



**Scintilla Charter Academy
Middle and Upper School
2024-2025
Family and Student Handbook**

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Welcome to the SCA Family!

Mission

The mission of Scintilla Charter Academy is to provide a deeper learning experience in which each child is empowered through creativity, collaboration, inquiry, and critical thinking to achieve his or her unique potential and acquire a love of learning, along with a strong sense of community and character.

Vision

By providing a deeper learning experience in which each child is empowered through creativity, collaboration, inquiry, and critical thinking, each child who attends SCA will achieve his or her unique potential and acquire a love of learning, along with a strong sense of community and character.

Scintilla Beliefs

At SCA, we believe every child should be encouraged, motivated, and challenged daily. Our unique mixture of innovations will provide challenges 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 that 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 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 who serves as the Municipal Court Judge for the City of Valdosta.

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 Executive Vice President of Synovus Bank's Main Office.

William Whitesell: William Long Whitesell was born in Huntsville, Alabama, moved to Valdosta in 1976, graduated from Valdosta High School, and received his B.A. in 1996 from Presbyterian

College. Graduating with his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Florida State University in 2000, he was admitted to the Georgia Bar and Florida Bar in 2001. William accepted a position at Young, Thagard, Hoffman, and Smith, L.L.P., where he practiced for three years before leaving to open his own firm, William Long Whitesell, L.L.C. William will begin a new position as a Superior Court Judge in January. In addition to our board, William serves on the board of directors for the Humane Society of Valdosta/Lowndes County and Partnership Health Center, and as President of the South Georgia Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Faculty and Staff

Information related to SCA's faculty and staff is located at the following [link](#).

Calendar

The 2024-2025 academic calendar is located at the following [link](#).

Admissions and Enrollment

Attendance Zone: Valdosta, Lowndes County & Brooks 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 Policy

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:

Middle/Upper School (6-8): 7:50 am - 3:10 pm

Office Hours: 7:15 am - 4:15 pm

The instructional day for Middle/Upper School scholars will be from 7:50 am - 3:10 pm. SCA attendance policy stipulates that any scholar who arrives at SCA after 7:50 am will be considered tardy. Scholars arriving after 7:55 must be escorted into the front office 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 Middle/Upper School regular day ends at 3:10 pm. Middle school scholars are expected to be picked up on time: between 3:10 pm and 3:45 pm. We encourage parents to enroll their child(ren) in the after-school program if they cannot make the 3:45 pm deadline. If a child is not picked up by 3:55 pm, parents/guardians will be charged \$1 per minute to allow his/her child to participate in the after-school program until arrival for pick-up. This policy does not apply to children participating in scheduled after-school activities (e.g., sports, extracurriculars) under the supervision of an adult.

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. For emailed excuses, parents/guardians may email to: attendance@scintillacharteracademy.com Failure to provide a written/emailed excuse 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

Absence Protocol

In the event that a child experiences multiple absences, the following protocol will guide next steps for SCA: Middle School:

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. Parents/Guardians may also expect a 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. Parents/Guardians may expect a referral to the Truancy Intervention Program.
3. *After 7 unexcused absences:* A school social work referral will be generated by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee listing specific school-based interventions (e.g., telephone calls, letters, conferences) which have occurred prior to making the referral.

4. *After 10 unexcused absences:* Scholars and/or parents/guardians will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court, magistrate court, and/or Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) 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. Unexcused absences in excess of 15 days are also a violation of the SCA Code of Conduct.

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

Absences from Class/School

As permitted under Georgia state law and Georgia State Board of Education policies, a scholar's absence, tardiness, or early checkout may be excused for the following reasons: Personal illness or when attendance in school would endanger a student's health or the health of others; Serious illness or death of an immediate family member; Mandated absence by order of governmental agencies, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces; Observing religious holidays, necessitating absence from school; Conditions that render attendance impossible or hazardous to one's health or safety; Registering to vote or voting, for a period not to exceed one day; and Reuniting of families between military deployments, not to exceed five days. NOTE: For school attendance purposes, scholars shall be counted present when they are in attendance at least one-half of the instructional day or serving as pages of the Georgia General Assembly.

Absences Requiring Medical Documentation

In the event that a scholar's personal illness or attendance at school endangers a student's health or the health of others, the school may require the scholar to present appropriate medical documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence. In the event that a scholar has 5 or more absences for health reasons without a physician's excuse, the school requires a physician's excuse in order to consider the absence as an excused absence. Parents are encouraged to be proactive in communicating with their child's school when there is an unusual attendance pattern expected. The following procedures will be utilized in addressing an accumulation of unexcused and/or excused scholar absences and/or tardies/early checkouts: System-approved letters are mailed that include the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-690.1). Instructions are included in each letter. Upon the generation of each letter, the Dean will be notified.

Absences do not accumulate beyond the current school year. School days missed as a result of out-of-school suspensions will not count as unexcused absences for the purpose of determining truancy. NOTE: SCA complies with the Lowndes County Juvenile Court Protocol Agreement for Truancy in Schools. A referral to the Truancy Intervention Program (TIP), juvenile court, state court, magistrate court, and/or the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) may be

made in lieu of the outlined procedures. Protocol changes that occur during the school year will be posted on the website

Unexcused Scholar Absences

Scholars are required to provide written excuses for absences in accordance with Scintilla's policy. The Director of Student Information Systems will maintain a record of students' excused and unexcused absences. Written notes explaining the reason for the student's absence are to be retained until the end of the school term. Teachers will maintain timely and accurate attendance records that reflect absences as excused or unexcused. For an absence to be excused, a dated and signed note from the physician or parent/guardian or an e-mail from a verified parent/guardian account must be sent to the student's homeroom teacher explaining the reason for the absence within three (3) school days of returning to school. Scintilla will notify the parent, guardian, or another person who has control or charge of the scholar when such scholar has five unexcused absences. The notice will outline the penalty and consequences of such absences and that each subsequent absence will constitute a separate offense. Prior to commencing judicial proceedings to impose a penalty for violating compulsory school attendance law, the school system shall send a notice by certified mail return receipt requested. By September 1st or within 30 school days of a student's enrollment, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the scholar must sign a statement indicating receipt of the written statement of possible consequences and penalties. After two reasonable attempts by the school to secure such signatures, the school shall be considered in compliance with this requirement. In addition, students age ten or older by September 1st must sign a statement indicating receipt of a written statement of possible consequences for non-compliance to the local system's policy. After a scholar has five or more unexcused absences, the school designee or SRO may refer a parent to the Magistrate Court for a warrant and to the Solicitor General for prosecution under the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance statute if it is suspected that the parent or guardian is the cause of the student's absence. At the State Court's discretion, parents may receive a fine of not more than \$100, up to 30 days confinement in jail, community service, or any combination for each offense. Additional actions may include but are not limited to: Referral to the Truancy Intervention Program, Juvenile court CHINS complaint, or DFCS referral. If the parent or guardian has previously attended TIP, a second referral to the program may be forfeited and criminal prosecution may be initiated.

Excused/Unexcused Combined Absences

Upon a student's 10th absence, whether excused or unexcused, a parent or guardian will be notified. The school district attendance officer or their designee may also make contact with the scholar and the parent or guardian at home. Medical documentation is required for any additional absences. Upon a student's 15th absence, whether excused or unexcused, a referral may be made to TIP or DFCS unless extenuating medical conditions exist.

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. **Checkouts prior to 11:30 am will be counted as an all-day absence.**

Tardy Policy

A middle/upper school scholar is tardy when he/she is not in the building by 7:55 am. Scholars who arrive at SCA after 7:55 am will be considered tardy. Scholars arriving after 7:55 must be escorted into the front office 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. Early check-out (anytime before 2:30 pm) is documented as a tardy on the scholar's record. In the middle school setting, teachers will take attendance at the start of each class period. Scholars arriving after the class start time, as indicated on the student's schedule, will be considered tardy. This will be notated on the student's record in Infinite Campus and may result in an adverse impact on the Spartan 10: Habits of Character evaluation process.

Early Checkout

Parents/guardians may not check scholars out after 2:30 pm. Instead, parents/guardians should use the car rider line. If the person picking up the child does not go through the car line, he/she will be required to wait until all scholars are called to the front lobby area at the end of pick-up. Checkouts prior to 11:30 am will be counted as an all-day absence.

Makeup Work

Scholars who have an excused absence shall have the opportunity to make up work. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian 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 with an *excused* absence will have a maximum of two school days (per excused absence) to submit make-up work or schedule/complete a make-up test with a teacher.

IGNITE - Before & After School Program

SCA offers an in-house before and after school program, IGNITE. The IGNITE Before School Program runs from 6:15 – 7:15 am. The After School Program runs from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm Monday – Thursday and until 5:00 pm on Fridays. The goal of IGNITE is to build on the school's focus on interactive, hands-on projects that spark curiosity, promote active learning, encourage teamwork, build character, and capitalize on children's innate spirit of exploration. IGNITE stands for Inspiring Greatness by Nurturing Innovation, Talent & Exploration!

Click [here](#) for more information and pricing for our Ignite Program.

Transportation Expectations

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. Parents/Guardians should drop off middle/upper school scholars between 7:15 am and 7:50 am (unless the scholar is participating in the IGNITE: Early Care Program). Drop off does *not* begin until SCA staff are present. The tardy bell rings at 7:55 am. Scholars arriving after 7:55 must be escorted into the front office and signed in by an adult at the main desk.

Transportation Expectations

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. Parents/Guardians should drop off middle/upper school scholars between 7:15 am and 7:50 am (unless the scholar is participating in the IGNITE: Early Care Program).

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Drivers will enter the school and follow the direction of the staff on duty. For drop off, cars will follow a pathway to the back of the school for scholars to enter the building. The safety of SCA scholars is of utmost importance- which is why pickup/dismissal policies will be strictly enforced.

Afternoon Car Line

Scintilla Charter Academy has always considered the safety of our staff and students our top priority. We believe it is crucial to implement strict access control measures to avoid unauthorized campus entry and to allow emergency vehicles to access our campuses without obstruction. With this in mind, in collaboration with the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, we will no longer allow cars to arrive on our campus early for afternoon pick up. Vehicles will not be allowed to line up on school property prior to 15 minutes before school dismissal. **You may not enter our campus to get in the car line for afternoon dismissal before 2:55.** School resources officers will enforce this as it is illegal to loiter in school safety zones. SROs will also ensure roadways around the school remain passable as is required by law.

Communication with Families

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

- Remind
- Intercom Messaging
- Fliers/Handouts/Posters
- Mailings
- Newsletters
- Web Page: www.scintillacharteracademy.com
- Weekly SCA Email Newsletter

- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

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 (FERPA).

Change of Address and/or Phone Number

Parents/guardians must complete a change of address form or log in to the Parent Portal and make changes immediately if an address or telephone number change occurs during the school year. Parents/Guardians will also be required to show valid proof of new residence - as previously defined. To ensure the safety of students, it is critical for parents/guardians to keep updated records of address/phone number on file with SCA.

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. Parents/guardians may also send a formal email to Kay Hardesty at kharesty@scintillacharteracademy.com to withdraw students.

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. Upper school supply lists are course specific and will be listed on the course syllabus.

School Visitors

All scholars, parents, and visitors must enter through the upper school lobby, sign in at the front desk, present a government issued ID and wear a visitor badge at all times. We encourage parent and family engagement at SCA and want families to feel welcome. We recognize that instructional time is critical and must be protected at the middle grades level given that the content is increasingly complex and sophisticated. Parents/Guardians should communicate with their child's teacher(s), at least 3 days in advance, to schedule a school visit. Parents/Guardians will not be permitted to "drop-in" on their child's class (unless previously agreed upon by the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher as related to a specific need) or to interrupt instructional time to speak with the teacher. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held by appointment only. Families are always invited to join their scholar(s) for lunch. Lunch visits do not have to be scheduled in advance.

Emergency Procedures

The safety of our scholars is of critical importance. SCA is 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 times, early dismissal, or school closing via local news outlets and all in-house communication vehicles including our website, email, text, and social media.

Fire

In the event of a fire emergency, classroom teachers will escort scholars to the designated emergency assembly area and follow all emergency procedures as outlined in the SCA school safety plan.

Lockdown

In the event of an emergency lockdown Scintilla will immediately implement its state and locally approved safety action plan.

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

Scholars may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by school officials or the media at school or school-related activities/events. Such photographs, videotapes, and interviews may be published, including internet publication. If a parent/guardian objects to his/her scholar being photographed, videotaped, or interviewed, or objects to the display of his/her work, the objection must be presented in writing to the Superintendent within 10 school days after the first day of enrollment.

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 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 Nutrition

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 the 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 [Here](#). 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 Scintilla Charter Academy Nutrition staff members are available to scholars and parents for any food-related questions, allergy concerns, or menu suggestions.

The following Meal Charge Policies and Procedures will be in effect for the 2024-2025 school year:

Breakfast cost for scholars is \$2.10 & Lunch cost is \$3.50. Adult breakfast cost is \$2.20 and lunch is \$4.10. 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 My School Bucks 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. Returned payment, along with any corresponding bank fees, must be paid in cash.

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 given out at Open House and also available in the school's front office after the school year begins. All household members including all children must be listed on the application. Please make certain that your application reaches Sylvia Wade, Director of School Nutrition. A letter to confirm your eligibility status will be sent to each household. Please retain this letter for your records.

The Director of School Nutrition is available to scholars and parents for any food-related question, allergy concerns, or menu suggestions.

The Director of School Nutrition is available to scholars and parents/guardians for any food-related questions, allergy concerns, or menu suggestions. Contact information is available on the school website.

Outside Food/Drinks During Lunch

Parents who are attending lunch with their child are allowed to bring take-out/fast food for their child. However, the use of delivery services such as Doordash are not allowed.

Fieldwork: Authentic Application of Learning

Within the middle school setting, faculty believe and act upon the research (Hattie, 2018) suggesting that when learning occurs in authentic contexts - higher levels of application and consequential retention of knowledge are likely to occur. In order to participate in fieldwork opportunities outside of the SCA setting, scholars must provide a permission slip signed by a parent/guardian. This permission slip will be signed at the beginning of the school year to indicate that the scholar has permission to attend any/all fieldwork opportunities.

Some fieldwork opportunities may require a fee for participation. In the event that any fee associated with fieldwork creates a financial hardship, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the scholar's teacher for information on potential support. Parents/Families are invited to attend fieldwork opportunities - but will be required to drive separately due to limited seating with school transportation. In the event that a parent/guardian intends to drive his/her child to a fieldwork site, the parent/guardian will be required to check his/her child in and out to indicate that he/she assumes liability during travel to and from the event. In order to attend fieldwork opportunities, scholars must be in good standing in the classroom and/or have met any pre-requisite requirements. Scholars with a pattern of unpredictable behavior - as evidenced by multiple behavior referrals - may require parent/guardian attendance on the trip to participate in the fieldwork opportunity.

Extracurriculars and Sports Participation

Extracurricular activities allow scholars to develop and hone unique skills with consideration to individualized student interest. Participation can be an interesting and exciting experience and an opportunity to develop new friendships, try a new sport, follow a new interest, or strengthen identified competencies. All Scholars are eligible and encouraged to participate in any extracurricular activity. Given that scholars begin to develop skills in time management at the middle grades level and are held increasingly accountable for choices, teachers will support scholars in setting reasonable goals for extracurricular/sports participation within the advising block. SCA administration reserves the right to suspend participation by a student if disciplinary problems arise which warrant such a consequence.

Per the SCA: Athletic Handbook, through policy and action, SCA supports the belief that a strong program of extracurricular activities provides a balance in educational programming for scholars. Athletic competition, by its nature, contributes to greater scholar awareness of self-discipline, growth in emotional maturity, and an increasing realization of the worth of the individual. Scholars must learn that participation in athletics is not only a privilege but is also an honor that requires responsibility for maintaining one's academic standing in the classroom and for maintaining a high standard of conduct outside of school hours as outlined in the student handbook and the Code of Conduct for Scintilla Charter Academicscholars, K-8. Further information pertaining to sports programming and participation is accessible via the SCA: Athletic Handbook.

School Dance Policies

SCA Middle and Upper School may host one or more school dances throughout the school year. The following rules and procedures for these dances:

- Only SCA Middle/Upper School scholars are permitted to attend. Scholars from other schools are not permitted to attend.
- The time of any scheduled dance event will be announced via appropriate school messaging. Scholars will not be admitted prior to the indicated time. Instructions for drop off/pick up locations will be provided prior to the event.
- School dance locations will be provided prior to the event.
- Scholars are not permitted to leave the building once they arrive. A signed parental note is required if the student will be picked up earlier than the scheduled pick-up times - which will be grade-specific. If scholars are picked up late, SCA administration may require the parent/guardian to remain onsite in a designated location for the duration of the event - if the child chooses to attend. Additionally, if this behavior becomes a consistent occurrence, SCA administration reserves the right to prohibit attendance at school-related dance events.
- Scholars are prohibited from bringing any item considered potentially hazardous or harmful.
- School dress code does not apply within school dances. However, SCA's Dean of Middle and Upper School will provide dance-specific guidelines to ensure that clothing selections are appropriate for the school setting. SCA administration reserves the right to dismiss any student who fails to adhere to established guidelines.

- Scholars will receive explicit guidance on behavioral expectations in a school dance setting. This guidance will be strictly enforced during the event. Scholars exhibiting inappropriate behavior may be sent home from the dance and may be prohibited from attending future dances.
- A security guard and school administrator will be present at all dances to ensure that established guidelines are followed.

Student Technology Policy

Electronic Devices

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.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Middle and Upper School at SCA equips scholars with a range of technology tools including, but not limited to, desktop computers, iPads, virtual reality goggles, and laptop devices. Scholars will receive unique login credentials which allow SCA faculty to track and closely monitor all internet activity. Parents/Guardians must grant permission for scholars to use technology for teaching and learning. This permission is granted when parents/guardians sign the handbook acknowledgement signaling an understanding of all terms and expectations - including those indicated for acceptable technology use below.

Purpose: SCA acknowledges the critical role technology plays in the teaching and learning process - as well as within the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) where scholars are required to demonstrate mastery of standards. As scholars work toward mastery of Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and other school-specific standards (e.g., Portrait of a Graduate), teachers may integrate technology to create opportunities for research, application, creativity, and/or enrichment.

Privilege: The use of technology resources is a privilege - not a right. Any activity with technology that is deemed as inappropriate by teachers and/or the Superintendent may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities. The Superintendent may revoke access to technology resources at any time. SCA internet usage can and will be monitored to ensure acceptable and safe use of technological tools. SCA also employs a web-filtering system to restrict inappropriate/unacceptable access. As with any computer-based monitoring system, the platform will continue to be refined as technology evolves to increasingly block inappropriate/unacceptable content and activity. Scholars will be assigned a unique log-in and password information. Using these student-specific logins, SCA can monitor and hold scholars

accountable for behavior occurring on any technological tool. SCA scholars must adhere to the following rules that pertain to appropriate technology and internet usage:

SCA: Middle/Upper School Scholars will...

1. respect SCA technology resources to avoid any instances of damage.
2. use technology only as instructed by a teacher and with faculty/staff permission using only my personal username/password.
3. demonstrate collegiality in technology-based/online settings avoiding any instances of cyber bullying to include posting or sending messages/pictures that could hurt, threaten, or embarrass other people.
4. report any instances of cyber bullying - including receipt of inappropriate pictures or messages - to an SCA faculty/staff member and parent/guardian.
5. protect any personally identifiable information when online including name, address, phone number, pictures, or any other identifiers.
6. report any instances where individuals outside of the SCA setting attempt to contact me while online to an SCA faculty/staff member and parent/guardian.
7. report inappropriate/unacceptable behaviors of other scholars - including accessing inappropriate web content - to an SCA faculty/staff member.
8. refrain from use of obscene or inappropriate language in an online setting.
9. refrain from use of chat/instant messaging tools, downloading of content, installing of programs, and altering device settings - without the explicit permission of a teacher.
10. refrain from using portable drives on devices without the explicit permission of a teacher.
11. refrain from sharing personal login information with anyone.
12. log off any/all devices upon completion of designated tasks.

In accordance with Senate bill 93 all school personnel and students are prohibited from installing, using, or visiting certain social media platforms on state equipment.

- Prohibited social media are platforms include those:
 - owned, operated, located in, or organized by a foreign adversary; for which foreign adversary has control or influence over content moderation practices of company's owner or operator; or which use software or an algorithm that is controlled or monitored by a foreign adversary. (e.g. Tik Tok).

Cell Phones

SCA prohibits the use of cell phones by Middle School scholars unless they are given permission by a staff member. Middle School scholars are required to keep cell phones stored in a locker or backpack. In the event a student does not have a locker or backpack to store his/her cell phone, they should ask a teacher to keep the phone until the end of the school day. Middle School scholars may wear a smartwatch but the watch may not be connected to an activated cell phone while on the SCA campus. Use of a smartwatch will be treated in the same manner as use of a cell phone. Scholars may be asked to remove their smartwatch during certain instructional and/or assessment windows.

Cell phone possession by High School scholars is acceptable. Scholars may use devices before and after school, during class changes, and during lunch. Usage of cell phones within the classroom is also permitted at the discretion of the teacher for instructional purposes. If the teacher has not given a scholar permission to use his/her cell phone during class time, the scholar is subject to disciplinary action. Earbuds worn in both ears, headphones, and wireless speakers are not permitted at anytime. One earbud is allowed only during times when cell phone use is permitted.

Scholars who violate SCA's cell phone policy will be subject to administrative consequences which may include confiscation of the device. SCA is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones, smartwatches, and other devices.

Cell Phone Policy Violations

- Violation 1: The scholar will be instructed to place the device in a bag or locker and issued a verbal warning. No parent contact is required.
- Violation 2: The scholar will be instructed to place the device in a bag or locker. The parent will receive an email notice to communicate the second violation.
- Violation 3: Administration will be notified. The parent will pick up the phone from school.
- Violation 4: Office Referral/Suspension

Lockers

SCA scholars may choose to secure a locker for use on campus during the school year. Lockers require scholars to submit an annual non-refundable rental fee of \$10.00 and sign a [contract](#). If the rental fee presents any financial hardship, parents/guardians may reach out to SCA administration with a request for support. SCA scholars will be required to provide a lock to secure personal belongings. SCA scholars are encouraged to keep the combination confidential to avoid access of unauthorized individuals to the personal locker. Sharing of lockers is not permitted. SCA administration or other designated faculty may conduct periodic checks to ensure that lockers are kept neat, clean, and do not contain anything considered inappropriate/unacceptable for the middle school setting. SCA scholars are expected to respect lockers to avoid any instances of damage. Damage to lockers may result in a required payment for associated damages and/or loss of locker privileges. Scholars will be allowed to access lockers during designated times throughout the day as directed by faculty/staff. SCA is not responsible for items taken from lockers. Violation of locker procedures will result in disciplinary action and possible loss of locker privileges for all scholars involved.

Health and Medical Information

Medicine Administration

SCA believes that student safety is of utmost importance in the educational experience. SCA recommends that any medication and/or medical procedure required by students be dispensed/conducted by a parent/legal guardian in the home setting. Under exceptional circumstances, prescribed medication and/or medical procedures may be dispensed/conducted by the school nurse or designated staff member per written physician's orders and written parent/guardian authorization. With the explicit written permission of a physician via a physician's order and parent/guardian written authorization, medication and/or medical procedures may also be self-dispensed/conducted.

If a child requires daily or life-saving medication/procedures (e.g., EpiPen, inhaler, insulin) during the school day, parents/guardians are required to provide the school nurse with necessary medications/materials for immediate application if/when a need arises. The school nurse or, in his/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 the 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 two licensed school nurses on staff to provide services to scholars in accordance with state guidelines. The nurses participate 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.

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 an 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.

Water Safety

Drowning is the leading cause of death for children between the ages of 1-4. Each year 3,400 people die from drowning accidents. Many of these tragedies could be avoided by simply teaching children to swim. Parents should be mindful of the role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving the lives of children. SCA encourages parents to seek out an opportunity in your area, and enroll your child in a swimming and water safety course.

Dress Code and Uniform Policy

Within the Middle/Upper school setting, scholars begin to establish self awareness of their individual identities - but also seek to feel a shared sense of belonging. The purpose of the SCA: Middle/Upper Grades dress code and uniform policy is to create a context where the developmental needs of middle/upper schoolers are met. The consistency in dress code will create a more positive climate whereby teaching and learning is much more likely to successfully occur. Scholars must be in uniform when they arrive on campus, and their overall appearance should be neat, clean, and modest per the guidelines detailed below. Faculty members are expected to correct and report any uniform infractions using the established procedures outlined below.

New scholars enrolled after the first day of school will be given ten (10) school days to prepare adequately for the dress code policy. For your convenience, all clothing with the SCA/Spartan logo will be available for purchase through outside vendors throughout the year. See website for approved vendors. Please, note that SCA's standing policy is to mitigate any financial obligation for those families for whom uniform and dress code expectations present an undue hardship. Parents and/or guardians who have concerns about the affordability of school uniforms may contact info@scintillacharteracademy.com - and SCA will work to assist the family in identifying community resources.

On designated days, scholars may have opportunities to participate in themed or professional attire dress-up days. Advance notice will be provided to ensure adequate time for parents/guardians/scholars to prepare. Explicit guidelines for dress on these designated days will also be provided.

Religious Exemption: SCA acknowledges and is responsive to any student's right to exercise freedom of religion. In the event that a student and/or parent/guardian/family requires a religious

exemption for attire, the Middle/Upper School Dean is the point of contact to facilitate. Parents/Guardians shall schedule a meeting with the Middle/Upper School Dean to discuss religious exemption, as related to uniform policy, to establish agreed-upon expectations aligned to the religious practice of the student/family.

Uniform Tops

SCA Middle/Upper school scholars may wear approved SCA or Spartan spirit wear t-shirt, polo, or sweatshirt options any day of the week. These items are for sale in our school store and available via approved vendors (see website). Scholars are required to purchase a red polo with the SCA Spartan logo. For special occasions, to include fieldwork opportunities or special events in the community, scholars will wear the designated red polo with the embroidered SCA logo.

Uniform Bottoms

Uniform bottoms are not required to have the SCA or the Scintilla Spartan logo. Middle/Upper school scholars may wear khaki/navy pants, jeans (with no rips, tears, or emblems), black, gray, white, or red athletic shorts or pants. Athletic leggings are permissible given that they are worn with a shirt that extends to mid-thigh. Athletic leggings are required to have a length below the knee (biker shorts are not permitted). This decision is at the discretion of SCA's staff and administration. Uniforms are required to be worn as the manufacturer intended. Oversized or undersized clothes will not be permitted. Skorts and shorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh. Uniform bottoms must always be appropriately sized so as to not be revealing in nature. Undergarments may not be visible at any time.

Additional Information

General Appearance: Scholars are expected to dress in a scholarly fashion so as not to distract from teaching and learning. In addition to outerwear, jewelry including piercings, necklaces, bracelets, and earrings, must not be oversized or distracting. Gauging or expanding of the ears is prohibited. Scholars shall not display tattoos - including drawing on oneself with markers or pens - that indicate inappropriate content or distract from the learning environment. Hair color or style that distracts from the learning environment are not permitted.

Shoes: Presentable shoes of any kind are acceptable. For periods in the day designated for recreation and/or physical fitness/sports practice, scholars are expected to adhere to athletic dress guidelines.

Sweatshirts/Hoodies: Sweatshirts/hoodies may have the SCA/Spartan logo.

Sweatshirts/hoodies with no SCA/Spartan logo must be solid in color, while brand logos are smaller than 3 inches. The sweatshirt/hoodie should not contain additional wording, pictures, or other graphics so as not to distract from teaching and learning. **Hoods may not be worn indoors at any time on the SCA campus. This will be strictly enforced by administration and faculty.**

Jackets/Coats: Jackets/coats are not required to have the SCA/Spartan logo as long the SCA/Spartan logo is visible on the scholar's shirt. If the jacket/coat does not have the SCA/Spartan logo, a brand logo smaller than 3 inches is acceptable. The jacket/coat should not contain additional wording, pictures, or other graphics so as not to distract from teaching and learning. **Hoods may not be worn indoors at any time on the SCA campus. This will be strictly enforced by administration and faculty.**

Inappropriate Attire: 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 that damage the carpet or floors, bedroom shoes, shoes with wheels, or shoes with heels over 1 ½ inch in height.
- Hats, caps, headphones, sweatbands, and sunglasses worn inside the building are not permitted except on specified days or particular situations, as determined by administration.
- Halter tops, midribs, muscle shirts, net shirts, cutaways, bandanas, 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. This criteria is at the discretion of administration and faculty.
- 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 is not permitted.
- Clothing that is torn, ripped, or unhemmed either by accident or style that reveals exposed skin 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 administration of the school.

Physical Education (P.E.) Dress Expectations

Middle/Upper school scholars will be expected to dress in appropriate attire for P.E. and other athletic practices. When P.E. and other athletic practices are scheduled, scholars must be diligent to wear appropriate dress to school to ensure preparedness. scholars in all grades are considered prepared for these events when they are wearing approved athletic attire and sneakers. Athletic attire includes shorts/pants, tops, and supportive sneakers. P.E. dress must adhere to uniform policy (e.g., length of shorts).

Noncompliance Procedures

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

dress code and uniform procedures. If a scholar comes to school out of uniform, the following measures will be taken (see below). If available, a uniform will be provided to the scholar which will be returned at the end of the day as well as:

Dress Code Policy Violations

- Violation 1: The scholar will be required to correct his/her dress code violation. If the violation cannot be corrected at school, the parent will be required to bring a change of clothes. The scholar will bring home a dress code violation notice that is required to be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Violation 2: The scholar will be required to correct his/her dress code violation. If the violation cannot be corrected at school, the parent will be required to bring a change of clothes. The scholar will bring home a dress code violation notice that is required to be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Violation 3: Administration will be notified. Parent contact will be made.
- Violation 4: Office Referral

Academic Policies

Middle School Grading Policy

Middle school classes will calculate scholars' grades using the following grading scale.

Major Grades:

- 60% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 40% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

Enhanced Algebra: Concepts and Connections offers scholars a high school credit upon completion. This course has an End-of-Course (EOC) exam and will use the following grading scale:

Major Grades:

- 50% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 30% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

EOC Exam

- 20% of overall grade

Upper School Grading Policy

Non-EOC Courses

Major Grades:

- 60% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 40% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

EOC Courses

Major Grades:

- 50% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 30% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

EOC Exam

- 20% of overall grade

Honors Courses

Weighted with 5 additional points

Major Grades:

- 60% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 40% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

Advanced Placement Courses

Weighted with 10 additional points

Major Grades:

- 60% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area
- Retake opportunity is provided for all scholars

Minor Grades

- 40% of overall grade
- Amount and types of assessment is specific to each content area

Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS)

As a public school, SCA scholars are required to participate in the GMAS End of Grade Assessment beginning in third grade. The school will provide ample notice of testing dates to ensure student readiness. Score reports will be distributed to parents upon receipt. The score

reports will be accompanied by a cover letter further explaining the assessments and a guide to interpreting the score reports. SCA invites parents/guardians to schedule conferences with faculty and/or administration to carefully review results, as deemed necessary by the parent/guardian. These conferences may assist parents/guardians in determining appropriate next steps in support of standards-aligned teaching and learning for an increased likelihood of long-term success.

Navvy

Navvy is a flexible, diagnostic assessment system used in grades 3-8 at SCA for assessing the proficiency of grade-level standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. With flexible administration, real-time diagnostic feedback, and multiple opportunities to succeed, Navvy is an integral tool for teaching and learning that helps provide a personalized educational experience for every student.

Elective Opportunities

SCA offers a unique blend of elective classes each week to support the whole child across academics, social development, and growth in “life ready” skills. Academic content teachers collaborate with elective teachers to maximize student learning potential. In middle school, scholars will participate in two electives each day. Elective courses are driven by student choice while also allowing all scholars the opportunity for exposure to the arts, physical education, and design. If a scholar opts to participate in Band or Spanish (8th grade) as an elective, he/she understands that this is a year-long commitment. In upper school, scholars have the opportunity to participate in a variety of course offerings in addition to specific courses required for graduation.

Promotion and Retention Policy

In addition to any grade-specific [state-mandated requirements](#), SCA: Middle/Upper School scholars will be *promoted* based on the following criteria:

Promotion/Retention – Grades 6-8

- Students must pass ALL academic classes (this is an SCA policy).
 - Minimum of 70% mastery of grade level standards in all academic courses
 - Minimum of 70% mastery in all *required* elective courses
- Parents may appeal the retention by submitting a letter to the counselor within 5 days after the last school day. The counselor will convene the Placement Committee comprised of a grade level teacher, the counselor and an administrator; will review all records for the school year and meet with the parent to determine the best placement for the scholar.
- Scholars must have no more than 15 unexcused absences for the school year. (8 for semester long courses).
- Scholars in grade 8 will be required to meet Milestone Test criteria for promotion.
- Additionally, scholars who are in the Special Education Program who do not meet the promotion criteria will have an IEP meeting scheduled with the IEP team.

- In some instances, promotion may require scholars to enroll in a summer school program and provide Scintilla Charter Academy with proof of completion.

Promotion/Retention Grades 9-12

- Students must pass ALL academic classes (this is an SCA policy).
 - Minimum of 70% mastery of grade level standards in all academic courses
 - Minimum of 70% mastery in all *required* elective courses
- Scholars must have no more than 15 unexcused absences for the school year. (8 for semester long courses).
- Additionally, scholars who are in the Special Education Program who do not meet the promotion criteria will have an IEP meeting scheduled with the IEP team.
- In some instances, promotion may require scholars to enroll in a summer school program and provide Scintilla Charter Academy with proof of completion.

To be promoted to the 10 th grade and classified as a Sophomore:	Student must have earned a total of 6 Carnegie units.	Of the 6 Carnegie units earned, 3 units must have been earned in required academic courses (English, Math, Social Studies, Science)	In addition to the 3 units earned in academic courses, the student must also have earned at least 3 additional units in any other courses (academic or elective)
To be promoted to the 11th grade and classified as a Junior:	Student must have earned a total of 12 Carnegie units.	Of the 12 Carnegie units earned, 6 units must have been earned in required academic courses (English, Math, Social Studies, Science)	In addition to the 6 units earned in academic courses, the student must have also earned at least 6 additional units in any other courses (academic or elective)
To be promoted to the 12th grade and classified as a Senior:	Student must have earned a total of 18 Carnegie units.	Of the 18 Carnegie units earned, 9 units must have been earned in required academic courses (English, Math, Social Studies, Science)	In addition to the 9 units earned in academic courses, the student must also have earned at least 9 additional units in any other courses (academic or elective)

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

Additional factors may contribute to the promotion/retention decision including, but not limited to, attendance, evaluation on Spartan 10: Habits of Character, and age/grade/current placement. In the event that a scholar is placed in the next grade level, SCA faculty will provide standard-specific recommendations for support prior to the start of the subsequent school year. The parent/guardian is encouraged to create opportunities for remediation within the window prior to the next school year.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with SCA’s decision to retain, a committee will be formed consisting of the parent/guardian, teachers, and administration. Following a discussion of relevant documentation, the committee will vote to determine whether the child will be retained, promoted, or placed into the next grade level. The decision to *promote* must be unanimous or the scholar will be retained. If a unanimous decision is made to *place* a scholar in the next grade level, the decision must be based on documentation suggesting that, given appropriate interventions via strategic implementation of a plan, the scholar would be likely to master the next grade-level standards by the end of the following year.

Grading Reports

Grades will be entered in SCA’s online grading platform as scholars are assessed. A report card will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks.

Graduation Requirements

Subject/Content	SCA Diploma	SCA Diploma with Distinction
English/Language Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9th Grade Literature/Composition • 10th Grade World Literature • American Literature/Composition *EOC • 4th ELA Credit 	4 units	4 units
Mathematics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra *EOC • Geometry • Advanced Algebra • Advanced Level Math 	4 units	4 units
Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology *EOC • Chemistry • Physical Science or Physics • 4th Science Credit 	4 units	4 units
Social Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World History • U.S. History *EOC • Government • Economics 	4 units	4 units
Health and Personal Fitness	1 unit	1 unit
Foreign Language OR Computer Science	Not required	2 units
Electives*	8 units	6 units
Completion of 2 Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, 2 International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses, or 2 Dual Enrollment (DE) Courses	Not Required	Minimum of 2 AP, 2 IB, or 2 DE courses
Pathway Completion-Advanced Academic, CTAE, Fine Arts, or Foreign Language	3 units	3 units

Capstone Project	Required	Required
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TOTAL UNITS	28 units	28 units
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Additional Information:

1. Scholars must complete at least one pathway for graduation-Advanced Academic, CTAE, Fine Arts, or Foreign Language.
2. Although it is not required for graduation (except to earn the SCA Diploma with Distinction), scholars must complete two years of the same foreign language for admission into most four-year colleges, both public and private.
3. Scholars must earn a minimum of three credits in any combination from the following subject areas: Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and/or CTAE. These three credits can come from scholars' pathway and/or from their electives.
4. SCA scholars are required to take all state mandated assessments.
5. If a course is offered at SCA, a scholar may not take the course through Georgia Virtual School or any on-line school.

Portrait of a Graduate

As mainstream schools focus on college and career readiness, the demands of the 21st century context are ever evolving. SCA acknowledges and seeks to act on the reality that post-secondary opportunities require individuals to create, innovate, network, and build as ever increasing technologies pave the way for more seamless and efficient acquisition of information. Far too often, graduates exit the K-12 setting with scores suggesting a likelihood of success only to find dismal opportunities post-graduation (Dintersmith, 2018). SCA has a vision and a commitment to ensuring that all graduates are 21st Century Life Ready. To increase the likelihood that scholars will exit the school setting as "life ready" individuals, SCA employs the Portrait of a Graduate process. Teachers are expected to align coursework and other school-specific tasks to those competencies represented in our graduate profile.. Scintilla Charter Academy's Portrait of a Graduate (POG) describes the skills that will empower our scholars to be productive citizens of a global community and successful in the workforce of the future.

Communicator

- Applies effective reading skills to acquire knowledge and broaden perspectives.
- Employs active listening and thinking strategies to advance understanding.
- Uses speaking skills to inform, influence, motivate, or entertain listeners.
- Incorporates effective writing skills for various purposes and audiences to convey understanding and concepts.
- Uses technological skills and digital tools responsibly to explore and exchange ideas.

Collaborator

- Seeks and uses critique and feedback from others to adapt ideas and persist in grappling with difficult tasks.
- Approaches opportunities for collaboration with an open mind to contribute respectfully to a thoughtful discussion.

- Demonstrates the ability to contribute when working with a group to promote learning, increase productivity, and achieve common goals.
- Analyzes and constructs arguments and positions to ensure consideration of a various of viewpoints.

Contributor to a Better World

- Demonstrates empathy, compassion, and respect for diverse perspectives and cultures when considering local, national, and world issues.
- Contributes to solutions that benefit the broader community.
- Understands the foundations of our country and values our rights, privileges, and responsibilities.
- Acts responsibly and ethically to build integrity.

Creative and Critical Thinker

- Uses information in creative ways to strengthen comprehension and deepen awareness.
- Demonstrates the ability to approach and solve a problem using inquiry, critical thinking, and logic to find a solution.
- Evaluates ideas and information sources for validity, relevance, and impact.

Goal-Directed and Resilient Individual

- Engages in healthy and positive practices and relationships to promote overall physical and mental well-being.
- Demonstrates perseverance to accomplish difficult tasks, overcome barriers to meet goals, and view failure as an opportunity to grow.
- Uses time and resources wisely to set goals, complete tasks, and manage projects.
- Shows strong understanding and belief of self to engage in reflection for individual improvement and advocacy.

Spartan 10: Habits of Character

SCA incorporates standards-aligned and rigorous curriculum with careful selection of appropriate resources. One of those resources provides a focus on developing habits of character which are essential to success in school and life. Given the SCA focus on developing “life ready” learners, scholars will receive explicit instruction tied to social emotional learning (SEL) competencies represented in the Spartan 10: Habits of Character.

Scintilla Spartans demonstrate respect, perseverance, responsibility, and service.

<p>Scintilla Spartans demonstrate respect.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow established norms, rules, and procedures. 2. Follow directions the first time they are given. 3. Demonstrate respect when speaking and listening. 4. Listen to diverse opinions and remain open-minded to new ideas. 5. Demonstrate collegiality and good sportsmanship.
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Scintilla Spartans demonstrate perseverance .	6. Set goals and work your hardest on tasks until completion. 7. Use feedback and suggested strategies to overcome any obstacles you face and produce high-quality work.
Scintilla Spartans demonstrate responsibility .	8. Own your attitudes and actions across all situations regardless of the attitudes and actions of others. 9. Self-monitor to keep up with personal belongings and complete all school assignments on time.
Scintilla Spartans demonstrate service .	10. Contribute to society in a positive way.

Homework

SCA acknowledges that homework has the potential to positively impact student achievement. For this positive impact to occur, SCA provides the following guidance to drive decisions on whether homework will be advantageous to scholars:

- Is the task purposeful?
- Will the task create an opportunity for independent success?
- Will the task create opportunities for scholars to extend, reinforce, or preview content?
- Will the task include choice to increase engagement?
- Will the task allow an opportunity for scholars to receive feedback?

Using the guiding questions above, homework is assigned at the teacher's discretion. Scholars will document required homework tasks and be expected to submit work by designated due dates.

Text Resources, Technology, and Supplies

Text resources, technology, and other educational supplies are loaned to scholars for use during the school year. Scholars are responsible for exercising care in the use of SCA materials. Permission for use of text resources, technology, and other educational supplies is granted when parents/guardians sign the handbook acknowledgement signaling an understanding of all terms and expectations. Scholars are required to return books and other supplies to teachers at the conclusion of the course/school year. Scholars will be charged for damaged or lost texts, technology, 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.

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 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (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. The SCA Special Education team manages procedures for making referrals, conducting evaluations, communicating with families, writing and reviewing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), maintaining student records, and reporting progress. For further information regarding the special education process, contact SCA administration.

For those identified with a disability through the Multi-tiered System of Supports (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. SCA's Special Education Team oversees the services provided to scholars with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) so that scholars make progress towards their goals. To ensure the least restrictive environment, as often as the team deems it 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 follows 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)

SCA requires families to complete a Home Language Survey as part of the registration process. Information from the survey is 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 English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services to scholars, SCA provides interpreters for parent/teacher conferences and other school-related activities, as needed.

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/guardians 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 as gifted. Enrichment and advanced content courses are developed by the subject-specific teachers working with gifted certified personnel.

How are scholars referred for gifted testing?

SCA scholars may be eligible for gifted testing via two referral pathways: reported or automatic. With reported referrals, a scholar is referred for consideration by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents/guardians, peers, self, or others with knowledge of a student's academic abilities. SCA scholars who score Level 4: Distinguished on the Georgia Milestones Assessment System (GMAS) in Reading AND/OR Mathematics may be automatically nominated for consideration. For reported referrals, the stakeholder who is making the recommendation will need to complete a nomination form.

The steps in the referral process are:

- An individual initiates the process by completing a nomination form.
- The nominating committee reviews nominations to determine if referral for formal evaluation is warranted. The nominating committee shall make a determination on whether to proceed with formal evaluation. The nominating committee shall include an SCA administrator and at least one classroom teacher. During nominating committee meetings, the committee will record minutes including descriptions of noted strengths/weaknesses and a rationale for why additional services may be needed with consideration to available data.

How are scholars identified as gifted?

Per Georgia State Department of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38, to be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either score at the 96th percentile on the composite or full scale score of a norm-referenced test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria (mental ability, achievement, creativity, or motivation) or qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.

Family Engagement

Parental Contact Information

SCA requires parents/guardians to maintain accurate contact information with front office personnel and teachers as this is critical to the safety of scholars. Parents/Guardians are expected to notify the school with new contact information - including email addresses, phone numbers, home addresses, work numbers, and emergency contacts. Updated/Current contact information will increase the likelihood of strong communication between school and home.

Parent/Teacher Contact Procedures

If a parent/guardian would like to discuss a matter with any staff member, the following procedures must be followed. Parents/Guardians will not be permitted to visit a classroom and/or interrupt instructional time without confirmation from the front office that procedures have been followed. Parents/Guardians will:

1. schedule an appointment with the faculty member prior to the meeting date.
2. report to the office at the time of the agreed upon appointment to give the front office staff an opportunity to notify the faculty member of arrival and to issue a visitor's pass.

Chain of Command: Communication

SCA believes that relationships are of critical importance to the educational experience - and clear/concise communication is key in our ability to establish, support, and sustain these relationships. 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 administrator in the school, should resolve the grievance by following the chain of command detailed below. Parents/Guardians will contact:

1. the *teacher/faculty member*. Given that the teacher/faculty member likely has direct knowledge of the circumstance, parents/guardians will begin by scheduling a meeting with the teacher. Parents/Guardians may schedule this meeting by calling the school or sending an email directly to the teacher. Except in emergency circumstances or situations involving imminent danger, parents/guardians shall not confront a teacher about an issue with any student present. If the teacher and parent/guardian agree that it is in the best interest of the student for him/her to be present for the discussion, they may choose to do so.
2. the *Assistant Superintendent*. If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher/faculty member, the parent/guardian will discuss the matter with the Assistant Superintendent.
3. the *Superintendent*. If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher/faculty member or the Dean of Middle and Upper School, the parent/guardian will discuss the matter with the Superintendent.
4. the *Board Chair*. If the grievance cannot be resolved after meeting with the teacher, Dean of Middle and Upper School, the Assistant Superintendent, or Superintendent, then a parent/guardian 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 meeting. The concern or grievance must be submitted in writing, and no more than two minutes will be granted. It is highly recommended that the concern or grievance be addressed in one of the aforementioned steps before using this option.

SCA Learning Environment

Parents/Guardians and families are expected to follow established norms, rules, and procedures when visiting SCA. SCA administration expects that parents/guardians and families will dress appropriately, use respect and courtesy, and address all employees, other stakeholders, and scholars in a polite and professional manner. Situations arising in reference to SCA policy, teacher decisions, or administrative decisions will be discussed in a civil, conference setting. Raised voices, threats, or interference with instruction/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.

Parent and Family Code of Conduct

Purpose and Scope: The purpose of the Parent Code of Conduct is to provide a mutual understanding to all parents/guardians and visitors to our school about conduct expectations while on school property, at school events, and when interacting with school employees and/or scholars.

General Expectations We expect parents/guardians and visitors to have a fundamental understanding and commitment to the following general propositions:

- Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians want all children to learn in a safe environment
- All children deserve a safe, positive, and joyful learning environment
- Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians must work together for the benefit of all scholars
- All parents/guardians and visitors, as well as all members of the school community, deserve to be treated with respect
- The school should be provided an opportunity to resolve issues of concern before public criticism.

Prohibited Behaviors

To provide a peaceful and safe school environment, the school prohibits the following behaviors by parents/guardians and visitors:

- Disrespectful, abusive, threatening, profane, elevated tone, or harassing communication, either in person, by e-mail or text/voicemail/phone, or other written or verbal communication
- Disruptive behavior that interferes or threatens to interfere with school operations, including the effective operation of a classroom, conferences, an employee's office or duty station, a campus lobby, or school grounds, including sporting events, parking lots, and car-pickup
- Threatening to do bodily harm to a school employee, visitor, fellow parent/guardian, or scholars
- Threatening to damage the property of a district employee, visitor, fellow parent/guardian, or scholar.
- Damaging or destruction of school property
- Inappropriate gifts
- Threats of posting negative comments on social media
- Demands for meetings at unreasonable times and or unreasonable lengths, without prior notice
- Attempts to dictate management decisions ● Frequent or repetitive meetings about an issue that has already been addressed
- To incite other parents to join or make a complaint
- Excessive unscheduled campus visits, e-mails, text/voicemail/phone messages, or other written or oral
 - School staff and administration may not always be immediately available to speak with you. The only way to ensure that you can speak with a staff member

or administrator is to schedule an appointment. Staff and administrators have a practice of attempting to return all phone calls/emails within 24 hours with great success. Your calls and visits will be responded to consistent with this practice if someone is not immediately available to speak with you.

- Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments regarding the school, school staff, other scholars made publicly to others
 - Any concerns that you have should be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively
 - This includes the use of any social media medium, including but not limited to websites, blogs, wikis, and social networking sites such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Consequences

Depending upon the severity of the incident, parents/guardians or visitors may be ejected from or otherwise banned from campus and the ability to attend or participate in school-sponsored events under the criminal trespass laws. In situations involving lesser infractions or where remediation is viable, a warning will be provided, either verbal or in writing, before the filing of trespass and issuance of a formal ban. Should a parent/guardian or visitor fail to heed the direction issued in the warning, a ban or other restrictions designed to deter the conduct will follow. No restriction, however, will prevent the parent/guardian from working collaboratively with the school to meet the child's educational needs, nor will a parent/guardian be excluded from a child's IEP meeting. Scintilla does not have ISS (In-school Suspension) or an alternative school. As stated in the SCA Student Code of Conduct, if a child's behavior negatively impacts the learning or safety of other scholars, the parent will be notified and may be required to schedule a conference or pick up the child from school. By signing the Parent Code of Conduct, the parent/guardian acknowledges this expectation and agrees to partner with SCA. If a parent repeatedly refuses to communicate with his/her child's teacher/school administrator or pick up their child if their child violates the Student Code of Conduct, the scholar will not be allowed to return to school until the parent/guardian follows through with expectations indicated in the Parent Code of Conduct. These absences will be unexcused.

Contacting Scholars

If a parent/guardian needs to reach a scholar during the school day, in the case of an emergency, the parent/guardian can contact the front office and 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 play a critical role in the mission and vision of SCA. Parents/Guardians and families are encouraged to volunteer in school-wide opportunities communicated throughout the year via school messaging. Parents/Guardians and families may also contact the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) or specific teachers to offer to assist in the classroom/school setting.

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 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.

Behavioral Expectations

SCA aims to equip learners with “life ready” skills to increase the likelihood of long-term success. Within the middle/upper school setting, faculty, teachers, and administration will explicitly teach social emotional learning (SEL) competencies. As a next step, scholars will be held accountable for following established norms, rules, and procedures in order to maintain a safe, orderly, and respectful environment. SCA recognizes that middle school scholars need a balance of affirmation for positive choices and redirection in instances where unacceptable behavior is observed. Through self-evaluation of the Spartan 10: Habits of Character, SCA faculty, teachers, and administration employ a proactive approach to effectively support scholars in working toward positive outcomes.

Get Things Done (Advising)

As middle school scholars move into young adolescence and begin to experience rapid and significant developmental change, SCA will intentionally support scholars in navigating this process. Similar to the K-5 notion of a crew meeting, middle/upper school scholars will participate in a dedicated advising block called “Get Things Done: where they will engage in goal setting, receive explicit instruction in social emotional learning (SEL) skills, and receive support in self-evaluation of the Spartan 10: Habits of Character. The purpose of this instructional block is to build community and equip scholars with the soft skills necessary for long-term success.

Spartan Showcase

Spartan Showcase is an opportunity for the SCA: Middle/Upper School to come together in celebration of learning and growth. One Friday each month, middle and upper school scholars will meet in a dedicated location to highlight progress across academics, character development, extracurriculars, and/or sports. The SCA Middle/Upper school staff will ensure that all grades and scholars are represented throughout the year.

Code of Conduct

SCA administration cannot foresee every situation that may come up during the school year. However, if behavior interrupts the operation of the classroom, the hallway, or the school in general, the results could be as simple as a warning or as serious as an expulsion.

Tier I Misconduct

This level of correction is used when the behavior engaged is of a minor but consistent action warranting intervention on the part of the teacher or other school staff. These actions negatively impact the learning and safety of our scholars. The consequence for any infraction is left to the discretion of the administrator based on variables involved in the incident. Tier 1 misconduct will be documented using our four-step plan. Repeated behaviors at the Tier 1 level will result in consequences at the Tier 2 level.

Examples of these actions might be but are not limited to the following:

- Violations of classroom rules
- Uniform issues (failure to follow the uniform policy)
- Bringing toys or items from home to school that are a distraction or against classroom rules
- Loud talking, loud laughing, or use of a tone that disrupts the learning process in the classroom, hallway, dining room, etc.
- Arguing with another scholar or the teacher interrupts the learning environment
- Failure to follow directions given by an adult
- Violation of cell phone policy
- Horseplay involving physical contact
- Visiting unauthorized sites on school technology that disrupt the learning environment

Tier I disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to the following:

- Documentation on the 4-Step Plan
- Immediate removal of the scholar from the classroom or area where the infraction occurs and a request made for the parent to come to the school to pick up the child
- A written or verbal warning by the teacher, counselor, custodian, lunchroom staff, support staff, or administrator
- Teacher conference scheduled with the scholar and the parent
- Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the assigned administrator

Parents, please remember: We do not tolerate scholar disruptions during class time. Regardless of the age of the child, a scholar who disrupts class by blurting out repeatedly, moving about the classroom so as to remove the attention of the scholars from the teacher, failing to follow classroom rules, arguing or belittling other scholars, throwing things, hitting, pushing or shoving others will be removed from class and the parent will be called to come and get the child.

Tier II Misconduct

This level of correction is used when the behavior engaged is persistent and repeated and negatively impacts the learning and/or safety of our scholars. These actions can occur in the classroom, in the gym, in the dining room, outside of the school building, or at school-sanctioned or even non-school events. These behaviors may include, but are not limited to, repeated acts of minor misconduct as seen in Tier I; of actions of a scholar against another scholar, adult or SCA property, that does not seriously endanger the health, safety, or well-being of others but does disturb the learning environment and the school culture. The consequences for any infraction are left to the discretion of the administrator.

Examples of these actions might be but are not limited to the following:

- Repeated violations of Tier I misconduct
- Disruption and interference with the normal operation of the school
- Continued failure to follow the uniform policy
- Academic dishonesty
- Taking items that belong to another scholar or adult
- Violation of cell phone policy
- Causing minor damage to the property of SCA
- Causing minor damage to the property of another individual
- Tampering with school technology
- Disrespectful or demeaning behavior and/or language directed at another scholar or adult
- Public displays of affection-kissing, hugging, or touching one another inappropriately (1st offense)
- Bullying on the first offense, harassment, cyber-bullying, or intimidation as defined in Georgia law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2751.4
- Second cell phone violation
- Visiting unauthorized locations (includes skipping)
- Throwing an item at an individual that could potentially cause harm
- Any act that negatively impacts the learning and safety of our scholars

Tier II disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to the following:

- Immediate removal of the scholar from the classroom or area where the infraction occurs and the parent is required to come to the school to pick up the child
- Restitution of stolen or broken items
- Confiscation of cell phone
- Student placed on a behavior contract
- Any other intervention or consequence deemed appropriate by the teacher, counselor, or administrator
- Possible suspension from school
- Administrator-issued detention

Tier III Misconduct

This level of correction is used when the scholar's misbehavior is repeated but the offenses may not be related; however, the actions negatively impact the learning and safety of our scholars. These actions can occur in the classroom, in the gym, in the dining room, outside of the school building, or at school-sanctioned or even non-school events. Actions may include but are not limited to repeated acts of misconduct as seen in Tier I and Tier II; actions of a scholar against another scholar, adult, or SCA property that could endanger the health, safety, or well-being of others and may also disturb the learning environment or the school climate. These behaviors are of a serious nature and may result in a scholar's suspension from school and school activities. The consequences for any infraction are left to the discretion of the administrator based on factors involved in the incident.

Examples of these actions might be but are not limited to the following:

- Instigating/provoking any altercations between or among scholars while on campus or at a school activity

- Any behaviors from Tier I or Tier II that are repeated and are not corrected by consequences administered
- The fourth failure to comply with the uniform policy
- Second infraction involving academic dishonesty
- Possession of a vaping device
- Refusing to follow directives given by an administrator involving a disciplinary consequence
- Lying, falsifying, omitting information, misrepresenting, or erroneously reporting information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by any SCA scholar toward another scholar in regard to an incident that has occurred
- Bullying on the second offense, harassment, cyber-bullying, or intimidation as defined in Georgia law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2751.4
- General Sexual Misconduct to include:
 - Snapping one another with towels in locker rooms, taking videos in locker rooms/bathrooms, peering over stalls in locker rooms or bathrooms, etc.)
 - Inappropriate or unwanted touching of another scholar
 - Making sexual remarks or unwelcome advances towards other scholars, staff, or faculty; asking for sexual favors explicitly, via social media, or online format
- Using vulgar/profane, racially derogatory, sexually derogatory, or aggressive language toward another scholar or adult including disrespectful language or behavior directed at a teacher, administrator or any SCA school personnel.
- Fighting/shoving/pushing another scholar or adult in an aggressive manner
- Hitting another scholar, teacher, or faculty/staff member in an aggressive manner
- Defacing, destroying, or causing significant damage to the property of another individual
- Defacing, destroying, or causing significant damage to the property of SCA
- Encouraging others to become involved in acts that are prohibited or disrupt the learning environment or the school environment at large
- Bringing medication to school without consulting with the nurse and leaving the medication in the clinic; carrying medication, in particular prescribed medication, on the scholar's person
- Tampering in any way with a scholar or a faculty/staff member's food or drink
- Taking still or video pictures of any individual while on school property with or without their clear and expressed permission. This includes taking pictures of other scholars and/or staff members.
- Recording a video in a bathroom/locker room that involves other scholars
- Videoing any kind of illicit activities and posting on any social media platform
- Videoing teachers or other scholars during the school day
- Visiting any site that includes pornography, profane music and/or lyrics, indecent pictures of individuals, graphic behaviors including fighting, etc.
- Posting comments or videos via social media, websites, chat rooms, etc. about the school, teachers, scholars, or parents of a disparaging, rude, or vulgar nature
- Soliciting sexually inappropriate pictures
- Placing vulgar or inappropriate pictures on websites and encouraging scholars to visit those websites either at school or at home
- Sending vulgar texts, Instagram posts, etc. to any individual at SCA including scholars, teachers, or other personnel
- Having vulgar, profane, or sexual pictures, texts, etc. in possession or sharing such with any other scholar
- Using sexual or explicit language with any other scholars or in the presence of scholars, particularly younger scholars

- Sexting or the sending of any type of sexually explicit or implicit message using a cell phone or other technological device
- Placing pictures of other individuals on social media with derogatory commentary about their personal characteristics, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.
- Being in possession of any type of cigarette or product, (nicotine or CBD), lighter, matches, rolling papers, or any smoking/vaping device on campus or at a school-related event/trip
- Creating any disturbance that disrupts or distracts from the learning environment and potentially inhibits the smooth operation of the school/classroom
- Disrupting the testing environment
- Second infraction of tampering with school technology in any form or fashion
- Tampering with technology so as to remove evidence of inappropriate online activity
- Engaging in larceny/theft of school property regardless of the value
- Engaging in larceny/theft of another scholar's property regardless of the value
- Accessing/altering school/teacher records
- Compromising test security of any standardized test
- Referring to a staff member in a negative, sexual, or racist fashion or making threatening or aggressive comments via any social media platform
- Obtaining access to another scholar's username and password
- Obtaining access to another scholar's ID number and using that number to purchase meals
- Inappropriate use of the SCA logo
- Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy (Technology)
- Leaving the building without permission; leaving campus without permission

Tier III disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to the following:

- Immediate removal of the scholar from the classroom or area where the infraction occurs and the parent will be required to pick up the child from school
- Restitution to individuals or to the school
- Suspension from school of no less than 3 days and no more than 10 days.
- School service assignments as determined by the administrator.
- Cell phone confiscated and loss of cell phone privileges
- Referral for expulsion.
- Possible involvement of local law enforcement.
- Any other intervention or consequence deemed appropriate by the teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Tier IV Misconduct

This level of correction is used with behavior that is of a serious nature. Tier IV Misconduct is of such a serious nature that the scholar will be removed from the classroom or the area where the act takes place immediately and will be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion as well as possible involvement of local law enforcement.

In the event misconduct warrants a possible referral for expulsion, the scholar will be granted a hearing as per O.C.G.A. 20-2-753. The Disciplinary Hearing Officer will hold the hearing within 10 days of the incident.

The Georgia State Board of Education rule 160-4-8-.15 provides that individuals selected by the LEA to be the Disciplinary Hearing Officer must have experience as a teacher, counselor, or administrator in a public school system. In addition, all qualified Disciplinary Hearing Officers have the initial and ongoing Tribunal training course that meets the requirements of the SBOE rule prior to the individual servicing in such capacity.

Examples of these actions might be but are not limited to the following:

- Repeated violations of Tier II or III behaviors
- Fifteen or more unexcused absences
- Making oral or written communication, creating a document, or making a symbolic gesture or contact of a threatening, undermining, or provoking nature to any scholar or school employee at SCA
- Tampering, defacing, or disturbing staff, scholar, or visitor vehicles parked on campus at any time
- Hate speech of any kind directed at SCA teachers, administrators, staff, or any employee of SCA or contracted by SCA including dining hall staff, custodial staff, construction staff, landscaping staff, etc.
- Any act of violence that impacts the climate, culture, and morale of the scholar body and the faculty/staff
- Verbal assault including the threatening of violence to other scholars or staff of SCA as well as to any individual on the SCA campus
- Physical assault/fighting directed at or to other scholars or staff of SCA as well as to any individual on the SCA campus
- Trespassing on the SCA campus after hours or when suspended from school
- Defacing SCA campus
- Third act of bullying, harassment, cyber-bullying, or threat/intimidation as defined in Georgia law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2751.4.
- Fighting or physical violence towards another scholar whether it causes harm or otherwise
- Sexual harassment in any form toward a staff member
- Exposing body parts, intimate or otherwise, lewd behavior (showing personal parts of the body to others, i.e. pulling down pants/shorts/skirt).
- Having possession of, sharing, or distributing obscene or pornographic material in print or computer, flash drive, CD, DVD, etc.
- Engaging in any type of behavior in the community that requires placement at a YDC facility or requires the use of a monitoring device
- Engaging in any type of behavior or conduct that is punishable as a felony or is a delinquent act that would be a felony if committed by an adult.
- Selling, giving, delivering to another person, or possessing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana (including but not limited to marijuana suckers, candy, etc), any controlled substance, any medication not prescribed to the taker, or any dangerous drug while on campus or at any school function.
- Selling, giving, or delivering to another person an alcoholic beverage; committing a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol; possessing, using, or under the influence of alcohol prior to attending school or while at school; possessing, using, or under the influence of alcohol prior to or during a school-related activity. Imbibing in liquor/alcohol on the school campus or at a school event.
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusing glue or aerosol paint, or relating to volatile chemicals.

- Being in possession of any drug paraphernalia
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of public lewdness
- Engaging in sexual conduct on campus or at a school-sponsored activity
- Entering the restroom of the opposite sex
- Engaging in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of criminal damage to property in the first or second degree, either on or off campus
- Stealing, extorting, gambling, or possessing stolen property
- Using, exhibiting, or possessing a firearm
- Bringing any item related to a weapon, or that could be construed as a weapon, on campus or to a school event
- Using, exhibiting, or possessing another weapon
- Using, exhibiting, or possessing fireworks of any kind whether homemade or purchased
- Discharging or participating in the discharge of a fire extinguisher
- Discharging or participating in the discharge of a fire alarm anywhere within or on the SCA school campus
- Engaging in serious and persistent offenses that disrupt or materially interfere with the orderly process in the classroom, the school, or any school-related activity.
- **Fighting will not be tolerated. Any scholars involved in a fight may be suspended for up to 10 days of school and will possibly be referred for a disciplinary hearing.**

Tier IV Disciplinary Actions may include but are not limited to the following:

- Suspension
- Long-Term Suspension leading to a tribunal hearing
- Expulsion
- Referral to Law Enforcement

Disciplinary Hearings

A scholar accused of committing a Level IV offense as defined in the SCA: Middle/Upper Grades Scholar Code of Conduct and Discipline plan may be referred for a Disciplinary Hearing for a determination as to whether a long-term suspension or expulsion is appropriate. A long-term suspension means denial to a scholar of the right to attend school and take part in any school function for period ten (10) or more school days. Expulsion shall mean the removal of the scholar from enrollment at SCA for the remainder of the school year or longer. A long-term suspension or expulsion will normally follow a short-term suspension. There are exceptions, however, that could prompt the school administrator to move forward with the immediate dismissal of a scholar. Examples of such violations include, but are not limited to, bringing a weapon to school, assault on a scholar or school personnel, or other chargeable offenses.

A disciplinary hearing officer shall employ the tribunal process to hold hearings in any of the instances previously described, as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-753. Per O.C.G.A. § 20-2-759, the disciplinary hearing officer shall have initial training prior to serving as a disciplinary hearing officer, undergo continuing education so as to continue to serve in such capacity, and function as an independent, neutral arbiter. Per SBOE rule 160-4-8-.15, individuals selected by SCA to serve as disciplinary hearing officers must either be: 1) in good standing with the State Bar of Georgia; 2) have experience as a teacher, counselor, or administrator in a public school system; or 3) actively serving as a hearing officer under an existing contract/agreement with a Georgia

school system and completed an approved Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) tribunal training course. SCA will ensure that its disciplinary hearing policies and practices align to state law and corresponding SBOE rules. A comprehensive description of the disciplinary hearing process is available, by request.

Middle/Upper School Discipline Procedure

Level I infractions (see previous description) will be tracked using a 4-step discipline plan. Each teacher will track the behavior of a student in his/her classroom only. Infractions in one class will not be carried over into another classroom. Level I infractions will be documented in the classroom. In the event that a student commits a level I infraction, the following steps will take place:

- Step 1: Verbal Warning
- Step 2: Parent Phone Call (Logged in Infinite Campus)/Behavior Reflection Form
- Step 3: Parent Phone Call (Logged in Infinite Campus)/Morning Detention/Behavior Reflection Form
- Step 4: Office Referral

Policy Prohibiting Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

SCA believes that all scholars have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. SCA has an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance among scholars, staff, and volunteers. Behavior that infringes on the safety of any scholar will not be tolerated. A scholar shall not bully, harass, or intimidate another scholar 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.

This policy applies to scholars on school grounds, while traveling on a school bus 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.

Any form of electronic bullying (cyberbullying) using school equipment, school networks, email systems or committed at school is strictly prohibited. Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to: electronic communication directed specifically at scholars or school personnel, an electronic communication that is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and/or any electronic communications that create a reasonable fear of harm to the scholars' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

The following actions will be taken when bullying is reported:

1. *Investigate*: Upon receipt of any report of bullying, SCA will direct an immediate investigation involving appropriate personnel. The investigation will 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 resource officers, school counselors, 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, the parent, guardian or any other person who has control or charge of the accused and the victim will be notified. If the incident involves an injury or similar situation, appropriate medical attention should be provided and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.
3. *Discipline*: Upon confirming that bullying has occurred, the accused scholar 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. SCA will clearly communicate to all parties that retaliation following a report of bullying is strictly prohibited and may result in strong disciplinary action. Upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel, or tribunal, if a scholar in grades 6-12 is found to have committed the offense of bullying three times during the school year, SCA will assign the scholar to an alternative setting that fulfills the requirements of an alternative program under state law.
4. *Follow Up*: Follow-up is important to the accused and the victim. After-care and follow-up will occur.

All scholars and/or staff shall immediately report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation to the Superintendent 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.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behavior include, but are not limited, to the following:

- All staff, scholars, and their parents will receive a summary of this policy prohibiting bullying at the beginning of the school year as part of the scholar 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.

SCA's policy prohibiting bullying includes but is not limited to the following:

- Scholars are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Superintendent or designee.

- Scholars can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.
- If the complainant scholar or the parent of the scholar feels that an appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached after consulting the Superintendent, the scholar or the parent of the scholar should contact the local superintendent or his or her designee.
- SCA prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

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 consequences as defined in SCA's Code of Conduct.

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

Scholars, 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.

Scholar Driver Information

Required Documentation

Scholars may purchase a school-issued parking permit after the following documentation has been submitted to Scintilla Charter Academy:

- Valid Driver's License
- Proof of insurance
- Valid tag number
- Certificate of completion for ADAP
- Proof of completion for Driver Education Course

Scholar Parking/Driving Rules and Procedures:

- A visible parking permit is required to be placed on the front windshield—upper corner of the driver's side.
- Scholars will park in designated parking spaces only.
- Abide by all Georgia traffic laws.
- Use of electronic devices while driving is prohibited.
- Loud music is prohibited.
- Loitering in the parking lot is prohibited.
- Driving too fast, reckless driving, or any behavior that could cause accident, injury, or damage to property will be enforced.

- Scholars may not loan or share decals.
- Flags, banners, and/or signs attached to vehicles are prohibited.
- Scholars will not be allowed to access their vehicle during the school day without approval or an administrator or the School Resource Officer.
- Scholars arriving late or dismissing early are required to report to the Middle/Upper School front office.
- Scholars may not leave campus during the school day without permission.

Scholars may be fined without reimbursement, have their permit suspended or revoked, or face other disciplinary action for violating parking and driving rules. All vehicles parked on SCA's campus are subject to being searched by school administration and law enforcement. Vehicles may be towed at the owner's expense and law enforcement may be notified when necessary. It is at the discretion of school administration to enforce other rules and procedures not specifically listed above. SCA's Code of Conduct applies to all scholars when they are on campus or at school sponsored events.

Violation of Parking/Driving Rules and Procedures:

- 1st Offense: \$25 fine and possible permit revocation and/or disciplinary action
- 2nd Offense: \$30 fine, loss of parking/driving privileges for 5 days, and/or disciplinary action
- 3rd Offense: \$35 fine, loss of parking/driving privileges for 10 days, and/or disciplinary action
- 4th Offense: Parking/driving privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year

Merit-based Requirements:

- After five unexcused tardies to school during a semester, scholar parking permits will be revoked for the remainder of the semester.
- First suspension from school—5 day suspension of driving/parking privileges.
- Second suspension from school—10 day suspension of driving/parking privileges.
- Third suspension from school—Driving/parking privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year.
- Any recommendation for expulsion will result in loss of parking/driving privileges for the remainder of the school year, regardless of the outcome.
- Scholars should remain in good academic standing. Parking/driving privileges will be reinstated when the scholar returns to good academic standing. Individual teacher input will be strongly considered.

Notification of Student Rights

RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Date: August 9, 2024

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Scholars Succeeds Act, Scintilla Charter Academy would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher—
 - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether the child 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 Superintendent, Mandy Brewington at 229-244-5750.

Sincerely,



Mandy Brewington
Superintendent

General Public Complaints Policy

SCA Student, Parent/Guardian, or General Public Complaints Policy Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to scholars, 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 II; Title III, Part A; Title IV, Part A, Title IV, Part B; the McKinney-Vento Act; School Improvement 1003(a) and 1003(g) (SIG); IDEA, and Emergency Relief Funds CARES Act, CRRSA Act, ARP Act.

Dispute Resolution

1. The complaints process may be initiated directly to the Superintendent .
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 Superintendent 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 Superintendent .
5. If the Parent, Guardian, or Unaccompanied youth does not agree with the decision of the Superintendent , 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 Superintendent , 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 Brewington
Superintendent
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 plans 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 Contact:

Special Education Contact
Melissa Carter
229-244-5750
mcarter@scintillacharteracademy.com

Child Find

SCA recognizes its responsibility to provide a free and appropriate public education to eligible scholars 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 8.

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 scholars with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit a major life activity. Such scholars 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.

Special Education Contact
Melissa Carter
229-244-5750
mcarter@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 scholars have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non disabled scholars.

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
Stacie Haire

2171 E. Park Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31602
229-244-5750
shaire@scintillacharteracademy.com

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

SCA complies with all aspects of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, including amendments from the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act of 2008. As a result, SCA ensures that all scholars, employees, and qualified individuals have access to SCA's programs without regard to his or her disability. For more information regarding ADA, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact SCA's ADA Coordinator:

ADA Coordinator
Melissa Carter
2171 E. Park Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31602
229-244-5750
mcarter@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 scholars who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible scholars") 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 scholars who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the Superintendent 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 scholars who wish to ask Scintilla Charter Academy to amend their child's or their education record should write to the Superintendent of School, 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 scholars' 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 scholars 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.

Pursuant to OCGA §20-2-786, if you do not want your child to be included in photographs, videos, or voice recordings, you must notify Scintilla Charter Academy, in writing, by August 31st, 2024. Provided however, parents may not opt-out of their child being included in photographs, videos, or voice recordings made by the School for public safety or security purposes. 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
- 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 scholars 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 scholars 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 scholars 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 scholars for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, scholars or educational institutions.)

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of scholars and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from scholars 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 scholars 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 in 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 scholars 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 Scholars

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 scholars 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 scholars who are not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian and are living in a homeless situation.

Homeless Scholars 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 scholars 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

Email: amiller@scintillacharteracademy.com

Staci Haire, SCA Counselor

Email: shaire@scintillacharteracademy.com

2171 East Park Avenue

Valdosta, GA 31602

Phone: 229.244.5750

Fax: 229.333.0283

Title IX

SCA does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education program or activity it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and this part not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in the education program or activity extends to admission and employment, and inquiries about the application of Title IX and this part to such recipient may be referred to the recipient's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary, or both. Scholars, 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:

Title IX Grievance Policy

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: Superintendent

If the complaint is not resolved at Level 2, the grievant may proceed to Level 3 by presenting a written appeal to the Superintendent 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 Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee has the option of meeting with the grievant to discuss the appeal. A decision will be rendered by the Superintendent 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 Superintendent. The grievant may request a meeting with

the Board. The Board has the option of meeting with 39 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.

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Reporting Acts of Alleged Sexual Abuse or Misconduct

The following is the reporting process for scholars to follow in reporting instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or another 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 employees shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the school's Superintendent of School, Assistant Superintendent or designee, and shall submit a written report of the incident to the school's Superintendent of School, Assistant Superintendent or designee within 24 hours. If the Superintendent of School or Assistant Superintendent is the person accused of the sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, the oral and written reports should be made to the other.
3. Superintendent of School, Assistant Superintendent 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 Superintendent of School, Assistant Superintendent 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.