledgement at the bottom:

- SCA Attendance Policy
- Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Interviewing, Photographing, and Videotaping of Scholars by Staff or Media
- SCA Dress Code
- Promotion & Retention Policy
- Behavior Expectations/Code of Conduct
- Notification of Student Rights

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE LIST ALL SCHOLARS IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD

Scholar Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_