



**Where Excellence is a Tradition**

# Parent-Student Handbook 2019 - 2020

115 Dolphin Way  
Hephzibah, GA 30815  
Phone-706-592-3987  
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# **Spirit Creek Middle School**

## **Vision Statement**

Spirit Creek Middle School is a school community where the quest for excellence is both a motivator and a source of pride. Student learning is our chief priority, and we are united in our efforts to ensure that all students learn at their optimum level of ability. Mutual respect among staff, faculty, and students form a strong foundation for discipline, communication, support, and learning. Our ultimate goal is to help students become self-sufficient adults who contribute to their local and global community; therefore, they will lead productive and rewarding lives.

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of Spirit Creek Middle School is to educate students to become self-sufficient adults who contribute to their local and global community.

## **Belief Statements**

1. Student learning is our priority and primary focus of all decisions.
2. Educational growth can be encouraged through motivation and high expectations.
3. A safe and orderly environment promotes student learning.
4. Faculty, staff, and the community share the responsibility for promoting student success.
5. Tolerance is developed through the teaching of understanding and respect for all people and cultures.
6. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices should emphasize problem solving skills while incorporating a variety of learning activities related to the real world to accommodate all learners.

## SCHOOL COLORS

Royal Blue-White-Kelly Green

## SCHOOL MASCOT

Dolphin

## SCHOOL MOTTO

Where Excellence is a Tradition



## ***School Song- “Spirit Creek Forevermore”***

Learning how to live each day,  
Knowing that we will lead the way,  
Blazing the Trail that others seek,  
We will be strong and help the weak.

Explorers of the world unite,  
Together we will win the fight,  
With spirits high our souls will soar  
Spirit Creek forevermore

With spirits high our souls will soar,  
Spirit Creek forevermore.

115 Dolphin Way  
Hephzibah, GA 30815  
Telephone 706.592.3987



Kierstin Johnson, Principal  
Jonavon Harris, Assistant Principal  
Cameron Henry, Assistant Principal

Where Excellence is a Tradition

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2019 -2020 school year. On behalf of the faculty and staff, we look forward to meeting all of our new students and seeing all of our returning students.

This school year will surely be an exciting time to be a Spirit Creek Dolphin as we look to continue our Robotics and Programming Academy, make instructional gains, excel athletically, and continue the tradition of excellence for which Spirit Creek Middle School has been known.

Over the summer months, teachers have been diligently planning your family's arrival. Our goal is to provide our students rigorous instruction in a safe and orderly learning environment that prepares them for high school. All students are expected to aim high and focus on learning.

In order to accomplish this goal, we need the support of students, parents, and our community. As we enter this new school year, our school will focus on growth. We will implore our students to be one percent better each day and work towards growth in all endeavors. In order to do so, students, along with all faculty and staff, will be asked to have a growth mindset. I have challenged the faculty to present students with instructional tasks and activities that require productive struggle. Through this struggle, students will find they are capable of more than they believed possible.

A major component of academic success for your child is their involvement in the activities and programs offered at Spirit Creek Middle School. Parents are welcome to participate in the school council or PTSA. Parents are always welcome to volunteer to support activities in the classroom or around the school.

Many items will be sent home throughout the year requiring the signature of a parent, including: Dress Code, Code of Conduct, Attendance Protocol, and the Parent/Student Handbook. Please sign and return the appropriate forms and review the items thoroughly with your child. **We have high discipline and behavior standards, as well as high academic standards, so it is imperative that you and your child know the policies of both the school and the board of education.**

Teamwork and collaboration are essential and we look forward to working with you to ensure your child's success. If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to any aspect of your child's education, please feel free to contact the school any time.

Again, welcome to the 2019 -2020 school year. I look forward to a regarding experience with you and your child. Our Spirit Creek family is proud to have you with us!

Sincerely,

Kierstin Johnson  
Principal



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## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Principal	Kierstin Johnson
Assistant Principals	Jonavon Harris Cameron Henry
Guidance Counselor	Sharon Caldwell Victoria Davis
Bookkeeper/ Principal's Secretary	Beth Beckett
Data Clerk	
Front Office Secretary	Evelyn Fulton

## TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

School Office	706.592.3987
Guidance	706.592.3987 ext. 2705
Website	<a href="http://www.rcboe.org/spiritcreek">http://www.rcboe.org/spiritcreek</a>

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### NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Richmond County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities for students. Dr. Moore has been designated to investigate any complaint communicated to the Board of Education.



## BELL SCHEDULE

SCMS Daily Schedule	
First Period/ Announcements	9:00 -10:00 (60 minutes/ 5 minute announcements)
Second Period	10:05 -11:00 (55 minutes)
Third Period	11:00 – 12:45
First Lunch	11:05-11:35 Class Time 11:40-12:45 (65 minutes)
Second Lunch	11:40-12:10 Class Time 11:05-11:35 & 12:15-12:45 (65 minutes)
Third Lunch	12:15-12:45 Class Time 11:05-12:10 (65 minutes)
Fourth Period	12:50 - 1:45 (55 minutes)
Fifth Period	1:50 – 2:55 (55 minutes)
Sixth Period	3:00 - 4:00 (60 minutes/ 5 minute announcements)



## FACULTY AND STAFF

### Main Office

Kierstin Johnson  
Beth Becket  
Evelyn Fulton  
Colleen Young

Principal  
Principal's Secretary / Bookkeeper  
Front Office Secretary  
Nurse

### Administrative and Guidance Suite

Cameron Henry  
Sharon Caldwell  
Victoria Davis  
LaToya Ashley

Assistance Principal  
Counselor  
Counselor  
Data Specialist

### Public Safety and Discipline Suite

Jonavon Harris  
SRO Dorothy Holmon

Assistant Principal  
Public Safety

### Media Center

Allison New

Media Specialist

### Teaching Staff

Allen, Rosina  
Cochran, Raynard  
Cody, Juanita  
Coleman, Shirley  
Davis, Melinda  
Franklin, Monica  
Harrington, Shirley  
Harris, Bonnie  
Heslip, Paul  
Hoffman, Shawn  
Holloway, Kimberly  
Hortenstine, Christina  
Johnson, Leoter  
Johnson, Loraine

Johnson, Tracy  
Jones, Jarmichael  
Lovett, Carrie  
Lowery, Beverly  
McClain Jr., Holice  
Peebles, Tamberly  
Rhodes, Heather  
Richardson, Juanita M  
Roberson, Pamela  
Scott, Dorothy  
Stevens, Karmenlita  
Teague, Anthony  
Williams, DeAlsylvonn

### Custodial Staff

Ellis Steed  
Monique Palmer  
Frank Renwick  
Stayder Brown  
Stephanie Barron

Head Custodian  
Assistant Head Custodian  
Custodian  
Custodian  
Custodian





**Food and Nutrition Staff**

Donna Bosserman  
Sharon Kelly  
Dolly Black  
Whitney Nails

Lunchroom Manager  
Inventory Specialist  
Food Service  
Food Service

**District Support Staff**

Carolyn Johnson  
Dana Pickens  
Angela Tate

Social Worker  
School Psychologist  
Title One Specialist





## INSTRUCTION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The middle school program shall provide meaningful learning experiences in:

- Language Arts
- Science
- Health
- Connections
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Physical Education

The middle school program shall be organized to allow for:

- Flexible use of instructional time and space
- A variety of exploratory experiences
- A broad offering of intramural activities
- Opportunities to facilitate transition from the elementary school to the high school
- Use of all school resources in supporting individual students and school programs

All students at Spirit Creek Middle School may participate in connections courses for a semester. The courses offered for the 2019 - 2020 academic year are:

- Robotics
- Computer Literacy
- Physical Education
- Math/Reading Enrichment
- Band
- Music Appreciation
- Health

## REGISTRATION

The first step in developing a strong school program is the registration of students. This gives us essential information to work successfully with each student.

New students register in our guidance office and returning students are required to turn in all registration material by the third day of school. All new and returning students are required to show proof of residency. Failure to do this may result in your child being withdrawn from school.

**The student's age, address, telephone number and emergency health information** are very important. We must be able to reach you in case of an emergency and use it to develop adequate school records. Please help us by being accurate and updating any changes throughout the year. If you do not have a telephone, please leave the number of a neighbor or close friend.



## ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

The academic school day begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. We encourage all students to take advantage of our free breakfast that begins at 8:30 a.m. Car riders and walkers must arrive by 8:50 a.m. to participate in our breakfast program.

**Walkers and car riders** will be dropped off at the front door of the school building and should not arrive before 8:30 a.m. Walkers and car riders will not be permitted to enter the building before 8:30 a.m. and there is no outside supervision before this time. **Bus riders** will be dropped off on the side of the school in the covered area.

Students arriving to school **after 9:00 a.m. are tardy** and must report to the front office to receive a pass to class. Please note that students who are tardy to school are subject to the guidelines outlined in the Richmond County Student Code of Conduct and Discipline.

All students are to drop off their book bag outside their homeroom teacher's classroom and report directly to their respective commons area. Students are not permitted in any other areas of the building.

## DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

We will begin afternoon announcements and our dismissal procedures at 3:50 p.m. daily.

**Walkers and car riders** will exit the building through the front door. All car riders are expected to be picked up by 4:15 p.m. Walkers are not permitted to linger around the building to socialize with friends. For safety reasons, walkers and car riders are not permitted back in the building beyond the front office area.

**Bus riders** will exit on the side of the school. Students need to listen for their bus number and walk orderly in the hallway to their designated area. When students enter the bus area, they are expected to quickly get on their bus. We will not hold buses for students to socialize. Students who wish to ride the bus home with another student must have a signed note by a parent or guardian. The note should be turned in to the office in the morning before 9:30 a.m. for verification. If a student leaves their classroom before their bus is called, he/she will receive a discipline referral.

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

It is essential that the Spirit Creek Middle School maintain a classroom environment that allows teachers to communicate effectively with all students in the class and allows all students in the class to learn. To assist staff in maintaining the necessary classroom environment, the Richmond County School System has created discipline policies and regulations that address the consequences, including suspension or expulsion, for students whose conduct is prejudicial to good order and discipline in the schools or impairs the morale or good conduct of other students.



### Application

Policies, regulations and procedures will apply to all students in attendance in instructional and support programs as well as at school-sponsored activities. Off-campus misconduct that adversely affects the educational climate will also be subject to these policies, regulations and procedures.

### Enforcement

Building principals are responsible for the development of additional guidelines and procedures regarding student conduct needed to maintain proper behavior in schools under their supervision. All such guidelines and procedures shall be consistent with Richmond County School System-adopted discipline policies.

Teachers have the authority and responsibility to make and enforce necessary rules for internal governance in the school and classroom, subject to review by the principal. The principal expects each teacher to maintain a satisfactory standard of conduct in the classroom.

All staff are required to enforce policies, regulations and procedures in a manner that is fair and developmentally appropriate and that considers the student and the individual circumstances involved.



**For more detailed discipline information, please see the official Code of Student Conduct and Discipline Handbook.**


## SPIRIT CREEK BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS


*All students participate in general education learning that includes:*

1. Universal screening to target groups in need of specific instructional and/or behavioral support.
2. Implementation of the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) through a standards-based classroom structure.
3. Differentiation of instruction including fluid, flexible grouping, multiple means of learning and demonstration of learning.
4. Progress monitoring of learning through multiple formative assessments.
5. Positive behavior supports.



 Classroom Expectations	 Hallway Expectations
<b>Studious</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Track the speaker</li> <li>- Focus on the assigned task</li> </ul>	<b>Studious</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walk on right side of hallway</li> <li>- Walk behind the person in front of you</li> </ul>
<b>Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bring materials to class EVERYDAY</li> <li>- Express ideas in a positive way</li> </ul>	<b>Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be in your assigned area when the bell rings</li> <li>- If not with your class, have a pass</li> </ul>
<b>Motivated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be on time</li> <li>- Ask questions</li> <li>- Learn from your mistakes</li> </ul>	<b>Motivated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go directly to your destination</li> <li>- Use inside voice</li> </ul>
<b>Strong</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guide others to do the right thing</li> <li>- Accept that sometimes things will be difficult</li> </ul>	<b>Strong</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remind others of expectations when necessary</li> </ul>
#DolphinDynasty #Everybody	#DolphinDynasty #Everybody

 Bathroom Expectations
<b>Studious</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allow for privacy</li> <li>- Always flush</li> <li>- Wash hands with soap</li> </ul>
<b>Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go during scheduled times</li> <li>- Save emergency passes for real emergencies</li> </ul>
<b>Motivated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only 4 students in bathroom at one time</li> <li>- Use bathroom for appropriate business only</li> </ul>
<b>Strong</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep bathrooms clean</li> <li>- Report any issues to an adult</li> </ul>
#DolphinDynasty #Everybody

 Cafeteria Expectations
<b>Studious</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow directions of all adults</li> </ul>
<b>Committed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enter the line in an orderly manner</li> <li>- Stay in your seat until dismissed</li> <li>- Sit in your classes assigned area</li> </ul>
<b>Motivated</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clean your area</li> <li>- Use inside voice</li> </ul>
<b>Strong</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remind others of expectations when necessary</li> </ul>
#DolphinDynasty #Everybody



## BUS CONDUCT

The following rules are for the safety, health, and welfare of all students who ride school buses. Parents are requested to impress on their children the importance of obeying these rules. We have a large number of bus students and good conduct is vital.

### SCHOOL BUS RULES AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The driver is in charge of the bus and pupils aboard. Obey the driver promptly and cheerfully.
2. Be on time. The driver cannot wait beyond his/her regular schedule for those who are late.
3. Wait in an orderly line off the street or road.
4. Cross in front of the bus only when the road is clear and at a safe distance in front of the bus in order to be seen by the driver.
- 5. Do NOT run toward the bus when it is in motion.**
- 6. Ride only the bus assigned by school officials.**
7. Do not try to get on or off the bus or move about inside while it is in motion.
8. Pupils must occupy seats assigned to them by the bus driver or school officials and remain seated when the bus is moving. Ride three to a seat, if necessary, and do not exchange seats unless given permission by the driver. If all seats are occupied, stand to the rear of the white line as long as the bus is in motion.

Behave on the bus as you are expected to behave in the classroom. Insolence, disobedience, vulgarity, profanity, fighting, pushing or similar offensive acts will not be tolerated.

Do not engage in any activity which might divert the driver's attention and cause an accident such as:

- Loud talking or laughing
- Unnecessary talking with the driver
- Extending any part of the body out of the windows or doors
- Students may not open or close windows without permission of the driver, nor shall they regulate or operate any part of the bus.

Do not engage in any activity that may damage or litter the bus or other property. The following actions are prohibited at all times:

- Smoking or eating on the bus.
- Spitting or throwing anything on or from the bus.
- Possessing knives or sharp objects on the bus.
- Bringing animals on the bus.
- Tampering with mechanical equipment, accessories, or controls of the bus.

Students will not leave the bus while going to or from school without permission of the driver. The driver will not give permission except in case of personal emergency, or upon request of the principal or the student's parents.

Pupils must be courteous to the driver, fellow students and passers-by at all times.

Report promptly to the driver any damage done to the bus. Persons causing damage will be expected to cover all costs.



**Bus violations** are subject to the same disciplinary actions as misconduct at school. When necessary, the principal may suspend or revoke riding privileges. In most situations, the first offense will result in a verbal warning. The second offense will result in a phone call to the parent/guardian. The third offense will result in a three day suspension of riding privileges. The fourth offense will result in a five day suspension and the fifth offense will result in a ten day suspension. Any further offenses may cause the loss of riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

## GRADING

In an effort to align our county grading system with other schools and colleges the following scale has been adopted:

- A = 90 – 100
- B = 80 – 89
- C = 75 – 79
- D = 70 – 74
- F = Below 70

All parents are strongly encouraged to register for our computerized Infinite Campus parent portal system to review grades weekly. If you have concerns about your child's grade, please do not wait until report cards to contact the teacher.

## HONORS

We recognize and encourage student achievement each grading period. We will recognize areas of achievement at the end of the school year for all grade levels. The areas we recognize are:

- All A Honor Roll
- A and B Honor Roll
- Perfect Attendance
- Distinguished Scholars per Content Area
- Trailblazer

**The Trailblazer Award** is a unique tradition at Spirit Creek Middle School. A trailblazer is one who leads the way, who demands his or her own personal best effort and one who has concern for those who follow. This award will be given to one student from each team who best exemplifies these qualities in the areas of academics, extracurricular activities, and interpersonal relationships.

Athletic and extracurricular activities will be recognized at a special ceremony at the end of the school year.

## WITHDRAWING STUDENTS

If you plan to withdraw your child from school, please give us notice **at least 24 hours in advance**. Instruction shall not be interrupted to complete the withdrawal process.



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY: RULE 10**

Students who are absent from school are required to bring a written excuse for the absence their first day back at school.

### Absence(s): Definitions

#### Excused Absence

- A. Personal illness.
- B. Family death and funeral.
- C. Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours.
- D. Attendance of non-school activities or functions authorized by the Superintendent or designee.
- E. Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith.
- F. Mandate or order of government agency.
- G. Extreme circumstances that cannot be resolved outside school hours; parent or guardian must request and receive approval from the Principal or designated representative.
- H. Any other absence not explicitly defined herein, but deemed by the local school board of education to have merit based on the circumstances.

### Unexcused Absence

Any absence not covered in (A)-(G) above, shall be declared unexcused. It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that no unexcused absences are allowed.

If parents keep their child out for other reasons outside of (A)-(G), such absence shall be deemed unlawful and therefore unexcused.

For any absence beyond (or after) 5 days, the parent shall be required to provide an official physician's note or another excuse from an acceptable or official third party justifying the absence.

### Truant

Truant is defined as any child who has more than 5 days of unexcused absences during the academic year.

### Full School Day

For a student to be marked present for a full school day, a student must be in attendance for a one half or more of the school day (or at least half of the school day). However, a student will not be recognized for perfect attendance after (10) tardies.

### Full Day Attendance Required

A student who wishes to leave school early must bring a written request to school stating the reason for early dismissal. Leaving school for unauthorized purposes before the end of the instructional (or school) day will be counted as a tardy. Parents should not pick up students before the end of the school day except where there is a legitimate emergency.





Students who are absent from school are required to bring an excuse for the absence their first day back at school. \* **An absence is either excused or unexcused.** If a note is not received within 24 hours of the absence or the next school day, that absence will be automatically considered unexcused. It is the policy of the Richmond County Board of Education that unexcused absences are not permitted. Class work missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up. Any student who serves a short term suspension out of school shall be allowed to make up missed assignments and tests. Absences that are lawful and therefore excusable shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the state of Georgia and local policy. Lawful excuses include:

- Personal illness.
- Family death and funeral.
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours.
- Attendance of non-school activities or functions authorized by the superintendent or principal.
- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith.
- Mandate or order of a governmental agency.
- Extreme circumstances that cannot be resolved outside school hours; parents or guardian must request and receive approval from the principal or her designated representative.

**(For more detailed attendance information, please see pgs. 10-13 in the official Code of Student Conduct and Discipline Handbook)**

#### GEORGIA COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAW:

All states require children of certain age ranges to attend school or receive some type of formal education, whether it's through public school, private school, homeschool, or some other venue. Georgia compulsory education laws require children between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend school, with penalties including fines and/or prison (applicable to parents) for noncompliance.

While most school-age children go to public school, with a much smaller component enrolled in private school, some parents opt for homeschooling instead. In fact, the statute addressing Georgia's compulsory education laws also includes details about home study programs. For instance, home study (or home school) programs must meet certain requirements, such as keeping regular attendance records and making sure students receive an education comparable to that offered by a Georgia public school.

Any child who is found away from home and not in school (truant) may be placed in the temporary custody of a peace officer. Truant children also may be subject to processing by a juvenile court. If a child who has aged-out of the compulsory education requirements decides to withdraw from school, he or she first will need the written permission of a parent or legal guardian.



## EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal interrupts our instructional environment and is strongly discouraged. Students will not be dismissed early after 3:30 p.m. because of the amount of activity in the front office. Students will only be released to the parent/guardian or authorized persons listed on the student's Infinite Campus summary page. Additionally, any person wishing to pick a student up must have identification that includes their full name and picture.

**We do not take this information by phone.** There is no way to verify information or the authenticity of the person calling over the phone. We are sorry if this causes any inconvenience, but it is entirely in the safety interests of your children that we follow this policy.

Early dismissals for unexcused reasons are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as a tardy.



## TARDY POLICY

Please read Rule 12 of the Uniform Code of Conduct and Discipline for the Richmond County Board of Education. It states:

### *Rule 12: Tardiness (Grades K-12)*

*The accumulation of unlawful tardies each semester will warrant disciplinary action. The accumulation of lawful tardies will not warrant disciplinary action; however, there are very few excuses for tardiness, which will be accepted as a valid reason for tardiness. The lawful excuses for tardiness are:*

*Where the student has a medical or dental appointment, which cannot be reasonably scheduled outside the school day, a signed written statement from the appropriate physician or dentist shall be required to validate a tardy for medical reason.*

*Appearance before a court – when required by subpoena, a copy of said subpoena to be furnished to the school to validate tardiness caused by a court appearance.*

*In special circumstances-rarely happen but are NOT likely to reoccur (such as when a parent brings a student to school, if the Principal agrees with the circumstances.) Oversleeping is considered unlawful.*

Chronic tardiness is often a good indication that the student is living out-of-zone and as such will be referred to Social Services for a zone verification visit to the parent's home (Code of Conduct rule #12). Excessive tardies must be referred to the Department of Family and Children's services for parental neglect.

## **BRING YOUR OWN TECHNOLOGY (BYOT) / CELL PHONES**

Spirit Creek Middle School, in cooperation with the Richmond County School System has diligently worked to provide teachers with technology resources for instructional activities. Most classrooms have a dedicated laptop cart and therefore, no child has a need to bring a cellphone for instructional purposes. Nevertheless, Spirit Creek Middle will participate in the BYOT initiative this year. **Students will only be permitted to use their technology to supplement instruction with teacher approval.** The use of technology outside of the classroom will be prohibited and disciplinary actions outlined in the Richmond County Code of Conduct will be enforced. **If your child's technology is lost, stolen or damaged, the Richmond County School System will not be responsible.**



## **PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

The faculty is working diligently to provide various avenues to communicate with parents. All teachers will update grades in our parent portal and class information on our school website weekly. We encourage all parents to contact teachers and/or administration anytime through email or telephone. We will return phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

To celebrate our successes and share important school information, administration will send a telephone message to parents when necessary. We will also share information through our Spirit Creek Middle School's website at [rboe.org/spiritcreek](http://rboe.org/spiritcreek).

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act requires that parents be notified that they may request information about teacher qualifications. If your child's core academic teacher is not "highly qualified", you will receive a letter within the first four consecutive weeks of instruction.

## **DRESS CODE**

Spirit Creek Middle School follows the Richmond County Dress & Grooming Code of Conduct Policy Rule #14. We encourage parents to read the policy with students. In general, the following policies seem to be violated most frequently:

1. No earrings (males) and body piercings (males and females)
2. No extreme hair styles or colors
3. No holes in pants/jeans - NOT EVEN WITH A PATCH!
4. No gym shorts or jogging suits (unless dressed out for PE)
5. No shoes without a back strap (flip flops, etc)
6. No leggings unless covered with an appropriate (knee length) shirt/dress
7. No tank tops or midriff tops. Girls should not show cleavage.
8. No oversized coats (THIS INCLUDES THE WEARING OF BLANKETS)
9. No hoods/hats/scarves should be worn on the head during school hours.
10. No sagging pants (males and females) or oversized shirts (males)
11. No bedroom slippers/sports slides

Students in violation of our dress code policy will be asked to call home for a change of clothing. If they are unable to reach a parent/guardian, the student will be placed in our in-school suspension room for the remainder of the school day. Further violations of the dress code policy will result in progressive consequences.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

School rules should be applicable to all students, regardless of their endeavors in extra-curricular activities. There should not be favor or permissiveness with athletes, band students, cheerleaders, and literary or one-act play participants. The policy recommends for athletes and competitors in all areas are as follows:



- If the athlete (or participant) is absent on the day of the game, he/she is not eligible to participate, unless it is a bona-fide absence. Examples are funerals, mandated court appearances. These will be accepted as excused absences with advance notification to the office/homeroom teacher.
- Any unexcused absence and/or cutting class on the day of the game will result in the athlete not being eligible for the game.
- If an athlete is under suspension, he/she is not eligible to participate until properly reinstated in school. Suspension includes in-school suspension. Students may not participate in practice while under suspension.
- Chronic disciplinary referrals may result in a student being dismissed from the team.
- Participants must meet all state and county eligibility requirements.

## ATHLETICS

Spirit Creek Middle School is proud of its diverse athletic program. The sports offered at Spirit Creek are:

Football	Basketball (boys and girls)
Track and Field	Cheerleading
Baseball	

Students in each grade level may try out for athletic teams if they have:

- Proof of insurance
- A current physical examination on file (good for one year)
- Parent permission form
- Athlete roster form
- Clearance form

All students who participate in athletics are required to meet academic eligibility requirements as mandated by the state of Georgia Department of Education. Grade evaluations are based on the previous semester report. 7th and 8th graders can only fail 1 class in order to be eligible.

## SCHOOL INSURANCE

Student insurance will be available to all students on an optional basis. Student insurance is required of all participants in middle school athletics and cheerleading. This insurance must be purchased before the student tries out for a particular activity.

## TRYOUTS AND SCHEDULES

Information concerning tryouts and schedules for a particular sport will be available on our website and announced to students during morning announcements at appropriate times during the school year.



## GUIDANCE SERVICES

Our school guidance services help students grow emotionally and socially. The counselor is available to all students and parents. The guidance counselor provides the following services:

- Individual guidance
- Classroom guidance
- Small group support
- Academic advisement and planning
- Career exploration
- Liaison between school, family and community
- Community resource person
- Middle school orientation/support

## CLINIC AND SCHOOL NURSE SERVICES

The purpose of our clinic is to care for students who become ill or receive injuries at school. A certified nurse is assigned to the school one half of the school day. Below is general clinic information:

1. An Administration of Medication form is required for prescription and nonprescription medication to be dispensed at school.
2. All medication must be in the original container.
3. A student with a temperature over 100 will not be permitted to remain at school.

## MEDICATION POLICY

All medicines require written permission from a parent/guardian. Bring to school only the dosage necessary to last the duration of treatment while at school. For recurring ailments it would be to the student's advantage to have medication on hand in the clinic, such as asthma, allergy and/or pain treatments. All medication must be housed and administered by the nurse or authorized personnel. **\*Students are forbidden to share, give, receive, or take any medication from other students. This is to include all over-the-counter medications (i.e. Tylenol, aspirin) and prescribed medications.**

## MEDIA SERVICES

The media center is open daily during the school day for use by students, faculty and parents. Students will be given an orientation to the media center at the beginning of the school year. Students must have a pass to enter the media center and have a purpose for being there.

Students are responsible for the materials he/she checks out from the media center. If a student loses or damages a book or a computer or laptop, it must be paid before the student may check out additional materials.



**TEXTBOOKS SUPPLIED BY THE STATE OF GEORGIA AND THE RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM WILL BE ISSUED TO STUDENTS THROUGH OUR MEDIA CENTER. LAPTOPS ISSUED DURING CLASS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO WHOM IT WAS ASSIGNED. THESE ARE CONSIDERED LOANS AND ALL TEXTBOOKS AND LAPTOPS SHOULD BE TREATED AS BORROWED PROPERTY. IN THE EVENT OF LOSS OR ABUSE OF TEXTBOOKS OR LAPTOP, WHETHER ACCIDENTAL OR PURPOSEFUL, STUDENTS MUST PAY FOR THE BOOK(S) AND/OR LAPTOP(S) AT REPLACEMENT COST IN ACCORDANCE WITH GEORGIA STATE LAW. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT BOOKS BE COVERED TO REDUCE WEAR.**

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators may request a conference to address academic or discipline issues. Conferences should be arranged through the homeroom teacher and scheduled during the teachers' planning time. The school will make all efforts to accommodate parent's schedule.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Many teachers extend their classroom instruction with visits to other areas of the community. Trips are a privilege. Discipline records will be reviewed before students are permitted to sign up for trips.

Any student participating in field trips is to obtain a field trip request from the sponsor. The form requires the signature of a parent or guardian after all the trip information has been recorded. Completed forms are to be returned to the sponsor.

The student is responsible for informing each teacher that he/she will be on a field trip. The student is also responsible to keep up with the work missed as a result of a field trip, and will not be excused from tests or other obligations.

Students should remember that they represent their school and their appearance and behavior should be a credit to Spirit Creek Middle School. On all field trips, school rules, whether or not the trip occurs during school hours, remain in effect. Violations of school rules on a field trip may result in the revocation of a student's privilege of participating in future field trips or other school activities. Students may also be subject to discipline as outlined in the Code of Conduct.



## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for safeguarding and securing their personal property. It is recommended that all personal items are labeled with the student's name.

Students are cautioned not to bring unnecessary money or valuable belongings to school. Please review the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline rule 1(r) for disciplinary actions.

## **POLICY FOR ACCESS TO THE INTERNET**

Access to material that may be considered objectionable in a school setting comes with internet connectivity. The value of access to educational information and interaction on the internet cannot be overstated. Internet access from Spirit Creek Middle School shall be efficient, ethical and legal and in compliance district policy.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

- 1. INTERNET ACCESS IS AUTHORIZED ONLY IN SUPPORT OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM AND THE CURRICULUM AS OUTLINED IN THE RICHMOND COUNTY CURRICULUM GUIDES.**
- 2. TRANSMISSION OF ANY MATERIAL IN VIOLATION OF ANY U.S. OR STATE REGULATION IS PROHIBITED, INCLUDING MATERIAL FOR WHICH THERE IS A COPY RIGHT, THREATENING OR OBSCENE MATERIAL, OR MATERIAL PROTECTED BY TRADE SECRET.**
- 3. COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES USE IS PROHIBITED. INAPPROPRIATE USE WILL RESULT IN CANCELLATION OF PRIVILEGES AND MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION. INTERNET USAGE IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT.**
- 4. VANDALISM IS DEFINED AS ANY ATTEMPT TO HARM OR DESTROY HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, OR DATA BELONGING TO ANOTHER USER, AGENCY, OR OWNER. VANDALISM WILL RESULT IN THE IMMEDIATE CANCELLATION OF PRIVILEGES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

Students who abuse the internet policy will have their internet privileges revoked and disciplined according to the guidelines in the Richmond County School System Code of Student Conduct and Discipline handbook.





## PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

The Richmond County Board of Education policy requires that students must earn a passing grade (70 and above) in the following content areas:

- Language Arts,
- mathematics,
- science **or** social studies,
- and an **overall** passing average in all connections courses to be promoted to the next grade.

**In addition to the above policy, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to pass the Mathematics portion and be on Reading Level of the Georgia Milestones to be promoted to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. State Education Policy 160-4-5.11(3)(1)(3) states:**

**3. No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not achieve grade level on the state-adopted assessments in reading and mathematics and meet promotion standards and criteria established by the local board of education for the school that the student attends.**

## SELLING AND SOLICITING

Students are not permitted to sell any items at school such as candy, gum, commercial products, etc. for profit. Any items intended for sale or sold for profit will be taken from students and will not be returned.

## STUDENT FOOD SERVICES

Our school food program is designed to provide a well-balanced breakfast and lunch every day. Breakfast and lunch are free to all students.

If bringing lunch from home, students may include a drink or get milk from the lunchroom. Sports (squeeze) bottles, canned drinks and glass containers are not permitted in the lunchroom. Noncarbonated drinks are sold through the lunchroom.

Students are prohibited from ordering food for delivery to the school. Food from area restaurants are only permitted if they are in a personal container or bag.

Microwaves are not available for student use.

## TELEPHONES AND MESSAGES

There is a telephone in the front office designated for student use. Students are not permitted to use the phone during instructional time unless it is an emergency. Forgetting gym shorts, lunch money, books and asking to go home with a friend are not



considered emergencies. Please make arrangements for participating in extra-curricular activities before leaving for school.

The front office staff will deliver telephone messages to students for emergencies only during the instructional day. We will not interrupt instructional time to deliver messages related to transportation changes. These types of messages will be delivered at the end of the school day.

## **FIRE, TORNADO AND SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire drills are required by law once a month and are an important safety precaution. The alarm is sounded and it is essential that everyone obeys promptly and clears the building by their assigned route as quickly as possible. Students should refrain from loud talking and remain outside until they are given the signal to return to the building.

Tornado and safety drills are equally important. We will conduct one tornado drill during the school year. Our school has a safety plan that will be reviewed with faculty, staff and students at the beginning of the school year. The principal will review the safety plan with parents during open house and our first PTSO meeting. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings to ensure they are aware of our safety procedures. We will conduct three safety drills throughout the school year to ensure we are prepared in case of an emergency.

## **GIFTED PROGRAM**

New regulations as established by the Georgia Board of Education now require multiple criteria for the identification of students for the gifted program. Please contact our counselors for specific qualification and guidelines.

## **VISITORS ON CAMPUS**

Persons not enrolled at Spirit Creek Middle School are not allowed on the school campus during school hours unless they have checked in at the main office and received a visitor's ID Badge. This badge must be visibly displayed. Parental visits do not constitute a conference. Please contact the front office to schedule a conference.

## **ASSEMBLIES/PEP RALLIES**

For your enjoyment and enrichment, you will be allowed to attend scheduled assemblies and pep rallies throughout the year. All school-sponsored programs are at the discretion and supervision of the teachers and/or the administration.

Please observe the following rules when attending assemblies:

- Enter the assembly in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Stay with your teacher and report to your assigned seating area immediately.
- Your quiet cooperation is expected as soon as the person in charge of the assembly appears.
- You may join in any group activity that is on the program: Singing, cheering, etc...



- Wild clapping, whistling, stomping, booing or any other disruption will not be tolerated.
- No food, beverages or gum are permitted in assemblies.
- After the assembly, you are to remain seated until properly dismissed.
- If you come to school late and the assembly program has begun prior to your arrival, you will not be allowed to attend the assembly.
- Repeated violations of assembly or pep rally rules will result in revocation of privileges; placement in In-School Suspension or another alternative setting; and/or administrative discipline.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

It is the student's responsibility to turn in each textbook to the issuing teacher. Students must take books to class every day. Textbooks will have the school's name, and a number will be assigned to each textbook. A periodic check will be made to see if each student has his/her own textbook. The teacher of the course will issue textbooks. Lost or damaged textbooks should be reported to that teacher. Students will sign for textbooks and are responsible for these textbooks. Parents or guardians will be notified of the amount owed for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, system or state owned materials, or equipment. Students who owe for textbooks, library books, or equipment will not be issued additional textbooks or library books until restitution is made. Graduating seniors will not be permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies until all fees are paid. Students are required to have class materials, such as pencils, pens, paper, books, uniforms, etc., and other items that a teacher may require for a specific instructional purpose when students go to class.

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**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL. LET'S HAVE A SUCCESSFUL 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR.**