



2023-2024

## Student and Family Handbook

To request assistance in translating this handbook in Hmong or Spanish translation please call 651-225-9177. Other language translation is available on request.

Yog koj tsis to taub daim ntawv no, thov hu rau ntawm 651-225- 9177

Si usted necesita asistencia para este mensaje por favor llame 651-225-9177

## MISSION

St. Paul City School is a supportive community where students thrive academically and socially in a small, empowering environment.

## VISION

SPCS builds a community where families are supported and students are academically, socially, and personally prepared for life both inside and outside of school.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

**St. Paul City School**

215 University Avenue West, Saint Paul, MN 55103

651-225-9177

[www.stpaulcityschool.org](http://www.stpaulcityschool.org)

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# PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Authorizer

Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) is the Charter School Authorizer for St. Paul City School (SPCS). Innovative Quality Schools is the Charter School Authorizer for St. Paul City School (SPCS). IQS is a leader in authorizing innovative Minnesota charter schools, both in Minneapolis/St. Paul and greater Minnesota. They have been authorizing schools since 2010, and today authorize over twenty charter schools. The sole mission of Innovative Quality is to authorize charter schools that are innovative and successful in preparing students to achieve their full potential.

### **IQS VALUES:**

- Focus on Innovation: take risks to try creative new things, challenge old processes, and continuously adapt.
- Avoid Insularity: Learn from, and be sensitive to, ideas and proposals that challenge our comfort zones.
- Commit to Collaboration: Be interdependent, have and open flow of ideas, listen to others and value differences.
- Embrace Diversity: Seek diversity in Board membership and sponsored schools.
- Instill Clarity and Transparency: Follow fair and rigorous procedures resulting in the authorization of high quality schools focused on innovation and student achievement.
- Transform for Educational Excellence: Work to ensure human and financial resources are available to carry out our authorizing responsibilities at the highest level of excellence.

## Board Governance

As a public charter school as part of independent school district number 4029, SPCS is committed to high quality board governance. Community members, parents, and teachers are publicly elected and serve as board members who meet monthly to make informed decisions that greatly impact the school. The Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of the month at 5:30PM. Parents and community members are welcome and encouraged to attend board meetings.

## Founders & History

St. Paul City School was founded as New Spirit School in 1998 by Mike Ricci with the goal of providing a high-quality, neighborhood school for the children of the Frogtown neighborhood. In 2010, New Spirit changed its name to St. Paul City School to better reflect our purpose in the broader community. St. Paul City School has become a pillar in the neighborhood for over two decades as a result of the vision to provide something better to our community.

River's Edge Academy was founded in 2009 by two public school educators, Ken Hanson and Dawn Clawson, who envisioned using the natural environment to engage students in work that was hands-on in a small learning community. Their vision and commitment to student learning is what has made REA a reality for hundreds of students over the years.

In 2019, River's Edge Academy merged with St. Paul City School in order to expand both school communities and serve students and families in one district from preschool through high school.



# SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

St. Paul City School embraces multiple innovations that define our school philosophy. Each innovation compliments the curricular program and contributes to the mission and culture of our school.

## Trauma-Informed Practices

The staff at SPCS is fully trained in Trauma-Informed practices. Our model begins with mindset. SPCS has a shared commitment to seeking the *why* behind a student challenge and providing relationship and support instead of punishment and shame. SPCS always seeks to avoid pushing students out and instead pulls them in. Our trauma-informed model embraces several practices that allow us to engage trauma with efficacy. Firstly, SPCS embraces restorative practices as a tool for community building and repairing harm. Secondly, SPCS embraces a Restore Room approach to responding to student behavioral challenges. This coaching and support approach replaces punitive office referrals. Thirdly, SPCS implements the ALIVE Program, also known as Miss Kendra's List. This trauma-informed SEL curriculum provides students a safe space to bring their worries.

## Restorative Practices

SPCS embraces Restorative Practices (RP) as a positive way to support students socially and behaviorally. RP recognizes that individual relationships are important and that there are effective ways of restoring a student that commits harm back into the culture of the classroom without always having to resort to exclusionary discipline. Teachers are trained on how to incorporate restorative practices and community-building exercises into their classroom each day. RP also allows us to put our trauma-informed lens into action; SPCS embraces RP as a research- and evidence-based approach to supporting students that have experienced trauma.

## Community-Based School

St. Paul City School believes in supporting our students throughout their whole day. Our goal is for our students to have 8 engaging hours within school and 16 supported hours outside school every day. With this emphasis on the student both inside and outside of school, SPCS aims to bring about a transformation in the way teaching and learning occurs while fostering resilience, curiosity, tenacity, self-discipline, and compassion in our students. SPCS employs full-time social workers and family liaisons. SPCS also has a deep partnership with the St. Paul Promise Neighborhood. In addition to the above-listed investments, SPCS employs a Director of Community Services and Full Service Community School Coordinator allowing us to support wrap-around services for our families. These investments allow us to support wrap-around services for our families.

## Experiential Learning

The SPCS academic program is designed specifically to support holistic student growth both inside the classroom and out in the community. SPCS works to provide all students with an opportunity to engage in relevant learning experiences through hands-on learning, fieldwork (field trips), Intensives, expeditions, and more. SPCS's academic and character development philosophy are rooted in community-based experiential learning. Fieldwork is purposeful academic and experiential learning that connects students to the world. Students are engaged in experiential learning in the natural and social environments in the surrounding neighborhood and city. SPCS provides hands-on learning that gives each student the opportunity to develop character values in a 'real life' way. SPCS believe these experiences maximize students' motivation to learn. Fieldwork immerses students in investigations and builds both curiosity and background knowledge.

## Professional Development

All staff at SPCS participate in weekly professional development. This regular, site- or district-wide training ensures that we are accomplishing our vision and mission; it also ensures that students' needs are met in and across disciplines, as well as inside and outside of the classroom.

## Circle

Circle is an integral part of building community and teaching character at SPCS. Circles are an interactive and engaging part of the day that allows students to share and develop as a community of scholars. Every school day students meet in a circle to begin the day. Some days this is a small group meeting with their Crew and some days it is an all school circle meeting. This meeting includes a reading, announcements and an initiative (activity designed to build community). Circle gives students the opportunity to learn to be leaders and provides a consistent touch point to the community each school day.

Attendance and participation in Circle is a part of being a student at SPCS. Student engagement and participation in Circle is expected and included in a part of the assessment of student learning and growth.

## School Values

The middle and high school are committed to challenging students to discover their greatness by learning through experience in a small, supportive community. One way that SPCS does that in the classroom and community is by helping students learn about core values. Students at all levels help to define what these values mean in action and hold each other accountable in Crew and the classroom.

- Honor
- Empathy
- Perseverance
- Exploration
- Honesty

# STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## Respect for Community Members

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>All students, staff, families, and community members associated with SPCS have the right to give and receive respect and decent treatment of others as an important part of living in a supportive and non-violent community.</p>	<p>Students, staff, families, and community are responsible for treating all community members as well as those visiting with respect.</p> <p>All school policies are in effect from the time a student leaves home in the morning until the student arrives home after school. Students participating in or attending any school function at any time, on or off campus, will be required to maintain these behaviors.</p>

## Safety and Security

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>All students, staff, family, and community members associated with SPCS have the right to be safe and secure during school hours, while at school, and during school sponsored events.</p>	<p>Students, staff, family, and community are responsible for promoting a safe and secure school environment. All suspicious or unsafe activity will be immediately reported to the administration. Students will be held accountable to any violation of these rights and responsibilities.</p>

## Non-Discrimination

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>

<p>SPCS Board of Directors will comply with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination to the end that no person protected by such law shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any educational program; or in employment or recruitment, consideration, or selection, thereof, whether full time or part-time, under any education program or activity operated by the district for which it received federal financial assistance.</p>	<p>Students, staff, family, and community are responsible for reporting any violation of the district's non-discrimination policy. Any student who feels they have been discriminated against may file a grievance with a staff member.</p>
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## Respect for Cultural Diversity

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>All students, staff, family, and community members associated with SPCS are offered a school community that includes people from a variety of backgrounds. That opportunity extends to matters of language, race, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, disabilities and other cultural traditions.</p>	<p>St. Paul City School is committed to being actively anti-racist and anti-discriminatory in all ways. Students, staff, family, and community are expected to offer the same respect they would ask from others. This includes accepting others, demonstrating kindness and consideration for everyone's ideas and feelings, and acting in ways that promote a safe and positive environment for all.</p>

## Attendance

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>Students have the right for a free public education according to state and federal law. It is the student's right to be in school.</p>	<p>Students are responsible for attending all assigned classes every day that school is in session and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class. Finally, it is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.</p> <p>Families are responsible for ensuring their student is attending school, to inform the school in the event of a</p>

<p>student absence, and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise.</p>
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## Student Records

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>SPCS respects the Minnesota Department of Education policies regarding right to school records.</p> <p>Students and families have the right under federal law to generally view their school records according to state and federal laws.</p>	<p>SPCS is responsible for respecting the privacy of school records and will comply with all state policies regarding the storage and access to school records.</p> <p>Students and families are responsible for following established procedures regarding access to school records.</p>

## Bullying

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>Students have the right to a respectful community, free from bullying. Bullying is any willful act done by a student, whether individually or with others, in person or electronically, to another student for the purpose of subjecting the other student to humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threats of abuse, social or other ostracism, shame, or disgrace.</p>	<p>Students, families and staff are responsible for conducting themselves, in person and electronically, with behavior that does not initiate, contribute to or promote bullying or cyber-bullying. Students and staff are responsible for reporting any form of bullying to the Executive Director. This is a serious offense and students will be held accountable to any violation of these rights and responsibilities.</p>

## Sexual and Other Harassment

<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<p>All students, staff, families, and community members associated with SPCS have the right to a learning environment that that is free from sexual, racial, religious and other harassment and violence.</p> <p>Students, families and staff have the right to a community safe from inappropriate physical contact.</p>	<p>Students are responsible for using language and behavior that does not ridicule or criticize anyone because of his or her gender or sexual orientation. This includes suggestive, rude, or offensive sexual words, gestures, or actions. Sexual harassment is a serious offense and students will be held accountable to any violation of these rights and responsibilities. It may also be grounds for legal action.</p>

# RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

SPCS is committed to providing tools and resources for students to learn how to handle difficult situations through restorative practices. This model is an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge in order to be an upstanding and responsible citizen. SPCS does not adhere to any type of blanket discipline or zero tolerance policy.

When harm is committed, students will be held accountable for their actions on a case-by-case basis, acknowledging both the immediate and external factors at play. This model is used for any and all behavior issues that arise inside and outside of the classroom during school hours, on transportation to and from school, or at SPCS functions. In the event of a more significant incident, students will be referred to the Dean of Students and/or administration to facilitate a more thorough restorative response, which may result in consequences such as an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Following a more significant incident and response, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student(s) involved will be notified by a staff member.

## Restorative Responses

Restorative Chats and VOMPs enable students to take ownership for their actions rather than assuming punitive action. The student who caused harm is given the opportunity to participate in a restorative process as a means of making things right for the student who was harmed and/or the school community. Staff make every effort to redirect students within the classroom using restorative practices when they are off task. If a behavior cannot be managed in the classroom, a staff member may send the student to the school's Restore Room to facilitate a Restorative Chat/VOMP.

Students who are asked to leave class twice in one day to visit the Restore Room or to VOMP, may either receive an In-School Suspension or an Out-of-School Suspension, as determined by administration. Students with a pattern of behavior resulting in multiple restorative chats/VOMPs may be placed on a behavior contract or be referred for other intervention and support.

### **RESTORATIVE CHAT (PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL)**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

### **VOMP (HIGH SCHOOL)**

- **V**erbalize: What happened? How did you feel? Include all details of the event and why it is a concern.
- **O**wnership: What do you need to take ownership for in the situation? Include the value you need to better demonstrate.

- **“M”-pathy:** How were others affected by your choices? Include peers, staff, and family.
- **Plan:** How will you keep this from happening again and move forward in a positive way? Include support you need from others, and what school expectations and values you need to display in a two step plan.

## Profanity

SPCS acknowledges that students might use profane language when feeling angry or frustrated. However, profane language is generally not an appropriate way of dealing with challenges in school. Those who use profanity may be asked to complete a restorative chat/VOMP and process better ways of responding.

## Smoking

SPCS is a smoke free environment. Smoking and tobacco use are not permitted anywhere on school property, on school transportation to and from school, during fieldwork or field trips, expeditions, or school sponsored activities on campus or away from school. Students who violate this policy will be subject to accountability measures or disciplinary action, and in some circumstances even legal action.

## Bullying

Students have the right to a respectful community, free from bullying. Bullying is any willful act done by a student, whether individually or with others, in person or electronically, to another student for the purpose of subjecting the other student to humiliation, intimidation, physical abuse or threats of abuse, social or other ostracism, shame, or disgrace.

Students, families and staff are responsible for conducting themselves, in person and electronically, with behavior that does not initiate, contribute to or promote bullying or cyber-bullying. Students and staff are responsible for reporting any form of bullying to the administration. Bullying causes serious harm that may be long-lasting and the school will respond with appropriate accountability, support, and even disciplinary actions to ensure that the harm stops and all members of the community feel safe.

Sexual harassment or other harassment based on race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language, or academic achievement, of or by any student is prohibited.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Other harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal or physical



conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. Derogatory conduct or communication as a way to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict harassment of any kind as defined herein shall be a violation of this policy and will result in disciplinary action.

In carrying out the Sexual and Other Harassment Policy, SPCS recognizes that sexual, racial, and religious harassment are subject to School District Equal Educational Opportunity policies and applicable state and federal laws. Sexual, racial and religious violence is criminal activity subject to civil penalties under Minnesota Statutes 609.341. SPCS will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual, racial, religious harassment violence, and take appropriate action against any person who is found to have violated this policy.

## Gang Association or Activity Policy

For the purposes of disciplinary action, a gang shall be defined as a group of three or more people, who have a name, claim a territory, have recognized rivals/enemies, interact together to the exclusion of others and exhibit behavior often associated with crime or a threat to the community. Students who engage with gang behavior, wear gang apparel, and/or use language that initiates, advocates, or promotes gang activities or that threaten the safety or well being of others will be subject to accountability measures and/or disciplinary action.

## Possession of Drugs, Alcohol, or Other Controlled Substances Policy

Students are not permitted to use or possess alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or narcotics on school property or at school-sponsored events. Students are also prohibited from selling or possessing counterfeit drugs on school property or at school-sponsored events. Students who are involved in this illegal activity in any way on school property or at school-sponsored events, will be referred to the Executive Director for suspension. Such items are against the law and will be confiscated by school authorities. Students found in violation of these laws will be subject to accountability measures and disciplinary action.

## Weapons Policy

As a public school, it is against the law to carry a weapon of any kind on school property. Students and visitors shall not possess or use firearms, weapons, or any other instruments capable of harming a person or property. A weapon means any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury. Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, chains, knives, clubs, brass knuckles, or any other items that, when used as a weapon, can result in bodily harm or property damage.

This policy is not meant to interfere with instruction or the use of appropriate equipment and tools by students. Such equipment when properly possessed, used and stored, shall not be considered in violation of the rule against the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students.

Carrying a weapon at school is a serious offense and students found in violation of these laws will be subject to accountability measures and disciplinary action.

Pursuant to Minnesota law, a student who brings a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school will be expelled for at least one year. The school board may modify this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

## Violation of School Policies

Students found in violation of any of the above mentioned policies will be subject to accountability measures and disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following. School administrators have the authority to determine the terms of suspension based on the specific incident.

1. Student meets with Dean of Students, school administration, and/or Executive Director.
2. Confiscation of the weapon and/or drugs.
3. Parent/guardian will be notified.
  - a. Recommendation for chemical assessment.
  - b. Drug use or possession of a weapon will be reported to the police.
4. Suspended from school:
  - a. Drugs: five (1) - ten (10) days
  - b. Weapons: five (1) - ten (10) days
5. Re-entry Meeting
  - a. If student is returning to SPCS, the student must have a re-entry meeting that includes the Executive Director, Social Worker, and other relevant staff prior to the return to classes.
6. Expulsion
  - a. Students may be recommended to the Board of Directors for expulsion from school. Families can choose to withdraw prior to expulsion proceedings.

## In-School Suspensions

In-School Suspensions are reserved for behavioral incidents deemed less serious than Out-of-School Suspensions in which the administrative staff decide that the student(s) involved benefit from remaining in school yet must be removed from the classroom for the part or all of a school day. This is considered an excused absence from scheduled classes and students are still responsible to meet academic expectations (see Academics & Academic Integrity and Grading & Credits section of the handbook). These decisions are made on a case by case basis.

## Out-of-School Suspensions

Our goal is to solve problems in school as much as possible. While SPCS does its best to reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions given, SPCS reserves out-of-school suspensions for serious infractions. Out-of-School Suspensions are reserved for infractions involving illicit and controlled substances, weapons, harassment issues pursuant to MN state statutes, verbal or physical altercations and serious offenses in the community. Violations of other school policies can also result in suspensions and are the discretion of the Executive Director.

The purpose of a suspension is to allow the student and community time to stabilize, reflect, and/or process. In the event of a suspension, a re-entry meeting is scheduled with the administration, student, and parent/guardian to discuss the student's behavior and their re-entry plan to return to the community.

## Grievances and Complaints

The following summarizes the procedures needed to address grievances and complaints. It is recommended that the first attempt be to try to reach a resolution with those directly involved. Following that attempt to resolve the issue, contacting and meeting with the Executive Director is the next step. Should there be a need to move ahead, the Executive Director will communicate the grievance or complaint with the Board of Directors. Staff and board member contact information as well as the date, time and location of board meetings may be found on the school's website.

# SCHOOL SAFETY

SPCS is a safe and welcoming school district. All students, families, staff, and community members have the right to learn in an environment that is safe and secure. All students, families, staff, and community members have the responsibility to ensure a safe school environment.

## Building Hours

Operating hours are from 7:30am - 3:30pm. Students and families are welcome in the building during those hours, however are discouraged from loitering. Students are welcome to enter the building at opening hours and should use this time to prepare for the school day. Students are asked to make transportation arrangements 15 minutes before the building closes unless a school sponsored activity extends beyond that time.

## Visitors

The safety and security of students and staff is a high priority for the SPCS community. ***All visitors, including parents/guardians, must sign in and out of the office.*** A student, parent/guardian, or staff person assisting an intruder in entering the building will be subject to disciplinary or legal action.

Parents/guardians and family members of enrolled students are always welcome on campus and are expected to use appropriate conduct and respect for the safety of all students, families, and staff.

## Volunteers

Staff members will ensure that all visitors/experts that are visiting classrooms for educational purposes during the school day check in and out at the office.

Parent/guardian and family members who are interested in volunteering may contact the office for more details. All volunteers/chaperones that may be alone with students during their duties as a volunteer or chaperone are required to complete a volunteer packet, background check, and be approved by administrative staff prior to working with students.

## School Property and Space

### SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any book, technology, or other material used for learning at SPCS that is made available to students, is the property of SPCS. All materials should be respected and taken care of. Students should ensure they are returned in good condition so that other students may use them.

Any student participating in a school activity is fully responsible for equipment, outdoor gear, tools, computers and other school gear entrusted to him or her. If equipment used by a student is not accounted for in a satisfactory manner, for

example, in the case of theft, loss, or damage, participation and clearance to participate in other activities will be withheld until satisfactory resolution is achieved.

## **STAFF SPACE**

There are some areas of SPCS schools designated for staff member use only. Students are not permitted in staff offices, staff bathrooms, staff storage, or kitchen space. Students are not permitted to use staff computers or other technology. Students and parents/guardians are asked to respect these expectations.

## **STUDENT STORAGE SPACE**

SPCS seeks to promote an environment of trust and personal responsibility where all property is respected. There are no lockers or locked personal spaces for students on school property. Students can store their personal belongings on the coat racks and shelves provided in the common spaces. Students are responsible for being honorable with their personal belongings and that of others. Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to school. If students choose to bring valuable items to school, they may check them into the office for secure storage, for the duration of the school day.

## **Student Medications**

According to the state law and because of liability issues, SPCS requires written parental/guardian consent in order to administer both prescription and over-the-counter medication including, but not limited to, aspirin, acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (i.e. Advil, Motrin). Enrollment paperwork includes permission forms for medication administration.

Students may not carry medications on their person during the school day, fieldwork, field trips, or overnight expeditions. Medications will be kept locked in the office. They must be in the original bottle with the student's name on it. SPCS staff will not administer medications to students who do not have signed parent/guardian consent on file.

During fieldwork, field trips, and expeditions field trips, leaders are prepared and trained to administer necessary emergency and non-emergency medication and will do so unless specifically instructed not to do so in writing by parents/guardians. In order to protect all students, SPCS asks that parents/guardians complete the necessary paperwork to communicate a student's specific medical needs.

## **Emergency Procedures**

### **SCHOOL CLOSURES**

In the event that the safety of students and staff is threatened by weather or other circumstances, school administration will cancel school or hold an e-learning day. This decision will be made as early in the day as possible. Notification will be posted on WCCO and KSTP. SPCS will make every effort to post cancellations and e-learning days on school social media channels and send a message to families via Talking Points. Please note that cancellations and e-learning days may

not coincide with other school districts and you must watch for St. Paul City School to be specifically listed.

### **FIRE, TORNADO AND LOCK DOWN DRILLS**

Students are required to be familiar with evacuation procedures. Per MN state law, St. Paul City School has an established emergency plan. Students and staff will do emergency drills throughout the school year to become familiar with the procedures. Questions should be directed to the building administrator.

# ATTENDANCE POLICIES

## Family Responsibilities

Regular school attendance directly relates to success in academic work, benefits the student socially, provides opportunities for important communication between staff and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability. School attendance is the joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, and staff. It is against the law for a student to be gone from school three (3) or more days without a lawful excuse in a single year.

Students and families are responsible for notifying the office (e.g., written note, email, phone call) before an absence or upon returning to school after an absence. If a parent/guardian fails to inform the school of a student's absence, it is considered an Unexcused Absence. Unless previously communicated and approved, any person other than the parent/guardian attempting to report a student's absence will result in the absence being marked unexcused.

## Reporting a Student's Absence

**Please call or email the school no later than 9:00 AM to report an absence.** Please include the following information when reporting an absence:

- Your name and relationship to student
- First and last name of student
- Day (Monday-Friday) and date of the absence
- Reason for absence
- Provide contact information for verification of absence

## Tardiness

A student is considered tardy if they are late to class or school. Students will be marked tardy if they are not in class at the start of the period. Students who arrive to class after two-thirds of the class is complete will be considered absent from the class, and not tardy. Students who arrive at school after two-thirds of the school day is complete will be considered absent for the entire day. See below for Truancy Procedures. Students who are excessively tardy will be referred to the School Social Worker or school administration; consistent tardiness will require a conference with the family to see how best can support a student's arrival to and readiness for school.

## Fieldwork Attendance

A fieldwork day (field trip) is the same as any other school day; therefore **attendance is required**. Students are to be on time, prepared, and behave appropriately; in high school, fieldwork counts toward academic credit. Students' safety is the number one priority while in the field and we work to ensure that all fieldwork and expeditions are planned according to the needs of our students.

- Students may not drive themselves or other students to and from fieldwork.

- Students will not be excused from fieldwork without prior approval from district administration; a doctor's note may be required.
- Students who are unexcused tardy to school, after their class has left the building for fieldwork, will be sent home unexcused.
- Students who have excused appointments on fieldwork days must communicate with the office regarding the tardiness of the student. In the event they arrive to school after their class has left the building for fieldwork, the student will be expected to work independently at school and is responsible for the content missed while their class is out of the building for fieldwork.
- Coordinating the arrival of students to class in the field is not the responsibility of the school.
- Students are not to be dismissed from the field during fieldwork days.

## Leaving School Early

Notification must be given directly to the office by a parent or legal guardian to excuse any student from school early, including students who are 18+ years old. Primary and Middle School students who need to leave school early must be picked up by a parent/guardian and the parent/guardian will need to sign the student out of the office. High School students may leave without parent/guardian accompaniment as long as the parent/guardian has communicated the dismissal with the office in advance.

Students must sign out of the building at the office and their attendance will be marked accordingly. Students who leave the building without parent/guardian permission will be suspended, unless an exception has been made by school administrators on a case-by-case basis. Students are not to be dismissed early from the field during fieldwork days.

## 15 Day Drop Statute

"A pupil, regardless of age, who has been absent from school for 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year or for five consecutive school days during summer school or intersession classes of flexible school year programs without receiving instruction in the home or hospital shall be dropped from the roll and classified as withdrawn."

126C.05 Subd. 8

### ATTENDANCE EXCUSES

<b>EXCUSED ABSENCES:</b>	<b>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Student illness</li> <li>■ Serious illness or death in family</li> <li>■ Medical or dental appointments</li> <li>■ Court appearances</li> <li>■ Religious holiday</li> <li>■ Suspension</li> <li>■ Physical emergencies (flood, storm, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Oversleeping</li> <li>■ Missing the bus or a ride</li> <li>■ Babysitting or caring for siblings</li> <li>■ Skipping a class</li> <li>■ Running an errand</li> <li>■ Taking a driver's test</li> <li>■ Being out of the building without signing out,</li> </ul>



	leaving early, or any other absence not included in the excused section of this policy
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Family vacations and college visits require PRIOR written approval by the building administrator. Approval will be based on attendance rates and academic standing.

If for any reason a student has three (3) or more consecutive days of excused absences, a note from a doctor, court official, or professional deemed appropriate by school administration is required to mark those absences excused.

## State Truancy Policy

Minn. Stat. 260A.02 provides that a student who is absent from instruction on three or more occasions on three days without a valid excuse within a single year will be considered continuing truant. At this time parents/guardians will be notified by first class mail or other means. They will have time to notify the school if there should be a valid excuse for the child's absence. If there is not a valid excuse, parents/guardians will be notified that they are obligated to compel the attendance of the child pursuant to Minn. Statute 120.101 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Statute 127.20. The parent has the right to meet with staff to discuss solutions to the child's truancy. If the child should continue to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to Juvenile Court proceedings under Minn. Statute Ch. 260 and the child may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the student's driving privilege pursuant to Minn. Statute 260.191.

A student under the age of 18 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for any part of five school days, shall be considered a habitual truant and will be subject to referral to appropriate services and procedures under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A

## Truancy Process

The following table describes the consequences for habitual truancy and the interventions provided by both the school and the county. Please note that three tardies to school equate to one day of absence.

<b>TRUANCY CONSEQUENCE</b>	<b>INTERVENTION</b>
After <u>3 days of unexcused absences</u> , families will receive an Attendance Alert Letter from the school.	Letter sent home from school administrator.
After <u>5 days of unexcused absence</u> , parents are <i>referred to the county School Attendance Matters (SAM) program and will be required to attend a Parent Meeting</i> with the Assistant Ramsey County Attorney.	Letter sent home from school administrator. Family attends a SAM meeting in Ramsey County.
After <u>7 days of unexcused absence</u> , families will <i>receive a letter and be required to attend an administrative conference at the school</i> with the student, parent/guardian, & School Social Worker to develop and implement an In School Attendance Contract.	Letter sent home from school administrator. Students and family meet at school to complete the In School Attendance Contract.
After <u>10 days of unexcused absence</u> , families will be referred to the Student Attendance Review Team (SART) hearing. This is a meeting with an attorney from the county, family, student, and school officials.	SART hearing at school with student, parent/guardian, Crew Leader, and Administrator.

<p>If the SART contract does not result in improved attendance, the County Attorney will take legal action against the parents by filing an educational neglect petition.</p>	
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## ASSESSMENTS

### State Assessments

SPCS abides by all state and federal testing requirements including the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and ACCESS for English Learners (ACCESS).

### Primary School/Middle School Assessments

#### **FASTBRIDGE**

To measure student progress during the year, students take Fastbridge benchmark assessments up to three times a year in reading (K-3) and math (2-8). Fastbridge assessments are designed to be a quick measure of student progress in a computer-adaptive test. The information from the assessments allows teachers to measure grade level proficiency, form instructional groups and monitor student progress throughout the year. “FastBridge assessments combine Curriculum-Based Measures (CBMs) and Computer-Adaptive Tests (CAT) for reading, math and social-emotional behavior (SEB) and delivers accurate, actionable reports for screening, skills analysis, instructional planning and more to ensure educators have the right tools and right data to provide timely and targeted supports. And it does this in half the time as other assessments, so you spend less time testing and more time delivering data-driven instruction.”

([www.fastbridge.org](http://www.fastbridge.org))

### High School Assessments

#### **NWEA MAP TESTS**

All High School students take MAP® tests in the fall and spring. Students set goals for their learning and reflect on them during Student Led Conferences. “Northwest Evaluation Association™ (NWEA™) is a global not-for-profit educational services organization known for our flagship interim assessment, Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®). More than 7,400 partners in U.S. schools, districts, education agencies, and international schools trust us to offer pre-kindergarten through grade 12 assessments that accurately measure student growth and learning needs, professional development that fosters educators’ ability to accelerate student learning, and research that supports assessment validity and data interpretation.” ([www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org))

## ACCUPLACER

All graduating seniors will take an Accuplacer assessment. Review for this assessment will be done in both Math and English classes and students can access practice materials on their own at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). “All ACCUPLACER tests use a multiple-choice format. There’s no time limit on the tests, so you can focus on doing your best to demonstrate your skills. ACCUPLACER uses the latest computer-adaptive technology and the questions you see are based on your skill level. Your response to each question drives the difficulty level of the next question so it’s important to give each question as much thought as you can before selecting your answer.” ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org))

## ACT

The High School offers the ACT to all Juniors and interested Seniors at no cost to students, although it is not required. Students have the option to take the ACT in the Spring during school hours at the High School. SPCS encourages all students to take the ACT to gain information about their college and career readiness. High School CEEB and ACT Code: 242-310. ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org))

# GRADING & CREDITS

## Primary & Middle School Grading System

Students are on a semester system at the Primary and Middle Schools (two terms per year). Report cards are given at the end of each semester to record students progress on grade level standards. Students earn grades, but not credits, and the Primary and Middle School level.

### PRIMARY SCHOOL GRADING SCALE

Grade Score	Description	Percent Equivalent
3	Meets Standards/Expectations	80 - 100%
2	Partially Meets Standards/Expectations	65 - 79%
1	Does Not Meet Standards/Expectations Yet	<65%

### MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADING SCALE

Grade Score	Description	Percent Equivalent
A	Consistently Meets or Exceeds Standards	90%+
B	Meets Standards/Expectations	80 - 89%
C	Partially Meets Standards/Expectations	70 - 79%

D	Does Not Meet Standards/Expectations Yet	<69%
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## High School Grading System

Students are on a quarter system at the High School (four terms per year). Report cards are given at the end of each quarter to record students progress and track credits. At the high school level, students earn credits for their passing grades (described below).

### LEARNING TARGETS

Learning targets are groups of MN state standards phrased in 'student friendly' language. For example, "I can solve word problems using multiple strategies." All assignments/tests/quizzes/projects under each learning target are graded on a 4-point scale (see table below), however are weighted differently based on the category of assignment. For example a quiz, midterm paper or project will be weighted more than daily work, but a student can still earn a 4 on each of them.

Student's overall achievement grade (final end of term grade) is decided upon the accumulation of the learning target grades. In the end, the final grade is earned based on comprehensive achievement.

### GRADING CATEGORIES

For all classes, assignments are graded under one of three categories. These categories are the same in each class.

- Habits of a Learner - 20% of the total grade
- Daily Work - 30% of the total grade
- Products - 50% of the final grade

### HIGH SCHOOL GRADING SCALE

High school grades can be translated into letter grades that will generate a GPA on the student transcript. Research has found, and our staff agree that using a number, word and description to explain expectations before, during and after an assignment to be highly effective.

End of Term Grading Scale	Everyday Grading Scale	Letter Grade Equivalent	GPA Equivalent	Percent Equivalent	Description
Exemplary (EX)	4	A	4.0	90 - 100%	Student has exceeded expectations and could teach the concept to a peer.
Accomplished (AC)	3	B	3.0	80 - 89%	Student has met the standard and learned the concept.
Developing (DV)	2	C/D	2.0	70 - 79%	Student has partially met standards and is in the process of learning concept.
Incomplete (IN)	1	F	0	0 - 69% *	Student has begun learning the concept, but has not met minimal standards.

Pass (P)	P	P	0	70 - 100%	Crew uses the Pass/Fail grading system. This final grade does not affect a student's GPA.
Fail (F)	F	F	0	0 - 69% *	

## High School Credits

### EARNING CREDITS

Students receive an end of term overall achievement grade at the end of each quarter that is posted on the student transcript. Students must pass a class in order to earn credit: a grade of Developing (2), Accomplished (3), Exemplary (4) or Pass (P) will earn credit in the course; a grade of Incomplete (I) or Fail (F) does not receive credit for that course. Students who have not earned credit in a course will need to make arrangements to earn that credit through repeating the course, summer school, or another credit recovery option.

- Each quarter class is equivalent to 0.25 credit; there are 4 quarters in a year, this equates to 1.00 credit per year
- Students take Intensive classes twice a year, earning 0.5 credit for each Intensive class
- Students take one Elective each quarter, earning 0.25 elective credit for each Elective class
- Students take Crew each quarter, earning 0.25 elective credit for each Elective class

Students are expected to take one grade-specific required electives (below) per year. Passing these classes is required for graduation, unless an exception has been granted from administration.

- 9th Grade Transition to High School Through AVID
- 10th Grade Passage Portfolio
- 11th Grade Junior Seminar
- 12th Grade Senior Seminar

Total credits required for grade promotion are described below. Student graduation and grade promotion plans (including credit recovery plans) will be handled on a case by case basis. See the Graduation Requirements section for a breakdown of credit requirements.

- 9th grade - 6.25 credits
- 10th grade - 12.50 credits
- 11th grade - 18.75 credits\*
- 12th grade - 25.00 credits\*

**Note:** Due to the restrictions of Distance Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the class of 2023 will be exempt from 1.00 General Elective credit (they will need a total of 8.00, not 9.00, Elective credits to graduate). This brings the total credit requirement for the class of 2023 to 24.00 credits for graduation.

### ATTENDANCE FOR CREDIT

Participation in class is important for student success and learning. Students are expected to be in attendance a minimum of 60% of the instructional periods in order to be eligible for credit in class. Should a student have more than 40% unexcused absences from a class, the students will not earn credit.

Attendance during Intensive classes is essential to earning credit as participation is a major part of the grade for these classes. Every day a student misses an Intensive class, the final grade will be dropped one letter grade.

### **CREDIT RECOVERY & SUMMER SCHOOL**

Students have the opportunity to do limited credit recovery during the school year at the High School through Intensives. Some Intensives are offered for 0.25 content credit and 0.25 elective credit. One credit recovery Intensive per content area will be offered per year.

At this time, SPCS does not offer summer school on site. Students requiring credit recovery to meet graduation requirements will be automatically signed up to take courses through St. Paul Public Schools. Students are able to take summer school classes in their resident district if they communicate with the Director of Operations in advance. In this case, they are responsible for contacting that school office to register. SPCS administration will make every effort to inform students and families of credit recovery options, yet it is the responsibility of the family to register the student in their resident district.

# ACADEMICS & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

## Special Education Services

All students will be grouped and challenged according to their ability. Special Education laws are followed and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are written and followed according to the law. Ancillary services (speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and psychology) that are required are contracted to local providers.

## 504 Plans

Section 504 is a federal law which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disabling condition in any program receiving federal financial assistance. SPCS follows legal requirements for drafting and implementing a student's 504. Questions can be directed to the School Social Worker.

## Homework and Homework Help

Homework plays a vital role in a student's education providing an opportunity for practice and personal growth. SPCS encourages families to support their students in making a commitment to homework and work completion. Students who use their time wisely at school will have less homework.

Every day, 2nd-8th grade students will have 30 minutes of independent reading for Action 100. This will be homework every day school is in session and a modified schedule over holiday breaks. Depending on the age of the child, additional homework may be assigned for students to provide extra practice skills introduced in the class or complete assignments.

Students are encouraged to use this time as an opportunity to get additional support from peers and teachers as well as a time for work completion.

## Make-Up of Missed School Work

It is the student's responsibility to make up all class work missed during a time of absence. Students should make arrangements, outside of class time, with teachers to get missing assignments. The office will collect assignments for students who are absent because of an extended illness or extended excused absence. Materials may be picked up two days after they are requested.

## Extensions and Late Work

Extensions: Students are expected to manage their time well and turn in assignments by their due date. Should a student need an extension beyond the due date, an extension form must be submitted to the teacher at least 24 hours before the due date.



The extension allows students to turn in work past the due date for full credit. The length of the extension is per teacher discretion. Electronic extension forms are posted on the school website. Paper copies of the extension forms are at school. The submission of the extension form is not a guarantee of extension. Students should expect to meet with the teacher for 10 minutes in order to consider the extension.

Late Work: If a student turns in work late without an extension, the maximum grade even after revision, will be an Accomplished (see grading scale).

## Revision

Students are expected to strive for high-quality work, this is an important performance benchmark for all students. Students have opportunities to receive feedback from peers and teachers guiding the learning and revision process. Students have the opportunity to revise completed work turned in on time for a higher grade until the end of the quarter.

## Use of Primary Sources

Staff value using authentic resources as a tool for relevant teaching and learning. Although students have access to textbooks, they more often use nonfiction and fiction trade books, publications, and the Internet. By reading literature and exploring primary sources, students gain information-gathering skills that they use to solve problems and conduct research in the real world.

## Academic Support

All students have an Academic Support class similar to a study hall. Students are expected to use this class time for work completion. In Crew, students set goals for success and Academic Support is a built in structure to help students achieve their goals. Students work independently, in small groups, or with an instructor. Time management, organization, and work completion are skills developed in this class. When students use their time effectively, they have little homework.

## Infinite Campus Portal

High School students and families have access to view academic progress and lunch account information via the Infinite Campus Portal. The website is linked on the homepage of the SPCS website. High School families and students are issued a secure login and password when a student enrolls at SPCS. SPCS encourages students and families to regularly check their Portal so they can stay informed and be aware of the status of all assignments and projects.

## Contacting Teachers

Teachers are always available to discuss a student's work via email. Teachers may also be available before and after school for additional academic support.

## Plagiarism and Cheating

Students are expected to show their own work and demonstrate knowledge of the material. Cheating is not acceptable in the classroom. Copying another student's work, allowing someone else to copy your work, using unauthorized materials for a class or test, or plagiarism are all forms of cheating that are unacceptable. Plagiarism is using the work of someone else as though it were your own. Any direct quote or evidence used without citation is an example of plagiarism. The consequences for such actions will be determined based on the situation and may include suspension.

Some consequences may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Re-do the assignment
- Restorative chat/VOMP
- Partial credit for the assignment
- Meeting with student, teacher, principal and parent/guardian, student's Crew Leader or Homeroom Teacher, and/or the Executive Director.
- Suspension

Checklist for avoiding plagiarism:

- What type of source are you using? Is it your own independent material, common knowledge, or someone else's material?
- If you are quoting someone else's material, is the quotation exact? Have you inserted quotation marks?
- If you are paraphrasing someone else's material, have you used your own words and sentence structures? Does your paraphrase or summary employ quotation marks whenever you use the author's exact language?
- Is the source of material borrowed from another author, whether quoted or paraphrased, acknowledged in the text? Are all your source citations complete and accurate?
- Does your list of citations include all of the sources you have drawn from in writing your paper?

## School Supplies

Students should bring their school supplies on the first day of school. Returning students should already have the majority of their school supplies already. School supplies at SPCS are simple, yet important for learning.

### **SCHOOL PROVIDED**

- Primary School & Middle School
  - Classroom Supplies
- High School & Middle School
  - Planner: SPCS will provide 1 planner for each high school and middle school student. This tool is required for every class and students will practice organization skills using the school planner. High/Middle School students who lose their school provided planner will be required to buy their own to replace it.
  - High School Portfolio: Every High School student keeps a portfolio of achievement and growth. The school will provide the portfolios.

## FAMILY & STUDENT PROVIDED

- Primary School & Middle School
  - Pencils
  - 1 folder
  - 1 notebook
  - Box of Kleenex
  - Close-toed shoes for physical education class and recess
  - Water bottle
- High School
  - 4 - 1 inch, 3-ring binders (1 for each academic class)
  - Academic class binders are labeled and left in each classroom. Homework completed will then be put into the binder when arriving to class.
  - 2 pocket folder for homework
  - Loose leaf paper
  - Pens & Pencils
  - Fieldwork supplies
    - Water bottle
    - Walking shoes (closed toe)
    - Clothes appropriate for active learning
      - Fieldwork changes from week to week. Students need to be prepared and aware of what clothes are necessary for each week. Check the school calendar for details.

# PRIMARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

St. Paul City School strives to have all of our students be prepared and excited for the next chapter in their education. We offer a rigorous program that teaches students to be strong readers, writers, problem-solvers and mathematicians. St. Paul City School's curriculum is aligned with the Minnesota State Standards which drive our curriculum and instruction.

## Action 100 Reading

The Action 100 reading framework is the heart of our academic program and builds a lifelong love of reading. The foundation of the program is based on reading books at each child's level, frequent assessment based on standards, and 30 minutes of reading at home and school. Teachers are trained to identify the different stages of reading, so they can conference with students to provide individualized support that is needed at that moment. To develop a habit of reading 60 minutes a day, students are engaged in reading books at their own level and take those books home each night. Another major component of the program is celebrating student success and practice milestones.

## Expeditionary Learning

Expeditionary Learning is our partner literacy curriculum. Whereas Action 100 is individualized to a student's level, Engage New York provides a rigorous grade-level curriculum to all students. This curriculum embeds socials and science topics into the grade level texts that students are reading. Students practice close reading skills while reading high-interest challenging texts. Each quarter students learn about another topic deeply, by reading novels, articles and informational books about it. Students discuss what they are reading and end the unit with a culminating project that infuses literacy skills.

## Groves Method Literacy

Students in K-3rd grade are taught foundational reading skills using Groves Method Literacy. This is a phonics and phonemic awareness-based curriculum that develops a child's reading skills through a multi-sensory approach. Students will tap, sky-write and spell words to build strong connections between letters and sounds. As the program was implemented, teachers followed the Groves Literacy Framework that included on-going coaching and training by Groves Literacy Coaches.

## Math

St. Paul City School focuses on building children's number sense. This is done through building conceptual understanding, application and use of multiple strategies. SPCS uses Eureka Math and McGraw-Hill's My Math as tools to build students' Number & Operation, Algebra, Geometry and Data Analysis skills. These rigorous curriculums build on application and reflective discussions in math. Big Ideas Math is the curriculum used in sixth through eighth grades. It focuses on building abstract reasoning processes to prepare students for Algebra. By using a balanced approach of instruction, it combines both discovery of topics and direct instruction. These programs all build students' thinking and problem solving skills.

# HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## AVID

High School students participate in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) programming throughout high school. Beginning with a required AVID course during first quarter of Freshman year, and optionally beyond that, students build learning through this nationally acclaimed program. "AVID fosters a safe, open culture, high expectations for teachers and students, and collaboration in all classrooms"—learn more at [www.AVID.org](http://www.AVID.org)

## Crew

Each student at the High School is a member of a Crew. Students are placed in a Crew from the day they enroll at the High School until the day they graduate; for many students, they are in the same Crew with the same Crew Leader

throughout all four years of high school! Crew members build strong relationships and Crew Leaders know students well and serve as an advisor. Crews have common adventure and service experiences to develop teamwork and friendship.

## Celebration of Learning

High School students and staff take the opportunity twice a year to present high quality hands on learning. This is a public exhibition that allows students to showcase their work to parents, teachers, and members of the wider community. The opportunity for students to present and show off their work accurately demonstrates what a student has learned. Students are required to present at Celebration of Learning as a part of their Crew grade. Presenting only high quality work helps to set a standard of excellence for all students. Participating in this important event is a way for high school families to both support their student's school and celebrate student success. Please see the calendar for the specific dates.

## Student Led Conferences

The High School holds Student Led Conferences twice a year. Students take an active role in demonstrating what they have learned, how they have grown and what goals they have met during the year. Students lead their conference with their Crew leader, family members, and friends or classmates. Students are required to present at Student Led Conferences as a part of their Crew grade. Please see the calendar for the specific dates.

## Portfolios

The portfolio reflects student growth and achievement over the course of their high school career. It includes a selection of high quality products from Math, Science, English, Humanities, and Electives that have been completed by the student. It also includes reflections on the student's experiences and growth in expeditions, fieldwork, service learning, and college and career preparation. It includes how the range of knowledge and skills has developed, how thinking about significant issues has changed, and it shows how effort has been made both academically and personally. As a senior, a portfolio can be a guide to help prepare the student for college admission.

Students work on developing their portfolio in Crew. All students create a portfolio and use the contents to help present their Student Led Conference. Actively developing and maintaining a portfolio is a part of grading in Crew. In 10th grade High School students takes the Sophomore Portfolio Passage elective class during the 4th quarter in which they compile their highest quality work from their first two years of high school and give a passage presentation. Following the presentation, students receive feedback and a recommendation from teachers to move on to the second half of high school.

## Service Learning

Every Crew chooses a service learning partner to work with multiple times throughout the school year. Students develop relationships with the organization and the people and learn to work together as a team for a greater cause. Participation and reflection for service learning is a part of the Crew grade.

## Expeditions

All students have the opportunity to experience an expedition while they are a student at the High School. The specific opportunities change from year to year, however these experiences are built into the curriculum and therefore provide every student with a chance to learn through experience. All students are expected to participate in expedition programs as a part of their Crew grade. Grading for expeditions are primarily focused on participation and reflection on growth. Students at St. Paul City School have the opportunity to participate in a series of urban and wilderness expeditions throughout the school year, including but not limited to: paddling, backpacking, snowshoeing, orienteering, urban expeditions, ropes courses, and rock climbing.

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

## Creating a College-Going Culture

Graduation requirements at SPCS exceed the Minnesota Department of Education graduation requirements. Students who graduate from SPCS will be academically prepared for a wide variety of post-secondary opportunities. Students will meet state standards in each subject area, as well as learn across disciplines. All students are academically, socially, and personally prepared to pursue life after graduating.

## Minnesota Department of Education - Minimum Graduation Requirements

“Students complete the academic standards by taking a core course of study that equips them with the knowledge and skills they need for success in postsecondary education, highly skilled work, and civic life. In order to graduate, your child’s high school coursework must include at least the minimum state course credit requirements (as well as the local school graduation requirements). A course credit is equivalent to a student successfully completing an academic year of study or mastering the subject matter, as determined by the local school district.”

(<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/grad/>)

## Graduation Walking Policy

Seniors are eligible to walk in the graduation ceremony if they are able to recover the credit in one session of summer school (a maximum of 1.5 credits). Students who complete their course work in summer school will be considered summer graduates. Diplomas will be made available once summer credits have been recorded at SPCS.

## Diplomas

Graduates are able to pick up their diploma following the last day of school once final grades have been posted. Diplomas must be picked up as they cannot be mailed.

## Early Graduation

Seniors who have met SPCS graduation requirements after first semester may be eligible for early graduation. Early graduation will be determined by school administration.

## Graduation Requirements

At the high school level, students are required to take four years of all core courses (Math, Science, Social Studies, and English). Students are also required to take 9 credits of elective courses (see note about the adjustments made for the classes of 2020-2024 on next page). SPCS offers a variety of Elective and Intensive course options throughout the year. Intensives are taken at the end of each semester, lasting for 8-9 full school days when students do an in-depth study of a special topic.

<b>MN STATE REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>SPCS REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>NOTES DETAILS ARE TAKEN FROM MDE STATE REQUIREMENTS.</b>
Language Arts 4 credits	Language Arts 4 credits	Credits encompass all 9-12 state Language Arts standards and specifications.
Math 3 credits	Math 4 credits	Credits encompass algebra, geometry, statistics and probability sufficient to satisfy the standards. Students in the graduating class of 2015 and beyond must complete an algebra II credit or its equivalent.
Science 3 credits	Science 4 credits	Credits encompass a full biology credit. In addition, students in the graduating class of 2015 and beyond must complete a chemistry, physics, or Career and Technical Education (CTE) credit. The CTE credit must meet the standards underlying the chemistry or physics credit.
Humanities 4 credits	Humanities 4 credits	Credits encompass U.S. history, geography, government and citizenship, world history and economics.
General Electives 7 credits	General Electives 7 credits *	Grade-specific required electives Crew Other electives
Art Elective 1 credit	Art Elective 1 credit	Art credits can be in visual arts, music, theatre, dance, media arts, or a combination.
World Language Elective No requirement	World Language 1 credit	MN State Colleges and Universities require 2 years of a single world language for graduation from the college or university. High school students are required to take 1 credit to meet graduation requirements and be prepared for post secondary education.



Health & Wellness credits required but undefined	Health & Wellness	Health and wellness credit is obtained through Crew.
Total Credits: 21.50	Total Credits: 25.00 *	

\* **Note:** Due to the restrictions of Distance Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the class of 2024 will be exempt from 1.00 General Elective credit (they will need a total of 8.00, not 9.00, Elective credits to graduate). This brings the total credit requirement for the class of 2024 to 24.00 credits for graduation.

## DRESS CODE POLICY

### Primary School Dress Code

The St. Paul City School Primary School uniform is as follows:

- Shirts are solid navy with an SPCS logo;
- Any type of pants/bottoms as long as they are not inappropriate clothing, as outlined below;
- Any sweater or sweatshirt that is a solid navy, black, grey, maroon, or khaki;
- No prints or floral markings on the sweaters or sweatshirts;
- Wear appropriate footwear for the day (ie: walking shoes for field trips).

Should the school determine any day to be a non-uniform day, the inappropriate clothing list still remains as an indication of inappropriate clothing. Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Tops or bottoms that are sheer, or expose the midriff, or expose any part of an undergarment;
- Leggings, jeggings, socks, or tights, unless worn underneath shorts, skirts, or dresses;
- Shirts bearing any message other than the school logo;
- Emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on clothing, hats, bandanas or accessories communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected group; evidence of gang membership or affiliation; approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals; depicts alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances; or depicts illegal, violent, or obscene content or language;
- Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.

### Middle and High School Dress Code

To be a responsible citizen in the world and workplace, people need to be prepared with appropriate clothing.

Therefore, students are responsible for dressing appropriately for school. While uniforms are not required, students are expected to present themselves in a manner that shows respect for oneself, others, and the academic environment.

- Appropriate clothing for academic participation: walking shoes for outdoor fieldwork; rain gear or winter gear;

professional dress for job shadowing and college visits; other clothing specific to experiential learning.

- Clothing or accessories must not be sexually, racially, or culturally offensive; sexually provocative; potentially dangerous (spikes, chains, etc.); or gang related.
- Clothing must not leave midribs exposed.
- Clothing or accessories must not reference drugs, alcohol, weapons, or inappropriate language.
- Undergarments must not be exposed.
- Length of skirts and shorts must be appropriate length for the school environment.

If at any time a student's clothing is not appropriate for the academic environment or does not meet school policies and guidelines, they will be asked to make a change to their clothing. A staff person will address the issue and ask for it to be immediately corrected. In the event of non-compliance, the student will be sent immediately to school administration.

## TECHNOLOGY, INTERNET, & PHONE USAGE

SPCS encourages appropriate technology and internet usage for the purposes of instruction. Students have access to school technology devices and programs as a way of building vital twenty-first century skills. Use of and access to SPCS's technology and the internet is a privilege, not a right. All students are expected to sign the Student-Family Handbook Agreement, including acknowledging the importance of the technology and internet usage expectations.

### **Technology During School Hours**

At the primary school, students are expected to turn their devices into the front office at the beginning of the day, to be returned upon dismissal. Students are not allowed to use personal technology devices, including cell phones, during school hours. Students are absolutely not to be using cell phones at any point during school hours for any reason.

At the middle and high school, students may keep devices on their person with instructor permission as long as they are silenced/powered off and stored out of sight during classes, except where directed to use them for instructional purposes. Appropriate times for device use will be communicated verbally and visually to students using a red, yellow, green color scale in all classrooms. This includes cell phones, headphones or earbuds, tablets, smartwatches, and other personal devices. Students will have the option to securely store their personal devices with school staff. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal technology.

If staff see a cell phone or other device out during times they are not allowed, the following steps will be taken:

1. Student redirection to put away devices.
2. Students are given an opportunity to turn in devices to teachers for the class period.

3. Students sent to VOMP/Restore Rooms for inappropriate use of technology and the device is turned in for the day, to be returned at dismissal. Three inappropriate use of technology VOMPs will result in a technology contract which includes turning in the device each day.

Use of additional personal technology, including tablets or headphones, will be approved on a case by case basis. Permission must be obtained for use of such technology in advance. If a student uses it without permission or inappropriately, the device will be confiscated and handed in to the front office for pickup at dismissal and the student will be required to VOMP/Restore Room for inappropriate use of technology. Three inappropriate use of technology VOMPs/Restore Room visits will result in a technology contract.

### **School-Provided Technology**

Technology devices are provided during classes for students for instruction purposes only. Because these devices are school property, SPCS admin have the ability to track student technology usage, including content exchanged via school-provided email accounts.

The following uses of school-provided technology are prohibited.

- Making personal calls during class time or on fieldwork
- Visiting inappropriate websites including content that violates school policies and values
- Using social media and/or messaging
- Playing computer games
- Illegal file sharing
- Downloading content

### **Inappropriate Technology Use Outside of School**

Inappropriate use of social media or devices in or outside of school may result in disciplinary action at school. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Using a cell phone to record or take photos of staff and/or students without permission in advance given by the individual being recorded or photographed.
- Recording or taking photos of classmates with the intent to bully or harass.
- Using social media apps, or using a cell phone to spread rumors, bully, make fun of, exclude, put down or create a hostile environment interfering with educational opportunities.
- Sharing with or asking other students for inappropriate content.

### **Communication During School Hours**

Families who need to reach their student during the school day should call the school office rather than reaching out directly to their student. Messages will be given to students during passing time unless there is an emergency. A phone at an administrators desk will be available for students to use with permission from staff before/after school hours, or with permission during school hours for emergencies only.

Use of and access to SPCS's technology and the internet is a privilege, not a right. All students are expected to sign the Student-Family Handbook Agreement, including acknowledging the importance of the technology and internet usage expectations.

# TRANSPORTATION

## School Bussing

SPCS will bus any student who lives within the city boundaries of St. Paul and who lives greater than one mile from their school. SPCS will also bus students outside of St. Paul boundaries if:

- Student is documented Homeless/Highly Mobile
- Student receives transportation from an IEP
- At least 10 students in a geographical location enroll at SPCS and a bus route can be completed within one hour

SPCS contracts bussing services. Therefore, SPCS students who are receiving transportation are governed by the SPCS transportation code of conduct. SPCS will follow the code of conduct precisely in order to ensure that routes are as safe as possible.

Especially during the beginning of the school year, students should be at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time and wait at least 10 minutes after the scheduled arrival time. If your bus does not show up, please call 612-808-8868 for real time support from our bus company. This is the fastest and best way to get support. We will work with you closely to ensure that any challenges from the first few weeks are solved as quickly as possible.

## BUS CARDS

Enrolled high school students who live more than one mile from school and who do not have a school bus route are eligible to receive bus fare to and from school. Bus cards provided by the school are to be used only for transportation to and from school or designated school sponsored activities. High School reserves the right to change this policy at any time during the school year and will notify students and families of any changes.

- Students are responsible for keeping track of their own bus card.
- Eligible students can pick up a card at the end of the school day.
- There are only 10 rides on a card.
- Eligible students only receive a card every 5 school days for which they are present at school. The date is recorded.
- If they use the card for non-school rides or misplace the card before the scheduled time, it is their responsibility to pay for their rides to and from school.
- Students can purchase an Unlimited Ride Student Pass Bus Card for a fee. This card would replace a 10 Ride Card.

## **UNLIMITED RIDE STUDENT PASS BUS CARDS**

Unlimited student passes are available to enrolled high school students for an additional cost. If a student chooses an unlimited bus card, they will be charged \$180 for the full school year or \$90 twice during the year, once to activate the card and once in the beginning of January. Failure to pay within 10 days will result in suspension of the card. Payment is required to activate the Unlimited Ride Student Pass Bus Card.

## **TRANSPORTATION CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students will take public transportation for fieldwork as well as have the opportunity to ride the school shuttle. Therefore, all students are responsible for signing the Transportation Code of Conduct, which is included in the enrollment paperwork.

All students have a responsibility for respectful conduct with regards to any mode of transportation to and from school. By signing this form you agree to adhere to the SPCS school policies and the Metro Transit Code of Conduct and represent yourself and our school in a positive manner.

## **BICYCLES**

Bicycles must be locked up on the bike rack outside of the building during the day. Space will not be provided for students to store their bike inside the building. Biking is sometimes a form of fieldwork transportation and in the event a student requests to ride their own bike during fieldwork, it must be approved by High School staff prior to the school sponsored activity.

## **SKATEBOARDS**

Skateboards are not allowed to be used in the building or during fieldwork and students are asked to keep their skateboard in the office during the school day.

# **FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM**

## **Wellness Commitment**

SPCS is committed to providing healthy options for meals served at school! SPCS serves breakfast and lunch for all students according to federal school nutrition regulations. Healthy meal options include whole grain meals, a variety of food offerings, and a daily salad bar. SPCS's School Board approved Wellness Policy is available on the website.

## **Free School Meals for Kids Program**

SPCS participates in the National School Lunch Program and the Community Eligibility Provision which align with the Free School Meals for Kids Program signed into law in March of 2023. All students at SPCS regardless of their Free/Reduced program participation will receive a free breakfast and lunch at school.

## Meal Costs

- Breakfast and lunch are free of cost.
- If a student decides to return to the lunch line for a second meal they will be charged the full price of the meal.
- Students may bring meals from home.
- There is no microwave, refrigerator, or freezer available for student use.
- Students may not order food for delivery during the school day.

## High School Open Campus Lunch

High School Students have the opportunity to earn Open Campus Lunch. This privilege enables students to walk, bike, or drive to local restaurants, or simply enjoy being outside during scheduled lunch periods.

- Eligibility for Open Campus
  - 90% attendance rate
  - Passing all classes with a 3 or higher, at the time of Grade Check
  - Positive behavior
- Academic progress is reviewed during the Grade Check Lesson in Crew.
  - This is approximately every two weeks throughout the school year.
  - Eligible students are posted in Circle on Wednesday during the week of Grade Check Crew Lessons.
- The students on the eligible list have Open Campus privileges until the next Open Campus list is posted (approximately 2 weeks)
- Open Campus students will be expected to sign in and out at the office.
- Students will lose the Open Campus privilege if tardy when returning to class.
- High School staff reserve the right to revoke Open Campus Lunch at any time.
- High School staff reserve the right to change the Open Campus Lunch details during the school year and students and families will be notified of any change.

## Snacks: Water, Food, & Gum

Students are responsible maintaining the integrity of the school facility

- Food is only allowed in classrooms during Crew, the first period of the school day which is immediately following breakfast service.
- Food is not allowed in the classrooms during instruction.
- Food can be eaten in the lunchroom and it is the responsibility of the student community to keep the building clean and tidy.
- Sunflower seeds are not allowed in the building for any reason.
- Periodically Crews have celebrations involving food, these events are pre-approved and therefore food will be allowed in the classroom.
- SPCS encourages a healthy lifestyle; therefore junk food (chips, candy and soda) is highly discouraged and will not be allowed during school sponsored events.

## USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# STUDENT LIFE

## Extracurricular Activities

SPCS offers a variety of extracurricular activities for students. The choices vary from school year to school year and are subject to change based on need, interest, and funding.

## Community After School Programs

Students are always able to access out of school time programming at community based centers. SPCS partners with many neighborhood community groups to help students access programs. Some of them include:

- FrogTown Community Center
- Conservation Corps of MN & IA
- Urban Boatbuilders
- Science Museum of MN Children's Defense Fund Freedom School

## Sports Options

SPCS provides soccer, basketball and volleyball after school sports. If a student wishes to participate in athletic programs with their resident school district, they must meet the eligibility standards required by the Minnesota State High School League to register. Please speak to the Executive Director and the resident school district to ask about opportunities.

## High School Student Leadership Crew

The Student Leadership Crew (SLC) serves as the high school student council. Students are elected by their peers in the spring to serve for the following school year. These elected students meet weekly to develop leadership skills and provide leadership for the high school and the SPCS student community at large.