SCINTILLA
CHARTER ACADEMY
inspire | IGNITE | innovate

2026-2027

Family and Scholar Handbook

2171 East Park Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31602
Phone: 229.244.5750
Fax: 229.333.0283
www.scintillacharteracademy.com

Welcome to the 2026-2027 School Year!

Dear Spartan Families,

Welcome to a new school year at Scintilla Charter Academy!

Each year brings new opportunities, new relationships, and new moments that shape who our scholars are becoming. This year, our theme, The Journey to Impact, reflects something we believe deeply at SCA: education is not simply about what students know. It is about who they become, how they use what they learn, and the difference they are prepared to make in the world around them.

The journey begins with purpose—helping every scholar know that they belong, that they are valued, and that their unique strengths matter. From there, we seek to inspire curiosity, ignite ownership of learning, create opportunities to innovate, and ultimately empower our scholars to make an impact in their school, their community, and beyond.

Families are an essential part of that journey.

The partnership between home and school has a tremendous influence on a child's success. We want our families to feel connected to SCA, informed about their scholar's experience, and confident that we are working together toward the same goal. This handbook is designed to help provide that shared understanding by outlining the expectations, procedures, and practices that allow our school community to learn and grow together.

As SCA continues to grow, one thing will remain constant: our commitment to knowing our scholars, challenging them, supporting them, and creating meaningful opportunities for them to discover what they are capable of accomplishing. From our youngest Spartans to our graduating seniors, we want every scholar to leave SCA prepared not only for the next step, but prepared to lead, serve, create, and contribute.

Thank you for choosing Scintilla Charter Academy and for trusting us with the privilege of educating your children. We are grateful for your partnership and excited about all that lies ahead.

Together, we will continue to Inspire Learners. Ignite Leaders. Innovate Tomorrow.

Here's to an incredible year and a journey filled with purpose, growth, and impact.

Go Spartans!

Amanda Miller, Superintendent
amiller@scintillacharteracademy.com

School Background

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 and international mindedness, along with a strong sense of community and character.

Vision

Every SCA scholar will become a curious, creative, and compassionate learner who thinks critically, collaborates purposefully, embraces diverse perspectives, and uses their knowledge, character, and leadership to make a meaningful impact in their community and the world.

Scintilla Beliefs

At SCA, we believe every scholar should be known, encouraged, supported, and challenged each day. We believe all scholars can achieve at high levels when they are provided with meaningful learning experiences, high expectations, responsive support, and a strong sense of belonging.

Learning should build curiosity, confidence, independence, and a lasting love of learning. Our educational approach combines standards-based instruction with creativity, collaboration, inquiry, critical thinking, and authentic opportunities for scholars to apply their learning.

We believe character and culture are essential to scholar success. Through the Spartan 10, Habits of Character, strong relationships, and shared community expectations, scholars develop the responsibility, perseverance, compassion, and leadership needed to succeed at SCA and beyond.

Our curriculum is intentionally designed to be developmentally appropriate, engaging, and responsive to the naturally inquisitive nature of children. By balancing challenge with support and depth with meaningful application, we empower scholars to reach their unique potential, embrace diverse perspectives, and make a positive impact in their communities and the world.

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.scinitllacharteracademy.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 and 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.

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.

Sam Warren: Sam Warren was primarily raised in Valdosta, GA. Sam is Vice President at Guardian Bank and provides a strong background in business, banking, and community leadership. He is a 2004 graduate of Georgia Military College, where he earned an Associate degree in Business Administration, and a 2007 graduate of Valdosta State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts. He continued his professional development through Georgia Banking School at the University of Georgia, graduating in May 2016. Warren is also a 2012 graduate of Leadership Lowndes.

Welcome 1
School Background 2
Mission 2
Vision 2
Scintilla Beliefs 2
What is a Charter School? 2
SCA Governing Board 3
Faculty & Staff Directory 8
Calendar 8
Admissions & Enrollment 9
Attendance Zone 9
Arrival & Dismissal 11
Attendance & Tardy Policy 11
Absences from Class/School 11
Unexcused Scholar Absences Protocol 12
Absences Requiring Medical Documentation 13
Excused/Unexcused Combined Absences 13
Early Checkout 13
Tardy Policy 14
Makeup Work 14
Daily Operations 15
Communication with Families 15
Scholar Records 15
Change of Address and/or Phone Number 15
Transfer or Withdrawal of Scholars 15
IGNITE 16
School Supplies 16
School Visitors 16
Celebration Procedures 16
Emergency Procedures 16
Interviewing, Photographing, and Videotaping of Scholars by Staff or Media 17
School Telephone Usage 17
Money and Other Valuables 17
Lost and Found 17
School Nutrition 18
Outside Food & Drinks During Lunch 18
Technology 19
Purpose/Policy Statement/Definitions 19
Application and Responsibilities 19
Device Storage Guidelines 20
Parent Communication Protocol 20
Special Circumstances 20
Progressive Discipline for Violations 20
Serious Misuse 20

Technology Acceptable Use Policy 20
Purpose/Privilege 21
Student Personal Computer Policy 21
Filtering and Monitoring 22
Health, Medicine, & the School Nurse 23
Medicine Administration 23
Medical Records 23
Medical Operations 23
Fever & Vomiting 23
Health Screenings 24
Lice Policy & Procedures 24
Water Safety 24
Uniforms & Dress Code 25
Lower School 25
Lower School Noncompliance Procedures 25
Middle and Upper School 26
Middle and Upper School Noncompliance Procedures 28
Educational Approach 29
Elective Opportunities 29
SCA Grading Philosophy 30
Promotion/Retention Policy 30
Grading Reports 32
Graduation Requirements 33
Weighted Grades Policy 34
State-mandated Scholar Assessments 34
Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS) 34
Georgia Milestones 34
GAA 34
ACCESS 35
Academic Parent and Family Conferences 35
Work Completed Outside of School 35
Textbooks, Technology, and Supplies 36
Recess 36
Fieldwork 36
Extracurriculars and Sports Participation 37
Student Support Services 38
Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) 38
Early Intervention Program (EIP) 38
Remedial Education Program (REP) 38
Special Education Services 38
English Learners (EL) 39
Gifted & Talented Program 39
Family Engagement 40
Parental Contact Information 40

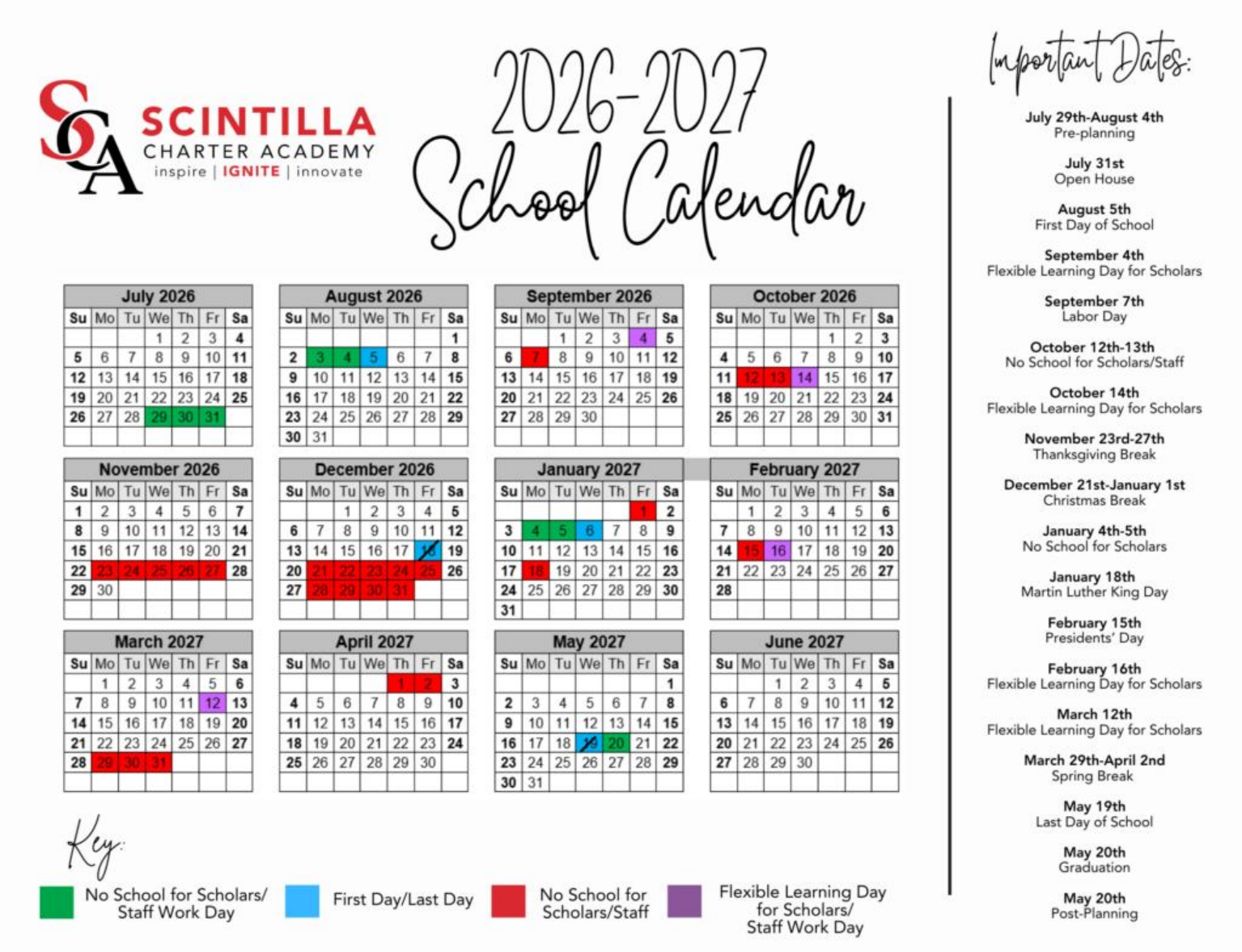
Contacting Your Child's Teacher 40
Communication Chain of Command 40
Contacting Scholars 41
SCA Volunteer Program 41
Communication Folders: Lower School 41
Behavior Expectations/Code of Conduct 42
Habits of Character 42
Scintilla Standards 43
Crew 43
Spartan Circle/Spartan Showcase 44
Learning Environment 44
Teacher/Staff Responsibilities 44
Student Code of Conduct 45
Tier I Misconduct 45
Tier II Misconduct 46
Tier III Misconduct 47
Tier IV Misconduct 49
Disciplinary Hearings 51
Policy Prohibiting Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Intimidation 51
School Dance Policies 53
Family Code of Conduct 54
Purpose and Scope 54
General Expectations 54
Communication Expectations 54
Prohibited Behaviors 55
Consequences 55
Family Partnership Commitment 56
Notification of Student Rights 57
General Public Complaints Policy 58
Dispute Resolution 58
Notice of Non-Discrimination 59
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 60
Child Find 61
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 62
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 63
Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) 64
Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) 68
Information For Homeless Scholars 70
Title IX 71
Title IX Grievance Policy 72
Reporting Acts of Alleged Sexual Abuse or Misconduct 73

Faculty & Staff Directory

Click here for a complete list of SCA's Faculty and Staff.

School Calendar

Click here for SCA's 2026-2027 Academic Calendar.



Admissions & Enrollment

Attendance Zone: Valdosta, Lowndes County, and Brooks County, Georgia

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.

Arrival and Dismissal

General Information

Instructional Day School Hours: 7:45 AM - 3:00 PM

Arrival: Gates will open at 7:15 AM and close at 7:45 AM

Dismissal: Gates will close at 3:35 PM

Office Hours: 7:15 AM - 3:45 PM

Tardiness:

Scholars arriving after 7:45 must be escorted into the front office and signed in by an adult at the main desk.

Late Pick-Up:

We encourage parents to enroll their child(ren) in the after-school program if they cannot make the 3:35 PM deadline. If a child is not picked up by 3:45 PM, parents/guardians will be charged $20 to allow his/her child to participate in the after-school program until arrival for pick-up. Parents or guardians must come into the front office to sign out their scholar for all late pick-ups. Upon the fifth late pick-up, the school will make a referral to the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS). This policy does not apply to children participating in scheduled after-school activities (e.g., sports, extracurriculars) under the supervision of an adult.

Attendance & Tardy Policy

Absences from Class/School

Your child(ren) must be in school every day as mandated by state law. **Parents/Guardians have three days to provide a written or emailed excuse for an absence.** For emailed excuses, parents/guardians may email to: attendance@scintillacharteracademy.com. 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.

Failure to provide a written/emailed excuse will result in the absence being *unexcused*.

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

- Scheduled medical or dental appointments with documentation
- 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
- Required court appearance or subpoena by a law enforcement agency
- Reuniting of families between military deployments, not to exceed five days (utilizing the Georgia Military Family Act).

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.

<u>Unexcused Scholar Absences Protocol</u>

In the event that a child experiences multiple unexcused absences, the following protocol will guide next steps:

- After 5 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The scholar will be identified as at-risk for excessive absences and placed on a watch list monitored by the school counselor. 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.
- After 7 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The scholar's parent will be contacted by a representative of the Attendance Intervention Committee regarding excessive absences, tardies, or early dismissals and schedule a conference. During this meeting, there will be a review of the Excessive Absence Notification Form, which the parent/guardian will be required to sign. Parents/Guardians will be expected to receive a referral to the Truancy Intervention Program.
- After 10 unexcused absences: The scholar's parent or guardian will be notified regarding the scholar's unexcused absences. The parent/guardian will be required to sign the Excessive Absence Notification Form and attend a Retention Alert Meeting. After 10 unexcused absences, a referral will be made to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) for truancy and/or educational neglect. Scholars and/or parents/guardians will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court and/or magistrate court.
- After 15 or more unexcused absences: A Tier IV violation of the Student Code of Conduct occurs when a scholar accumulates more than 15 unexcused absences. A home visit will be made by SCA's SRO. Retention will be strongly considered. A referral will be made to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) for truancy and/or educational neglect. Scholars and/or parents/guardians will be subject to a referral(s) to juvenile court and/or magistrate court.

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 with 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.

Absences Requiring Medical Documentation

In the event that a scholar has 5 or more absences without a physician's excuse, the school will require a physician's excuse in order to consider the absence as an excused absence.

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

In the event that a scholar's physical illness 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 and ensuring the safety of all scholars and school personnel.

Excused/Unexcused Combined Absences

Upon a student's 10th absence, whether excused or unexcused, a parent or guardian will be notified by the Attendance Intervention Committee. 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

Checkouts prior to 11:30 AM will be counted as an all-day absence. Parents/guardians may not check scholars out after 2:30 PM. Instead, they will need to pick them up in the car line. Early checkout (anytime before 2:30 PM) is documented as a tardy on the scholar's record. Student drivers will require verified parent permission to check out early.

Tardy Policy

A scholar is considered tardy when he/she arrives after the car line is closed. Scholars arriving after the car line is closed must be escorted into the office and signed in by an adult at the main desk. Student drivers arriving after the car line is closed will be required to sign in as tardy at the Middle/Upper School front office. 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. Upon the seventh unexcused tardy, parents or guardians will be required to complete an Excessive Tardy Form at the front office each time their scholar is dropped off late for the remainder of the school year.

In the middle and upper school, 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.

Makeup Work

Scholars who have an excused absence shall have the opportunity to make up work. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian in lower school and the scholar in middle/upper school 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.

Major projects or assessments missed during suspensions will be made up within the same number of days as the length of the suspension.

Daily Operations

Communication with Families

SCA is committed to promoting communication between the school and those we serve (parents/guardians, families, scholars, and the community). Listed below are some of the formal ways SCA will communicate with parents/guardians, scholars, and other stakeholders regarding important announcements.

- Intercom Messaging
- Call System
- Handouts/Posters
- Mailings
- Newsletters
- Remind App
- Web Page: https://scintillacharteracademy.com
- Weekly SCA Email Newsletter
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram)
- Lower Grades: Spartan Communication Folders

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 Infinite Campus 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 scholars, 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 Bailey Harrell at bharrell@scintillacharteracademy.com to withdraw scholars.

IGNITE

Scintilla Charter Academy is proud to offer the IGNITE Before & After School Programs. These fee-based programs are administered by the school and operated by our faculty and staff.
The IGNITE Before School Program runs from 6:15 – 7:15 am. The After School Program runs from 3:35 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
The IGNITE Director is Cindy Gregory. If you have any questions, please email ignite@scintillacharteracademy.com.

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.

Click here for more information on the IGNITE program.

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 SCA's website under the Family Resources tab.

School Visitors

All scholars, parents, and visitors must enter through the Lower or Middle/Upper School Office, sign in at the front desk, present a government issued ID and wear a visitor badge at all times. Visitors are only allowed to visit the location approved at check-in.

- Parents/Guardians will not be permitted to "drop-in" and should communicate with their child's teacher(s), in advance, to schedule a school visit. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held by appointment only.
- Families are always invited to join their scholar(s) for lunch and do not have to be scheduled in advance. Families are required to sit at the designated visitor tables.

Celebration Procedures

Parents may bring a snack to celebrate a child's birthday and must be coordinated with your scholar's teacher well in advance. If you choose to distribute party invitations at SCA for a birthday celebration outside of school, all scholars in the child's homeroom must be included.

Emergency Procedures

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

- 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, school messenger, and social media.

- Fire:

  If the emergency is a fire, classroom teachers will escort their scholars to their designated locations and follow all emergency procedures as outlined in our school safety plan.

- Lockdown:

  In the event of an emergency lockdown, SCA 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, an opt-out form must be submitted within 10 school days after the first day of enrollment. The form is available on SCA's website under Family Resources.

School Telephone Usage

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

Money and Other Valuables

The school will not assume responsibility for money or any lost or stolen items.

Lost and Found

Any article that has been lost and returned may be claimed in the office. Items that are not claimed 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 National School 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.

Scintilla Charter Academy will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision for the 2026-2027 school year. Children need healthy meals to learn. Scintilla Charter Academy offers healthy meals every school day at no charge to your child(ren). By participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) and eliminating the need for meal applications, Scintilla Charter Academy will reduce administrative and printing costs. Families also benefit from the elimination of completing and submitting meal applications. Scintilla Charter Academy is an equal opportunity provider.

Menus are available online at https://scintillacharteracademy.com/breakfast-lunch-menus. 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 Director of School Nutrition is available to scholars and parents for any food-related question, allergy concerns, or menu suggestions.

Outside Food/Drinks During Lunch

Families who are attending lunch with their child are allowed to bring take-out/fast food for their child. However, families are not permitted to bring outside food for other children.

Technology

Personal Electronic Device Use Policy – Grades K–12

Purpose

To foster a safe, focused, and respectful learning environment, this policy which aligns with Georgia House Bill 340 outlines the guidelines for scholars to access and use personal electronic devices (PEDs) on school property during instructional hours.

Policy Statement

Scholars in grades K–12 are not permitted to access or use personal electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, and earbuds, during school hours, except under conditions outlined in this policy. Prohibited uses include communication, messaging, video or audio recording, gaming, social media access, and other functions that may disrupt learning or compromise safety.

- Grades K–8: Use of PEDs is prohibited from arrival to dismissal, including during classroom instruction, hallway transitions, lunch, recess, and restroom visits.
- Grades 9–12: Scholars may use PEDs only during class transitions and lunch. PEDs must remain off and out of sight during instructional time unless specifically authorized for learning purposes.

Violations will result in progressive disciplinary action as outlined below and in the Scintilla Student Code of Conduct.

Definitions

- Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs): Privately owned electronic devices that can send, receive, or display digital content or enable wireless communication.
- Access: Holding, wearing, viewing, or using a PED for any reason, including music, texting, gaming, browsing, or recording.
- School Hours: Defined as the bell-to-bell instructional day for each division (K–5, 6–8, 9–12), including transitions, assemblies, and school-related activities.

Application and Responsibilities

- This policy applies to all scholars on school property or participating in school-related events during instructional hours.
- Scintilla Charter Academy is not liable for the theft, damage, or loss of personal electronic devices on school property, at events, or during transportation.
- School staff may request devices be turned in, collected, or stored during school hours.

Device Storage Guidelines

- Grades K–5: PEDs must remain off and will be locked in the classroom cell phone storage area upon arrival to school and can be retrieved at dismissal of the school day.
- Grades 6–8: PEDs must remain off and will be locked in the classroom cell phone storage area upon arrival to school and can be retrieved at dismissal of the school day.
- Grades 9–12: PEDs must remain off and will be locked in the classroom cell phone storage area upon arrival to class and can be retrieved at dismissal of the class period.

Parent Communication Protocol

Parents needing to contact their child during the school day must call the school's front office. Scholars are not permitted to use PEDs to call, text, or message during school hours.

Special Circumstances

- Field Trips / Athletics / Events / Transportation: PED use will follow guidelines set by supervising staff and/or noted in the event plan.
- Medical or Educational Exceptions: Scholars with IEPs, 504 plans, or documented medical conditions requiring device use will be granted appropriate accommodations.

Progressive Discipline for Violations

- Grades K–5: Administrator discretion based on age and developmental level.
- Grades 6–12: Each offense will serve as a step on the 4–Step Discipline Plan.

Serious Misuse

Any use involving academic dishonesty, bullying/harassment, unauthorized recording, or violations of safety protocols will result in immediate disciplinary action as described in SCA's Code of Conduct, regardless of the scholar's prior history with device use.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

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

Purpose

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

Privilege

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

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 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).***

Scholars who intentionally damage, misuse, or destroy school-issued technology, including Chromebooks, will be assessed a fine to cover repair or replacement costs.

Student Personal Computer Policy

Scholars may not bring or use personal laptops, computers, or Chromebooks at school unless specifically approved in advance by a school administrator.

All school-related technology use must take place on an SCA-issued device. This helps protect student information, maintain network security, ensure appropriate filtering, and provide consistent technical support.

Personal computers may not be connected to the school's wired or wireless network or used to access school systems, assignments, assessments, or student records. Unauthorized personal computers may be collected and returned in accordance with the school's student device and personal property procedures.

Exceptions may be considered for documented instructional or accessibility needs and must be approved in advance by school administration.

Filtering and Monitoring

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

SCA: Scholars will…

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

Health, Medicine and the School Nurse

Medicine Administration

Prescribed medication and/or medical procedures needing to be administered during the school day will 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.

Scholars are not permitted to bring over the counter or prescription medication and/or medication refills to school. All medications must be dropped off with staff by an adult family member in a container with the scholar's name and administration instructions. Any changes to medication administration instructions must be relayed to the school nurse as soon as possible.

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 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.

Fever & Vomiting

Scholars with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will be sent home and may return once they have been fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications for 24 hours. Scholars who are vomiting will be sent home and may return 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting.

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. Scoliosis screenings will be provided for all sixth and eighth grade scholars. Consent forms will be sent home the week prior with the option to opt out.

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, a scholar may go to class. Scholars may be subject to being re-checked for the presence of head lice after returning to school.

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. SCA distributes information on a swimming and water safety course available in our area to families each year through email, family newsletter, paper flyer, the SCA website, and social media.

Uniforms & Dress Code

We strive to encourage unity among our scholars, faculty, and staff. Implementing a uniform dress code at SCA allows us to work towards this effort. Families who are unable to purchase uniforms may contact the front office, and we will arrange assistance to ensure their child has the required uniform. The atmosphere of a school must be conducive to learning, and a scholar's appearance can positively or negatively impact the climate of a school. SCA scholars must adhere to the following dress code requirements:

Lower School

Click here to view SCA's full uniform policy.

At Scintilla Charter Academy, we believe that how our scholars show up each day reflects how they see themselves and the bright future they're preparing for. As part of our commitment to fostering deeper learning, character, and school pride from the earliest grades, we have refined our lower school dress expectations to support a focused and professional learning environment.

Monday–Thursday: Scholars are required to wear an official solid red, black, grey, or white SCA or Spartan polo (girls can also wear embroidered polo dresses or jumpers)

Friday: Spirit wear is encouraged to show your Spartan pride! If spirit wear is not worn, scholars are required to wear an SCA or Spartan polo

Bottoms must be:

- Khaki, denim, red, or black skirts, shorts, skorts, pants, dresses, or jumpers
- No athletic pants or shorts, pajama pants, sweatpants, butterfly skirts, or printed leggings
  Khaki joggers and black/denim jeggings are permitted only if the polo shirt fully covers the buttocks
- Red, black, gray, and white solid color leggings can be worn under skirts, polo dresses, and jumpers

Outerwear guidelines:

- Jackets, sweaters, and hoodies must be SCA-branded, college or university-branded, plain, or have logos no larger than a fist
- No large graphics or full-front/back logos

Lower School 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:

- 1st Occurrence: The teacher will send home a letter from the administration informing the parent/guardian that the student failed to adhere to the dress code and uniform policy.
- 2nd Occurrence: The teacher will send home a letter from the administration and call the parent/guardian to develop a plan for avoidance of noncompliance in the future. The scholar may be required to change into an appropriate uniform if one is available.
- 3rd Occurrence: Parents/Guardians will be contacted for the scholar to be checked out to resolve the dress code violation. This check-out will result in an unexcused absence.

Middle and Upper School

Click here to see an image of dress code do's and dont's.

In our lower school grades, uniforms are a part of our learning environment. As scholars move into middle and upper school, we want to give them more opportunities to express themselves in ways that align with their developing maturity and future aspirations. By introducing new dress guidelines, we're helping scholars build habits that reflect the level of responsibility and professionalism that will serve them well in the years ahead. This shift also helps reduce the over-reliance on athletic wear as everyday clothing, promoting a mindset that school is a place for learning, leadership, and preparation for the future. This shift aligns directly with our mission—to empower each child through creativity, collaboration, inquiry, and critical thinking to achieve their unique potential. When our scholars take pride in how they present themselves, they signal that they are ready to lead, ready to learn, and ready to grow.

What This Looks Like:
Fridays are considered Spartan Days, and all scholars are required to wear SCA-branded gear!
On Monday-Thursday, we want our scholars to show up each day as:

- A proud Spartan, wearing SCA-branded gear
- A college- or career-focused learner, representing future aspirations
- A professional-in-training, developing habits for long-term success

This new standard supports our mission by fostering both individuality and responsibility in a way that builds community, character, and readiness for what lies ahead.

What's Allowed

- SCA-branded shirts, sweatshirts, and outerwear
- Official college or university apparel

- Clothing, including outerwear, that is not SCA or college/university branded may display a small manufacturer or brand logo no larger than approximately the size of a closed fist.
- Polos, button-ups, blouses, dresses, skirts, and plain t-shirts
- Performance athletic wear (e.g., dri-fit joggers and athletic leggings). Leggings may be worn when paired with a top that covers the buttocks.
- Jeans or pants in good condition, worn appropriately at the waist
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses that are an appropriate length for the school environment and allow scholars to participate comfortably in all school activities
- Hooded sweatshirts and jackets may be worn; however, hoods must remain down while inside school buildings.
- Closed-toe or open-toe shoes appropriate for school
- Backpacks that are solid-colored or display the SCA logo, a college or university logo, or a manufacturer's brand logo

What's Not Allowed

- Jeans or pants with holes or rips that expose the skin
- Cotton sweatpants, lounge pants, or pajama-style clothing
- Oversized t-shirts worn to cover shorts
- Biker shorts
- Clothing that is excessively tight, revealing, or otherwise inappropriate for the school environment
- Shirts that reveal the stomach, chest, back, or have straps less than 2 inches wide
- Shirts and tops must fully cover the chest, back, sides, and midriff when a student is standing, sitting, bending, or raising their arms to shoulder height.
- Tops that expose any part of the abdomen, waist, or undergarments are not permitted. This includes crop tops, cut-off shirts, and shirts that are too short or altered to provide appropriate coverage.
- Tank tops or undershirts worn as outerwear
- Decorative backpack graphics, patches, or slogans other than the SCA logo, a college or university logo, or a manufacturer's brand logo
- Clothing, backpacks, or accessories displaying inappropriate, offensive, or disruptive graphics, images, or slogans
- Slippers or bedroom shoes
- Hoods worn inside school buildings
- Hats or caps worn inside school buildings unless approved for a school activity or religious accommodation
- Clothing that is costume-like or intended to draw undue attention is not permitted during the school day.
- Beats or large headphones (small earbuds may be used in the classroom with teacher permission)
- Hairstyles or hair accessories that substantially disrupt the learning environment or create a safety concern

- Tattoos, piercings, or accessories displaying inappropriate, offensive, or disruptive images or messages
- Accessories or apparel that are distracting or costume-like or present a safety concern

All middle and upper school scholars are required to have a red SCA or Spartan polo for special events.

Middle and Upper School 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, they will be required to change either by obtaining a clothing item from the clothing closet or by someone bringing a change of clothes. If available, a uniform will be provided to the scholar which will be returned at the end of the day as well as:

For fieldwork and special events, scholars who do not wear a red SCA or Spartan polo or other required attire will not be allowed to participate.

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

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

Educational Approach

At Scintilla Charter Academy, we believe that learning should be meaningful, rigorous, and deeply engaging. Our K–12 educational model blends standards-based instruction with inquiry-driven learning experiences that foster curiosity, creativity, and character.

All scholars engage daily in core content areas—language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science—as part of a well-rounded academic program. In addition, our scholars benefit from robust elective offerings that include physical education, visual and performing arts, world languages, design, and more. These experiences challenge scholars to think critically, collaborate with peers, and express themselves in new and meaningful ways.

SCA uses the Georgia Standards of Excellence to guide instruction, but our educational approach goes far beyond compliance. We believe that studying fewer topics in greater depth helps scholars develop deeper understanding and long-lasting skills, better preparing them for real-world problem solving. While all grade-level standards are taught, two to three key areas in science and social studies are explored intensively each year, allowing for interdisciplinary learning, inquiry, and authentic application.

Every unit of study integrates reading, writing, research, scientific exploration, and real-world connections. Whether designing solutions, presenting their thinking, or engaging in fieldwork, SCA scholars are empowered to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners. We also place a strong emphasis on social-emotional development and arts integration, ensuring every child is known, seen, and supported.

Elective Opportunities

SCA provides a dynamic rotation of elective classes that extend and enrich the core curriculum. In grades K–5, scholars rotate weekly through five elective classes, which may include:

- Physical Education
- Visual Arts
- Maker & Design
- Music & Theatre
- Health and Wellness

Elective teachers work collaboratively with classroom educators to design cross-curricular units that deepen understanding and connect learning across disciplines. In addition, scholars receive technology integration support that enhances classroom learning, digital citizenship, and project-based work.

At the middle and upper grades, scholars have increased choice in electives that support both personal interests and college/career readiness. These offerings continue to emphasize creativity, collaboration, and exploration beyond the traditional classroom.

SCA Grading Philosophy

SCA uses a standards-based grading practices to reflect what scholars know and can do. Scholars are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery, and feedback is focused on progress toward learning goals.

Grading Principles

1. Grades reflect clearly defined learning goals and standards.
    - Every academic grade is anchored in specific learning expectations aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence, applicable course standards, and IB frameworks.

2. Assessment evidence must be valid.
    - Scholars are assessed on the knowledge and skills they have been taught. Assessments should clearly measure the intended learning standards and should not include surprises or trick questions.

3. Academic grades reflect academic performance.
    - Academic grades are based on demonstrated knowledge and skills. Nonacademic factors, such as handwriting, behavior, participation, or whether a scholar writes a name on an assignment, are addressed separately unless they are directly connected to the standard being assessed.

4. Learning comes before grading.
    - Scholars should have opportunities to practice, receive feedback, and revise their understanding before being evaluated for mastery. Practice is part of the learning process and should not carry the same weight as evidence collected after instruction and feedback.

5. Achievement is reported separately from habits and character.
    - Academic achievement is reported separately from work habits, behavior, participation, responsibility, and other learner dispositions.

Habits of Character and the Spartan 10 are assessed and reported separately to provide families with a more complete picture of each scholar's academic, personal, and character development.

Promotion/Retention Policy

The following criteria will be utilized to determine promotion/retention for each scholar. If retention is determined to be a possibility, a Possible Retention Alert Meeting will be held. Following a Possible Retention Alert Meeting, if retention continues to be strongly considered, a Promotion/Retention Team will be convened. The Promotion/Retention Team will consist of the parent/guardian, the scholar's teacher(s), Dean of School, and Director of Scholar Supports. The team will utilize the school's Promotion/Retention Rubric, along with all relevant academic, attendance, intervention, behavioral, and developmental data, to make a recommendation regarding promotion or retention. If the committee's decision is not unanimous, the decision will be made by the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. If the decision is made to place a scholar in the next grade, the decision should be based solely on the team's consideration that

given appropriate interventions (and the implementation of a plan) the scholar should master the next grade-level standards by the end of the following year.

Lower School

Promotion Criteria:

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

Additional information considered as applicable:

- Benchmark Assessments
- GMAS scores for 3rd Grade (ELA) and 5th grade (ELA and Math)
- Attendance
- Age, grade, current placement

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

Middle School

Promotion/Retention Criteria:

- Scholars 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).
- 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

Additional information considered as applicable:

- Benchmark Assessments
- GMAS scores for 8th grade (ELA and Math)
- Age, grade, current placement
- In some instances, promotion may require scholars to participate in summer reassessments and/or to enroll in a summer school program and provide Scintilla Charter Academy with proof of completion.

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

Upper School

Promotion/Retention Grades 9-12

- Scholars 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 10th 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)

Grading Reports

Four times a year, at the end of each nine weeks, scholars and families in all grades will receive a report card. The end-of-term report provides academic and related information on a scholar so that support and attention may be enhanced, maintained, or altered to help the scholar achieve maximum growth and learning. Families may also view grades in Infinite Campus.

Graduation Requirements

Subject/Content	SCA Diploma	SCA Diploma with Distinction
English/Language Arts · Literature I · Literature II *EOC · 3rd ELA Credit · 4th ELA Credit	4 units	4 units
Mathematics · Algebra *EOC · Geometry · Advanced Algebra · Advanced Level Math	4 units	4 units
Science · Biology *EOC · Chemistry · Physical Science or Physics · 4th Science Credit	4 units	4 units
Social Studies · 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

Weighted Grades Policy

In order to recognize the rigor of advanced coursework, Scintilla Charter Academy applies additional quality points to final course averages for Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses (when available).

- Honors Courses: Five (5) points will be added to the final course average.
- Dual Enrollment (DE), Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Courses: Ten (10) points will be added to the final course average.

These additional points are applied after the final numeric grade is earned and are included in the calculation of the student's grade point average (GPA). This weighting ensures that scholars who pursue more rigorous courses of study are appropriately recognized for their efforts and achievement.

State-mandated Scholar Assessments

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

Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS)

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

Georgia Milestones

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

GAA

Georgia Alternative Assessment is for scholars with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose IEP team determines they cannot meaningfully participate in the Georgia Milestones Assessment, even with accommodations. The GAA 2.0 measures achievement on Georgia's Extended Content Standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

ACCESS

ACCESS for ELLs (Grades K–12): An annual English language proficiency assessment for English Learners (ELs) that measures listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to monitor progress in learning English and guide ESOL instruction.
Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs: A one-on-one, paper-based English language proficiency assessment designed specifically for kindergarten English Learners. It uses an interactive, age-appropriate format to measure listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs: An annual, individually administered English language proficiency assessment for English Learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities who qualify through their IEP team and participate in Georgia's alternate assessment program.

Academic Parent and Family Conferences

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

Work Completed Outside of School

Homework may be assigned at the teacher's discretion. Scholars are expected to complete assignments responsibly and meet the deadlines established by their teacher or teachers.

SCA believes scholars should become increasingly independent and responsible for directing their own learning. Homework should have a clear purpose and should reinforce, practice, extend, or apply knowledge and skills that have already been introduced through instruction.

Homework should not be assigned simply for compliance or as busywork. When assigned, it should be meaningful, developmentally appropriate, and connected to identified learning goals. Teachers may provide additional practice or enrichment when it supports an individual scholar's learning needs.

Work completed outside of school will not make up a significant portion of a scholar's academic grade. Academic grades should primarily reflect evidence of learning demonstrated in a supervised school setting, where teachers can provide support and verify each scholar's independent understanding. This helps ensure that grades are equitable and accurately represent what the scholar knows and can do, regardless of differences in family schedules, resources, technology access, or assistance available at home.

Scholars enrolled in Advanced Content, high school, dual enrollment, or IB courses may have additional assignments, independent work, reading, research, or long-term responsibilities consistent with the expectations of those courses.

SCA also recognizes that meaningful learning extends beyond traditional homework. Families are encouraged to support reading for enjoyment, curiosity, creativity, problem-solving, service, exploration, and authentic experiences that help scholars connect classroom learning to their interests, communities, and the world around them.

Textbooks, Technology, and Supplies

Books, technology, and supplies are loaned to scholars for use during the school year. Scholars are responsible for exercising appropriate care when using SCA materials. Parents and scholars must acknowledge the Technology Acceptable Use Policy before school-issued technology may be used.

Upper School scholars are expected to take their assigned Chromebook home each night. Each scholar will also be issued a charger and is responsible for bringing both the Chromebook and charger to school each day. Chromebooks should be fully charged overnight and ready for instructional use at the beginning of the school day.

Scholars are required to return all books, technology, chargers, and other school-issued supplies at the conclusion of the course or school year, or upon withdrawal from SCA. Scholars may be charged for lost or damaged books, technology, chargers, and supplies. Replacement items may not be issued until applicable charges have been addressed.

Recess

SCA believes that unstructured break time is vital to children's development and academic success. Each grade level's schedule includes 25 – 45 minutes of daily recess times with a morning and afternoon recess in grades K–4 and one recess in grade 5. Middle school scholars participate in a daily 15-minute outdoor break. All staff members are provided directions concerning the responsibility for the supervision of scholars and the safety of our scholars is a priority at all times.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork and experiences outside of the school are an important part of the curriculum and are encouraged. Families will complete a fieldwork permission form at the beginning of the school year which will apply to all fieldwork during the day. Families can opt out of their child participating. When children travel, they are given a new perspective on the world around them. So much happens on fieldwork opportunities: the learning is social, emotional, and academic. Projects become more exciting to young scholars when experiences are provided beyond the classroom. Examples of SCA fieldwork might include, but not be limited to things like: Georgia ecosystems, government facilities, historical landmarks, art museums, and scientific and agricultural exhibitions. Experiences provided through fieldwork will support driving learning expeditions.

Ample notice will be provided to parents prior to school/class/grade-level fieldwork opportunities. A permission slip signed at the beginning of the school year will cover all fieldwork opportunities. Some fieldwork opportunities may include a small fee for participation. However, SCA will not deny any child the opportunity to attend a field trip due to financial limitations. Please contact the school or your child's teacher for more information. Parents and families are encouraged to attend but will be required to drive separately due to limited seating with bus transportation.

Scholars may only attend fieldwork if they are good standing in the classroom. Scholars with three or more behavior referrals may be prohibited or asked to be accompanied by a guardian on a fieldwork experience due to behavior or discipline issues. Scholars Fieldwork experiences are non-refundable.

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 and upper grade levels and are held increasingly accountable for choices, teachers will support scholars in setting reasonable goals for extracurricular/sports participation within the advising block. Grade-band Deans reserve 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 Academy scholars. Further information pertaining to sports programming and participation is accessible via the SCA Athletic Handbook.

Student Support Services

Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)

Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a data-driven, multi-level prevention system designed to meet the needs of the whole child by implementing a continuum of tiered supports. GaMTSS is grounded in the belief that academics, behavior, and well-being are interconnected and impact student success. By integrating academics, behavior, and well-being data, systems, and practices, teams can align efforts to address barriers to learning and improve outcomes.

Early Intervention Program (EIP)

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

Remedial Education Program (REP)

The Remedial Education Program provides a structure for additional instruction and evidence-based interventions to ensure scholars meet grade level expectations at the middle and high school levels. Guidelines within this document have been created to aid district and school personnel responsible for supporting the scholars in grades six through twelve who are identified as needing additional assistance through REP.

Special Education Services

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

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

English Learners (EL)

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

Gifted & Talented Program

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

Family Engagement

Parental Contact Information

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

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

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

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

Communication Chain of Command

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

1. **The Teacher:** Parents should schedule a meeting with the teacher by calling the school or sending an email directly to the teacher. Except in emergency circumstances or situations involving imminent danger, parents shall not confront a teacher about an issue with any scholar present. If the teacher and parent agree that it is in the best interest of the scholar to have a discussion in the presence of the scholar, they may do so.
2. **The Dean of Elementary (PK–5) Grades, or The Dean of Middle and Upper (6–12)** If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher, then they should reach out to the appropriate Dean.
3. **Superintendent**: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the Dean, then they should reach out to the Superintendent.
4. **The Governing Board:** If the grievance cannot be resolved after talking with the teacher or the appropriate party, then a parent must submit his/her grievance in writing to the chair of the board.

Parental concerns and grievances may also be raised during the community comments portion of the Board of Directors meeting. The concern or grievance must be submitted in writing, and no more than two minutes will be granted. It is recommended that the concern or grievance be addressed in one of the aforementioned steps before using this option.

Contacting Scholars

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

SCA Volunteer Program

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

Communication Folders: Lower School

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

Behavior Expectations/Code of Conduct

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

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

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

Habits of Character

Perseverance

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

Responsibility

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

Respect

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

Service

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

Scintilla Standards

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

Scintilla Standards:

1. Follow directions and do the right thing the first time. When you do something well, remember to not ask for a reward.
2. When speaking to someone, make eye contact and be a good listener. When someone introduces you to a new person, make sure to shake their hand and say "Nice to meet you."
3. Respect others' opinions, ideas, and suggestions. It's always polite to respond respectfully when someone is speaking to you.
4. In the hallway always remember to use gallery hands and gallery voices. Use your best manners and audience etiquette at Spartan Circle and any other assembly.
5. It is NEVER okay to meanly tease anyone or purposely leave someone out.
6. Show good sportsmanship on and off the field.
7. Everyone makes mistakes!! When you do, use them as an opportunity to learn and make better choices next time.
8. Always do your best! Set goals and work your hardest on tasks until they are complete.
9. Take care of our campus. In the restroom, wash your hands, and remember to throw away your trash. If you see trash somewhere, pick it up even if it is not yours. Make sure to always clean up after yourself no matter where you are.
10. Own your attitudes and actions across all situations regardless of the attitudes and actions of others.
11. It's always polite to hold the door open for someone close behind you.
12. Work to contribute to our school and community in a positive way.

Crew

Each morning, scholars in grades K–5 will start their day in their homeroom with a crew meeting. Crew meetings will be held daily for Middle School and weekly for Upper school. The purpose of this time is to build community. Elements of crew meetings include news and announcements, preparing for successful learning, and focusing on high expectations, Scintilla Standards and Habits of Character.

Spartan Circle/Spartan Showcase

Spartan Circle and Spartan Showcase are opportunities for the entire SCA school family to come together. Grade levels rotate in leading our weekly Spartan Circle. SCA families are always welcome to attend Spartan Circle.

Learning Environment

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

Teacher/Staff Responsibilities

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

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

Student Code of Conduct
REVISED JULY 2026

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 in 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 the 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
- Confiscation of a cell phone
- 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 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 in 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; or actions of a scholar against another scholar, adult, or SCA property that do not seriously endanger the health, safety, or well-being of others but do 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 any SCA teacher/staff member
- 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
- Visiting unauthorized locations (including 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 a 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 the consequences administered
- The fourth failure to comply with the uniform policy
- Second infraction involving academic dishonesty
- 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 scholar toward an SCA teacher/staff member or another scholar regarding 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 or any SCA school personnel.
    - Making sexual remarks or unwelcome advances towards other scholars, staff, or faculty; asking for sexual favors explicitly, via social media, or in an 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 in an aggressive manner
- Hitting another scholar 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
- Recording a video in a bathroom/locker room that involves others

- Videoing/taking pictures of any kind of illicit activities on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Videoing/taking pictures of any individual on school property or at a school-sponsored event and posting on any social media platform that negatively impacts scholars or staff
- Visiting any site that includes pornography, profane music and/or lyrics, indecent pictures of individuals, or 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 SCA teachers/staff members or 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 characteristics, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.
- Being in possession of any type of cigarette or vaping device (nicotine or CBD), lighter, matches, or rolling papers, on campus or at a school-sponsored event
- 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'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
- Making aggressive and/or intimidating 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 must complete the initial and ongoing Tribunal training course that meets the requirements of the SBOE rule before serving in such capacity.

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

- Repeated violations of Tier II or III behaviors
- 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 threat of violence to other scholars or staff of SCA as well as to any individual on the SCA campus
- Fighting/shoving/pushing an SCA faculty/staff member in an aggressive manner
- Hitting an SCA faculty/staff member in an aggressive manner
- Battery with severe injury
- Three or more fights in the same year

- 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. For this offense, the
- Sexual harassment in any form toward a scholar or 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 on a 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 THC (including but not limited to vaping devices, edibles, etc.), any controlled substance, any medication not prescribed to the taker, or any dangerous drug while on campus or at any school-sponsored event.
- Multiple Offenses of being in possession of any type of cigarette or vaping device (nicotine or CBD), lighter, matches, or rolling papers, on campus or at a school-sponsored event
- 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 being under the influence of alcohol prior to attending school or while at school; possessing, using, or being 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: 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 contact/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.

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.
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 SCA's governing board.
- 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.

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:

- For Middle School dances, only SCA scholars are permitted to attend. Scholars from other schools are not permitted to attend.
- For Upper School dances, SCA scholars are allowed to invite students from other schools. SCA scholars will be required to submit a form for approval to invite a student who does not attend SCA.
- 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 without approval. 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 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

Family Code of Conduct

Purpose and Scope

At Scintilla Charter Academy, we believe strong partnerships between families and educators are essential to creating a safe, joyful, and engaging learning environment. This Family Code of Conduct is intended to establish shared expectations that promote mutual respect, effective communication, and a collaborative approach to supporting every scholar's success.

This Code of Conduct applies to all guardians, family members, volunteers, and visitors while on school property, attending school-sponsored events, participating in virtual meetings, or interacting with school employees and scholars through any form of communication.

General Expectations

Members of the SCA community are expected to uphold the following principles:

- Teachers, administrators, and parents/guardians share a common goal: ensuring all scholars learn and thrive in a safe environment.
- Every scholar deserves a safe, positive, and joyful learning experience.
- Families and school personnel must work together in the best interest of all scholars.
- All members of the school community deserve to be treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect.
- Concerns should be addressed through established channels to allow the school an opportunity to resolve issues fairly, appropriately, and effectively.
- Families are expected to support school policies, procedures, and expectations designed to ensure the safety and success of all scholars.

Communication Expectations

Scintilla Charter Academy is committed to timely and responsive communication. School staff and administrators may not always be immediately available due to instructional and supervisory responsibilities.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule appointments when meeting with staff or administrators.
- Staff and administrators strive to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours during normal business days.
- Families are expected to communicate in a respectful and constructive manner.
- Concerns should follow the school's chain of communication:
    1. Teacher
    2. Dean of School
    3. Assistant Superintendent

4. Superintendent
5. Governing Board (for matters within the Board's authority)

Prohibited Behaviors

To maintain a safe and productive learning environment, the following behaviors are prohibited:

- Disrespectful, abusive, threatening, profane, harassing, or intimidating conduct or communication, whether in person, by phone, email, text, social media, or any other means.
- Disruptive behavior that interferes with school operations, including classrooms, conferences, offices, school grounds, sporting events, parking lots, or carline procedures.
- Threatening or attempting to cause bodily harm to any scholar, employee, parent/guardian, or visitor.
- Threatening or damaging school property or the property of others.
- Failure to comply with visitor procedures, including check-in requirements and directives from school personnel.
- Recording or photographing staff or scholars in violation of school policy or applicable law.
- Excessive, repetitive, or unreasonable communication after a concern has been reviewed and addressed through established procedures.
- Repeated requests for meetings without prior notice or at unreasonable times.
- Interference with school operations, personnel decisions, or disciplinary matters involving other scholars.
- Sharing confidential or personally identifiable information regarding scholars or staff.
- Using social media or other public platforms in a manner that is threatening, defamatory, harassing, or that substantially disrupts school operations.
- Encouraging or participating in behavior intended to intimidate, harass, or disrupt the school community.
- Providing inappropriate gifts or incentives to employees or scholars.

Consequences

Depending upon the severity of the incident, parents/guardians or visitors may be asked to leave campus, prohibited from attending school-sponsored events, or otherwise restricted from campus in accordance with applicable law, including Georgia's criminal trespass statutes.

Whenever appropriate and feasible, the school will provide a verbal or written warning and an opportunity to correct the behavior prior to imposing restrictions. Failure to comply with such directives may result in additional restrictions or a formal campus ban.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent a parent/guardian from collaborating with the school to meet their child's educational needs, including participation in required meetings such as IEP, Section 504, or other legally mandated conferences.

Family Partnership Commitment

Scintilla Charter Academy does not operate an In-School Suspension (ISS) program or alternative school placement. As outlined in the SCA Student Code of Conduct, if a scholar's behavior significantly impacts the safety or learning of others, a parent/guardian may be required to participate in a conference or pick up their child from school.

By signing this Family Code of Conduct, parents/guardians acknowledge and agree to partner with Scintilla Charter Academy in supporting their child's success. If a parent/guardian repeatedly refuses to communicate with school personnel or declines to fulfill responsibilities related to their child's conduct, the scholar may not return to school until the parent/guardian has participated in the required conference or meeting. Any absences resulting from such circumstances will be considered unexcused in accordance with school policy.

Together, we can ensure that every scholar at Scintilla Charter Academy is known, valued, challenged, and supported.

*Scintilla Charter Academy recognizes that many of our scholars participate in Parks and Recreation sports and other community activities outside of school. Although these events are not school-sponsored, our scholars are often recognized as members of the Scintilla family. We ask that parents and family members conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of Scintilla Charter Academy by demonstrating respect, integrity, good sportsmanship, and courtesy toward officials, coaches, players, and spectators. Adults set the example for our scholars, and positive, respectful behavior helps foster an environment in which all children can learn, compete, and grow.

Notification of Student Rights

RIGHT TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

Date: August 5, 2026

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students 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, Amanda Miller at 229-244-5750.

Sincerely,

Amanda Miller
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:

Amanda Miller
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 11.

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.

Scintilla Charter Academy
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 nondisabled 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 Middle and Upper School
Stacie Haire
2171 E. Park Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31602
229-244-5750

shaire@scintillacharteracademy.com

Section 504 Coordinator Lower School
Eveny Walker
2171 E. Park Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31602
229-244-5750
evenywalker@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 students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

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

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the 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 students 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 25th, 2026. 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
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary 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
6. 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 students have certain educational rights and can:

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

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

Amanda Miller, SCA Homeless Liaison

Staci Haire, SCA Counselor – Homeless Support
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 that it operates, and 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.

The purpose of this grievance process is to address formal complaints of sexual harassment. The process shall be triggered upon receipt of a formal complaint by the Title IX Coordinator.

Any School employee with actual knowledge of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment in an education program or activity as defined in the Policy, must report the sex discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator. Failure to report may result in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including termination.

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment as defined by this Policy, (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), to the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, by telephone, by electronic mail, or through other means specified by the School. Reports may be made at any time, including during non-business hours.

Complainants and Respondents shall be treated equitably throughout the process. All evidence, both inculpatory and exculpatory, shall be evaluated objectively. An individual's status as a Respondent will not be considered a negative factor during consideration of the grievance. Respondents are entitled to, and will receive the benefit of, a presumption that they are not responsible for the alleged conduct until the grievance process concludes and a determination regarding responsibility is issued. Similarly, credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.

The presumption shall be that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process. No disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures shall be imposed against a Respondent prior to the completion of the grievance process. Upon determination of responsibility for sexual harassment by a Respondent, the Complainant shall be provided remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity. Such remedies may include the same individualized services as "supportive measures"; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the Respondent.

Retaliation against anyone for participation in this process is strictly prohibited.

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

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 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.

Melissa Carter, Title IX Coordinator
2171 East Park Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31602
Phone: 229.244.5750
Fax: 229.333.0283
mcarter@scintillacharteracademy.com

Reporting Acts of Alleged Sexual Abuse or Misconduct

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

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.

Any teacher, counselor, volunteer or administrator receiving a report of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct of student by a teacher, administrator, or other employee shall make an oral report of the incident immediately by telephone or otherwise to the Superintendent, 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 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.

The Superintendent, 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, 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.