



# S.P.A.R.K.S

2021-2022

Program Guide

**Student/Parent Handbook Acknowledgement and Pledge**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Acknowledgement and Pledge**

I acknowledge being provided electronic access to the Student/Parent Handbook and WCISEC Policy on student behavior. I have read these materials and understand all the rules, responsibilities and expectations. In order to help keep my school safe, I pledge to adhere to all SPARKSs and Cooperative policies and procedures.

I understand that the Student/Parent Handbook and Cooperative policies may be amended during the year and that such changes are available on the WCISEC website under the programs tab or in the school office.

I understand that my failure to return this acknowledgement and pledge will not relieve me from being responsible for knowing or complying with School and Cooperative rules, policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge being provided electronic access to the Student/Parent Handbook and Cooperative policy on student behavior. I have read these materials and understand all the rules, responsibilities and expectations.

I understand that the Student/Parent Handbook and Cooperative policies may be amended during the year and that such changes are available on the WCISEC website under the programs tab or in the school office.

I understand that my failure to return this acknowledgement and pledge will not relieve me from being responsible for knowing or complying with SPARKS and Cooperative rules, policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**General School Information**

This handbook is a summary of the school’s rules and expectations, and is not a comprehensive statement of school procedures. West Central Illinois Special Education Coop’s comprehensive policy manual is available for public inspection through the Coop’s website at [www.wcisec.org](http://www.wcisec.org) or the coop office at 130 S. Lafayette Street, Suite 201, Macomb, IL 61455.

SPARKS is a public day school that provides programming and services for students in grades K - 12+ with Multiple Disabilities, Intellectual Disabilities or severe Autism.

The West Central Illinois Special Education Coop Executive Board has hired the following administrative staff to operate the school:

- Mrs. Leyona Wiley, W.C.I.S.E.C. Director
- Ms. Betsy Wujek, W.C.I.S.E.C. Assistant Director
- Mrs. Pam Nelson, W.C.I.S.E.C Program Coordinator

SPARKS contact information

Ingersoll Middle School  
1605 East Ash Street  
Canton, IL 61520

**Program Coordinator**

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**Angela Evans**  
(309) 647-9978  
Fax: (309) 575-3072  
Teacher: Angie Evans - [aevans@wcisec.org](mailto:aevans@wcisec.org)

**Stacie Mortland**  
(309) 647-9978  
Fax: (309) 575-3072  
Teacher: Stacie Mortland- [smortland@wcisec.org](mailto:smortland@wcisec.org)

**ADMISSION**

Admission to SPARKS begins with an initial referral contact made by the home school or another agency. A staffing conference to determine the student’s eligibility for the program is held, followed by an intake interview conducted by the alternative school staff.

Upon enrollment at SPARKS the student maintains membership in the home school district as indicated in the students’ Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The student must follow the rules and guidelines of the home school district when participating in extracurricular activities.

## **ORIENTATION**

Prior to entrance into the program the student and parent/guardian may receive an orientation consisting of:

1. A tour of the building
2. Explanation of the school rules and policies
3. An explanation of the daily data collection
4. Scheduling
5. Access to electronic program guide at [www.wcisec.org](http://www.wcisec.org)
6. Filling out medical release and parent information forms

## **OVERVIEW**

SPARKS in Canton, Illinois, is an alternative approach to education for those students who have difficulties with academic, communication, adaptive, functional, and social skills aligned with diagnosis of Autism, Intellectual Disabilities, or Multiple Disabilities.

A base curriculum of SPARKS offers opportunities for:

1. Individual and small group academic instruction
2. Community learning experiences
3. Functional and Life Skills instruction

## **VISITORS**

All visitors are required to enter through the main doors at the southwest end of the circle drive. Press the doorbell and listen for the click, and proceed immediately to the main office to sign in at the office and pick up a visitor's badge. On those occasions when large groups of parents and friends are invited onto school property, visitors are not required to sign in, but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Any person wishing to confer with a staff member shall contact that staff member by telephone to make an appointment. Conferences will be held outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Visitors may observe the SPARKS program provided they notify the Program Coordinator no less than 2 hours prior to the desired date of the visit. Authorization for the visit shall be given by the Program Coordinator after consultation with the classroom teacher. The Program Coordinator and/or teacher reserves the right to refuse visitors' access to the program classrooms when, in the opinion of staff, there is reason to believe the visit would disrupt the educational process.

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school or cooperative grounds or in any school or cooperative building; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Program Coordinator or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who; (1) refuses to provide requested identification, (2) interferes with, disrupts, or threatens to disrupt any program activity or the learning environment, (3) or engages in an activity in violation of policy 8:30, Conduct of Cooperative Property.

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SPARKS expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on cooperative property or at a cooperative event. No person on cooperative property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, student, or any other person;
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language;
3. Possess a weapon, or any dangerous device;
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property;
5. Damage or deface cooperative property;
6. Violate any Illinois law, town or county ordinance;
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products;
8. Consume, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs;
9. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any cooperative activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner);
10. Enter any portion of cooperative premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Governing Board;
11. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized cooperative employee's directive;
12. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller blading, roller skating, or skateboarding;
13. Violate other cooperative policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or cooperative employee; or
14. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the cooperative or a cooperative function.

### **CONVICTED CHILD SEX OFFENDER**

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender meets either of the following two exceptions:

1. The offender is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the building Program Coordinator of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other issues pertaining to his or her child.
2. The offender received permission to be present from the board, superintendent, or superintendent's designee. If permission is granted, the superintendent or board president shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the building Program Coordinator. In all cases, the superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity

### **ATTENDANCE**

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between seven and seventeen years of age (unless the child has already graduated from high school) shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session. Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

## SPARKS Program Guide

There are certain exceptions to the attendance requirement for children who: attend private school, are physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), are lawfully and necessarily employed, are between the ages of 12 and 14 while in confirmation classes, have a religious reason requiring absence, or are 16 or older and employed and enrolled in a graduation incentive program.

### STUDENT ABSENCES

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health, or other reasons as approved by the Program Coordinator.

A student will be released from school, as an excused absence, to observe a religious holiday or for religious instruction. The student's parents/guardians must give written notice to the building Program Coordinator at least 5 calendar days before anticipated absences. Students excused for religious reasons will be given the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent credit.

Unexcused absences include but are not limited to over sleeping, missing the bus, shopping, hair appointments, working or looking for work or any activity that can be accomplished after school hours.

**Parents may excuse the first 9 absences of the school year. After the 9th absence the student must produce a doctor's note or get the Program Coordinator's approval for an absence.**

In the event of any absence, the student's parent or guardian is required to call SPARKS (309) 647-9978 before 9:00 AM to explain the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 AM on the day of the student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent is unable to contact the school, a signed note should be sent with the student, explaining the absence. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. Upon parent or guardian request, the reason for the absence will be kept confidential. **Absences not excused within two business days will remain unexcused.**

SPARKS students attend school according to Canton CUSD #66 school calendar. A copy of this calendar is posted on our website, [www.wcisec.org](http://www.wcisec.org) under classes. It is the student's responsibility to know when school is in session.

### TRUANCY

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is a violation of state law which carries with it a Class C misdemeanor.

SPARKS students from 16 and under will be referred to truancy after 3 unexcused absences.

### EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

In case of bad weather and other local emergencies, the school outreach system or feel free to listen to any local radio or television station to be advised of school closings or early dismissals. School closing for any reason will be announced by 7 a.m. If bad weather or other emergency occurs during the day, The school outreach system will be used or listen to local media stations for possible early dismissal information.

For your child's safety, make certain your child knows ahead of time where to go in case of an early dismissal.

## **REMOTE/E-LEARNING**

WCISEC will implement a remote/e-learning day(s) in the event school may be canceled due to an emergency. All WCISEC students have an established and coop managed Google email account which they will use to access their teacher's Google Classroom. For those students without internet connection, assignments will be provided during extended periods of remote/e-learning.

## **HOURS**

Doors will be unlocked at 8:05 AM each morning. Doors will be locked at 9:00 each morning and students who arrive late must use the front door and report to the office. Dismissal will begin at 2:30 PM with all students being dismissed by 2:50 PM.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

1. Transportation is provided by your home district according the Canton CUSD #66 School Calendar.
2. Out of town students must ride district transportation unless other arrangements have been made with the home district and the SPARKS Program Coordinator.
3. If you are not riding your regular transportation and someone other than a parent or guardian is picking you up, SPARKS must be contacted by a parent.
4. It is possible for a student who does not demonstrate appropriate bus behaviors to receive a bus suspension. If a student is suspended from the bus, the parent may take the student to school.
5. A student who is suspended from riding the bus who does not have alternate transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternate transportation to school.
6. If you do not arrive on the bus, the driver of the vehicle you arrived in must check in with the office.
7. If your behavior is a concern you may not be permitted to get on the bus. You may remain at school until transportation can be arranged.
8. Students will only be permitted to ride their district's bus and may not take another district's bus.

## **BUSSES**

Those students that are unable to follow district rules may earn a bus suspension. The bus guidelines are as follows:

1. Students should be ready and outside five minutes early. School buses are on tight schedules and cannot wait.
2. Stay out of the street and roads when waiting for your bus.
3. The bus will only pick up or drop off students only at their designated stop.
4. Always cross the road in front of the bus where the bus driver can see you. Walk 10 steps ahead of the bus and wait until the bus driver signals for you to cross.
5. Use an inside voice while on the bus
6. Be absolutely quiet when the bus is approaching a railroad crossing.
7. If there is a bus emergency, stay calm, listen to the driver and follow the instructions.
8. Remain seated while the bus is in motion. Do not move around or change seats on the bus.
9. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times. Do not throw anything out of the bus windows.
10. No eating or drinking is allowed on the bus.
11. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Riders who destroy property will pay for the damages.
12. Keep bags, coats and all other objects out of the aisles.
13. Do not litter. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary and orderly.
14. When you get off the bus move away quickly and stay clear of the rear wheels.
15. The driver/monitor is in full charge of the bus and students while in transit.

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16. The bus driver/monitor is authorized to assign seats.

**Consequences** for inappropriate bus behavior may include one or more of the following:

1. Restricted lunch and/or breakfast
2. Loss of privileges
3. Loss of points
  
4. In-school suspension
5. Meeting with parents
6. Bus suspension
7. Police notification/involvement

## VIDEO AND AUDIO MONITORING SYSTEMS

A video and/or audio monitoring system may be in use on the school bus and a video monitoring system may be in use in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the tape may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

## ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Individuals with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities within their home districts.. Individuals with disabilities should notify the building Program Coordinator or home district Principal if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program or meeting.

## MEDICATION

Students at SPARKS cannot have in their possession any medication, prescription or over the counter. Possession of medication may result in discipline.

Prior to taking medication at school, students who need to take medication during the day, prescribed or over the counter, must have forms filled out and signed by a physician on file. All medication will be kept in the office.

A student who is absent or whose physician, PA, or advanced Practice Registered Nurse anticipates his/her absences from school because of a medical condition may be eligible for homebound instruction. Homebound eligibility and determination will be made at an IEP meeting.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Parents/Guardians of English Language Learners will be informed how they can (1) be involved in the education of their children, and (2) be an active participant in assisting their children to obtain English proficiency, achieve at a high level within a well-rounded education and meet challenging state academic standards expected of all students. For questions related to this program or to express input in the school's English Language Learner Program, contact Mrs. Nelson, Program Coordinator at SPARKS.



## **GRADING AND PROMOTIONS**

School report cards are mailed to parents on a quarterly basis. Along with the report cards, parents will receive measured IEP goals and any relevant data (ie. academic data from AIMSWeb, and behavior data). For questions regarding grades and data please contact your child's case manager.

Students will not be required to take or participate in any class or courses in comprehensive sex education, including in grades 6-12, instruction on both abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; family life instruction, including in grades 6-12, instruction on the prevention, transmission, and spread of AIDS; instruction on diseases; recognizing and avoiding sexual abuse; or instruction on donor programs for organ/tissue, blood donor, and transplantation, if his or her parent or guardian submits a written objection. The parent or guardian's decision will not be the reason for any student discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on a successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on standardized tests and other testing. A student will not be promoted based upon age or any other social reasons not related to academic performance; unless the student ages out of an elementary district.

## **ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

Individuals with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to participate in all school-sponsored services, programs, or activities. Individuals with disabilities should notify the building principal if they have a disability that will require special assistance or services and, if so, what services are required. This notification should occur as far in advance as possible of the school-sponsored function, program or meeting.

## **SCHOOL DRESS CODE/STUDENT APPEARANCE**

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well fitting manner while on school property and /or in attendance at school sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment.

1. Students' dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or picture alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.
2. Students' dress (including accessories and skin) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
3. Hats, gloves of any kind, coats, bandanas, headbands, and sunglasses may not be worn in the building during the school day. Chains need to be left home.
4. Clothing with holes, rips, tears, and chains, and clothing that is otherwise poorly fitting, showing skin and/or undergarments may not be worn at school.
5. The length of shorts or skirts must be appropriate for the school environment.
6. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
7. Articles of apparel must be modest. Spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, low cut shirts are subject to the discretion of SPARKSStaff.
8. Pants will be worn around the waist in a manner that does not show garments or skin underneath. (1" or more of the under garment or skin.)
9. Book bags, backpacks and briefcases must be kept in a locker, cubbie, or closet. Girls may bring purses, but they must remain locked up in their lockers or a predetermined location within the classroom during the day.
10. If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, the Program Coordinator will make the final decision.

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11. Students whose dress causes a substantial disruption or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, staff or others may be subject to discipline.

*Students who are found in violation of the school dress code will be asked to leave the room and correct the violation and then return to class. Students who repeatedly violate the dress code may receive in school suspensions.*

## **LOCKERS**

Lockers are the property of Canton CUSD #66. All students will be assigned a locker. Lockers will not be shared. Students should have no expectation of privacy for the personal property left in the lockers.

## **SUSPENSION POLICY**

SPARKS will make every effort to handle discipline issues without the use of out of school suspensions. Suspendable offenses include but are not limited to:

1. Behavior that poses a danger to other students, themselves, or the staff.
2. Prolonged verbal abuse toward staff or peers.
3. Prolonged physical aggression toward staff
4. Physical aggression with contact toward peers.
5. Conduct so disruptive over a period of time, classroom activities cannot continue.
6. Refusal to stay in the assigned area.
7. Disrespectful behavior toward a visitor or someone within the community.
8. Stealing
9. Possession of drugs, alcohol or a weapon.
10. Continued harassment of a peer.
11. When attempts to modify the behavior within the school have not been successful.
12. Prolonged refusal to follow staff directives.

## **CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones and electronic devices should be powered off and remain out of sight. Staff will ask students to either put the device away or turn it over if students refuse to comply. Students who refuse to comply may face additional discipline including parent contact.

## **NOTIFICATION REGARDING STUDENT ACCOUNTS OR PROFILES ON SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES**

The Director or designee shall notify students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of each of the following in accordance with the Right to Privacy in the School Setting, 105 ILCS 75/.

1. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent(s)/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the students' account or profile on a social networking website.
2. School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to make a factual determination.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Students may be disciplined for misconduct, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco materials to include electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vapor items,
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of alcoholic beverages are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling:
  - a) Any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis; unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law.
  - b) Any anabolic steroid or performance-enhancing substance not administered under a physician's care and supervision.
  - c) Any prescription drug, when not prescribed for the student by medical personnel or when used in a manner inconsistent with prescribed instructions.
  - d) Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system.
  - e) "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance not containing an illegal drug or controlled substance, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug or controlled substance; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug or controlled substance.
  - f) Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.
4. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring a firearm or "look alike," knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm.
5. Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant, or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others. All cell phones and similar electronic devices must be kept powered-off and in the students locker or with a staff member during the regular school day.
6. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
7. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials.
8. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
9. Bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior.
10. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.
11. Being absent without a recognized excuse.
12. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
13. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, and hazing.
14. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

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15. Sending, receiving or possessing sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate pictures or images, commonly known as “sexting.”
16. Making an explicit threat on an internet website (social media) against school employees, a student, or any school-related personnel that is accessible within the school at the time the threat is made or available to a third party, that is threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his/her duties or employment status.

For purposes of these rules, the term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student’s person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of the student, such as in the student’s clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school’s student lockers, desks, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student’s conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of; school grounds before, during, or after school hours at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to and from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

## DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Disciplinary measures may include but are not limited to:

1. Point reduction
2. Loss of level
3. Disciplinary conference
4. Withholding of privileges
5. Seizure of contraband
6. Suspension from school and all school activities for up to 10 days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds at SPARKS and their home school.
7. Suspension of bus riding privileges
8. Notification to probation
9. Notifying local law enforcement and filing charges
10. Notification of parents and home school
11. Temporary removal from the classroom
12. Delay of lunch and/or transportation

## CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safely for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

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**GANG & GANG ACTIVITY**

“Gang” is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student’s conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia, or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass, or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

**BULLYING, INTIMIDATION & HARASSMENT**

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

*Bullying* includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s or students’ person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s or students’ physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in bullying, intimidation or harassment will be subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in this handbook, including but not limited to, suspension and police referral. Parents of students who have engaged in the above behavior will be notified. Any student making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment may also be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, nondiscrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

WCISEC Complaint Managers: Betsy Wujek, [bwujek@wcisec.org](mailto:bwujek@wcisec.org) and Tera Twitchell, [ttwitchell@wcisec.org](mailto:ttwitchell@wcisec.org)

## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

1. Free and reduced price meals are available for qualifying students. For an application, contact the Program Coordinator, Ms. Brooks.
2. Students who wish may eat breakfast at 8:30 AM Breakfast will only be served after 8:55 for a late bus.
3. Students inform the classroom teacher if they have their lunch or need a school lunch. Lunch is served at 11:00.
4. Students may bring their lunch to school. Students must inform an adult if their lunches requires refrigeration
5. Drinks brought into the school not in a sealed bottle or can will be confiscated and dumped.
6. Energy drinks will not be permitted at school.
7. Food and drinks may not be kept in lockers.
8. Students may purchase additional milk above and beyond a regular lunch.
9. If you send money with your student on a daily basis for lunch and breakfast, and do not want your child to charge, let the classroom teacher or program coordinator know.

## ALLERGIES AND ANAPHYLAXIS

School attendance may increase a student's risk of exposure to allergens that could trigger an allergic reaction. While it is not possible for the Cooperative to completely eliminate the risk of exposure to allergens when a student is at school we encourage a cooperative effort among students' families, staff members, and students to help reduce the risk and provide accommodations and proper treatment, which may include an epi-pen. Please openly communicate any specific allergies to the program coordinator or building administrator.

## FINES, FEES, AND CHARGES: WAIVER OF STUDENT FEES

Students will not be denied educational services or academic credit due to the inability of their parent or guardian to pay fees or certain charges. Students whose parent or guardian is unable to afford student fees may receive a fee waiver. A fee waiver does not exempt a student from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and/or equipment.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline.

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All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission or a parent or guardian with authority to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher;
2. Failure to complete appropriate coursework;
3. Behavioral or safety concerns;
4. Denial of permission from administration;
5. Other reasons as determined by the school

## SEARCH AND SEIZURE

In order to maintain order, safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

### SCHOOL PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS PERSONAL EFFECTS LEFT THERE BY STUDENTS

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as, lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice or consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The Program Coordinator may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

When feasible, the search should be conducted as follows:

1. Outside the view of others, including students.
2. In the presence of a Cooperative administrator or adult witness: and
3. By a certified employee or liaison police officer of the same sex as the student.

Immediately following a search, a written report shall be made by the Cooperative authority who conducted the search and given to the Director. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

## STUDENTS

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as: purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

## SEIZURE OF PROPERTY

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred.

## AGENCY and POLICE INTERVIEWS

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New Horizons will ensure that before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains or questions a student suspected of a criminal activity that his/her parent/guardian has been notified and has the option to be present for questioning.

### **ATHLETIC RULES AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

SPARKS students who participate in sports at their home school are subject to the Extracurricular Athletic Activities Code of Conduct of their home school.

### **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SEX EQUITY**

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religion religious beliefs, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

No student shall, based on sex, or sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student or parent/guardian with a sex equity or equal opportunity concern should contact the home district's Principal or Athletic Director.

### **ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL DANCES**

Attendance at school-sponsored dances is a privilege. SPARKSstudents who wish to attend dances at their home schools must be in good standing at Carthage Bright Starts or Cruisers. Students should inform SPARKSstaff in advance so that arrangements can be made.

### **TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Parents/guardians may request information about the qualifications of their student's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification and licensing criteria have been waived;
3. Whether the teacher is teaching in a field of discipline of the teacher's certification;
4. Whether any instructional aides or paraprofessionals provide services to your students and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the school office.

### **HOMELESS CHILD'S RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined at law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

1. continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or



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2. enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

**PESTICIDE APPLICATION NOTICE**

The district maintains a registry of parents/guardians of students who have registered to receive written or telephone notification prior to the application of pesticides to school grounds. To be added to the list, please contact:

Mrs. Pam Nelson - (309)-333-8912.

Notification will be given before application of the pesticide. Prior notice is not required if there is imminent threat to health or property.

**STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MEDIATE ANY INFRINGEMENTS, WHICH MAY NOT BE SPECIFICALLY STATED**