



School Handbook 2024-2025

SPECTRUM BUILDS...

[Belongingness](#) [Empathetic Hearts](#) [Unhackable Brains](#)

Our Mission

Thinking, Creating, Reflecting: Impacting the Future by developing mindful, self-directed learners for life.

Our Vision

Spectrum Progressive School will be known as the leader in education where the discovery and development of an individual's full potential is mutually nurtured by student, family, school, and community through contemporary and progressive research-based methods.

Dear Spectrum Families and Friends,

Every spring at Spectrum we choose a theme that binds us together as a group, gives us a common focal point, and a concept that informs, expands, and unites us. It becomes a common thread we share from the youngest to oldest all year long, no matter what topics we study as individual groups. The theme for this year is SPECTRUM BUILDS: as in Spectrum Builds Thinking Skills, Spectrum Builds Understanding, Spectrum Builds Knowledge, Spectrum Builds Unity, Spectrum Builds the Arts, Spectrum Builds Friendships, Spectrum Builds Naturalists. There are so many examples of what Spectrum builds!

Belongingness, empathetic hearts, and unhackable brains are still underlying aspects to our work at nurturing positive school culture and growing whole human beings, but Spectrum Builds weaves through those ideas as well.

Our hope is this is a year where we can BUILD a community with parents and families in such a welcoming and meaningful way that you feel a sense of ownership over this place called Spectrum, that has been creating a positive space and place for children and learning for over half a century. BUILD your own sense of wonder as you partner with us in the most important work of the universe- enriching and celebrating childhood.

Spectrum Board of Directors and Staff
Spectrum Progressive School of Rockford

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Spectrum Progressive School of Rockford: Who We Are

Facts and Figures

- Serves 65+ students ages 3 through 15 with a small student-teacher ratios
- Is based on the educational theories of John Dewey (active learning), Jean Piaget (learning is personal and developmental) and Howard Gardner (multiple intelligences - we are smart in many ways.)
- Uses a personalized approach to learning with meaningful technology integration for process and products
- Focuses on health and well-being through fitness, outdoor education, movement, dance, and yoga
- Encourages students to be actively involved in making, executing, and reviewing their learning by leveraging PLAN-DO-REVIEW and the Relational Learning Frameworks
- Uses an arts integrated, interdisciplinary approach to learning that honors the many ways our students are gifted
- Promotes active engagement, reflective learning, and collaboration
- Guides students to examine their own performance consciously and deliberately in different contexts in order to evaluate their strengths and areas in need of work
- Provides opportunities for everyone at Spectrum to be both a learner and a teacher
- Develops strong relationships with families so that an entire team of adults support the student in the learning process

Our Mission

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Our Vision

Spectrum Progressive School will be known as the leader in education where the discovery and development of an individual's full potential is mutually nurtured by student, family, school, and community through contemporary and progressive research-based methods.

We Believe It Is Important to:

- Recognize the unique and inherent gifts of all learners
- Believe that every child deserves a Spectrum Progressive School education
- Have students who have pride in their school and alumni who value their experience
- Attract and retain high quality staff
- Be committed to community engagement and social responsibility
- Utilize the most innovative and current research-based educational methods
- Be the school where teachers send their children
- Guide students through an arts integrated curriculum emphasizing active, experiential learning
- Be committed to having a diverse school at all levels
- Be committed to a plan for funding that supports long term growth and development of Spectrum School

"Why Spectrum?" Spectrum students have the confidence to be deeply engaged in learning, work, and communication. They have the skills to think critically and creatively. They understand how to collaborate and know how to ask questions. They can solve problems in a variety of contexts, applying what they know to what they need to do. They care about their communities, humanity, and the natural environment. They work to make a positive difference in the world.

At Spectrum, we believe....

- Learning is a process that involves the whole child. It doesn't happen by children plugging into a formula or plugging children into a formula.

- Children learn differently and need multiple ways to express and demonstrate their learning.
- Deeper learning happens when children are given a chance to figure things out for themselves.
- Every child is gifted, and it is up to the educator to figure out how to honor, develop and expand upon each child's gifts.
- Children deserve individually designed learning that meets them where they are at and helps them advance at their own pace.
- Learning is fundamentally social, connecting the learner with others and the world.
- Children need to feel safe at every level: socially, emotionally, academically, and physically. This helps them build relationships, take risks, follow their passions, and develop empathy.
- School should be a place that grows leaders who change their communities and the world for the better.

The Importance of Parent and Family Engagement

There are three main reasons why family Engagement is critical to Spectrum School:

1. **Education at Spectrum is a three tiered partnership between Family, Staff, and Students.** Each is an essential component of the intellectual and academic development of the child. Love, support, and encouragement must come from the family; the focus on material and academic growth comes from the staff; willingness to learn and grow in developing understanding of self, others, and the physical universe comes from the children. When this partnership is flourishing and fully functional, great things happen for the student – learning happens, understanding happens, autonomy happens! It is beautiful to witness!
2. **Parent Engagement is critical to the existence of Spectrum School.** Tuition alone does not cover the cost of running Spectrum School. Both because we consider parents essential partners and to keep tuition at current levels, the help of parents is essential to a program that is rich in experiences, offerings, individual attention, low class size, teams of teachers and talented assistants working and planning together for each child, and the utilization of the tremendous talent available within the parent and extended family community.
3. **Family presence at Individual Progress Report Meetings, General Presentations, School Shares, Events, Performances, Fund-Raisers are visible representations to Students of interest and Engagement in their educational evolution.** Students pay attention! They know and note when families attend events or visit the school. They may not say anything or even sometimes feign embarrassment, but they register that family came, family cared, family thought what they were doing was important enough to be present and participate. Additionally, the development of awareness of and relationships between families strengthens the relationships between students.

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT PARENTAL Engagement IN THEIR EDUCATION IS THE ONE FACTOR UNIVERSALLY COMMON TO STUDENT SUCCESS IN SCHOOL AND BEYOND.



Spectrum Progressive School 2024-25 Parent, Family, and Community Volunteer Form

The Volunteer Form lists some ways you as parents and/or your family members might be willing to participate. Please add any interests, skills, talents you would be interested in sharing that are not mentioned. Know that Spectrum is respectful of your time and other obligations, but if you could find something you would be willing to commit to, it would be greatly appreciated! Thank you!

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Areas of strength and/or interest: _____

Please check below those volunteer opportunities in which you are able and willing to work. (All volunteers must sign a confidentiality agreement. Regular volunteers working with children must agree to a background check.)

Regular Board and Committee Membership: Minimum monthly meetings to plan, problem-solve, and implement school improvement and enhancement initiatives towards a positive and sustainable school community. The board listens to, advises, and as necessary votes on actions proposed by the committees. Committees include:

- Leadership
- Finance
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Education
- Parent Engagement, Community outreach
- Safety, Policy and Procedures

Please let Marci Hallgren or any Board member (listed in front of the school handbook) if you are interested in serving on the Board, or on a Board committee. Please contact Marci Hallgren - m.hallgren@spectrumschool.org for all other volunteer opportunities.

Regular Volunteer Leadership and Support

- Volunteer Coordination and chairing school events - communicate needs, coordinate schedules, ensure volunteers know expectations (e.g. room parents, events, tasks, responsibilities, where to go for help)
- Academic support like tutoring in reading, math, or editing student writing
- Reading with or to children (individually or in small groups)
- Helping students reflect on and archive their work (print and/or digital)

Ad hoc School and Classroom Support (as needed):

- Driving on field trips and/or chaperoning
- Volunteering for school events (e.g. Pastries with Parents, Fun Run, Trunk or Treat, Holiday Store, Calendar Raffle - events pending fundraising committee)
- Helping facilitate or supporting a learning or creative workshop or activity
- Supporting supervision of outdoor learning
- Supporting art projects and arts integration
- Interest group facilitation or support, project implementation support
- Support ad hoc projects like art auction support, music, drama, or band with prepping resources, making costumes, helping students rehearse their tasks for the same
- Compass support before or after school
- Playground beautification and clean up, gardening, help with littles and outdoor winter gear
- Share your passion! Arts/ PE/ Movement facilitation (ex.- yoga, dance, wood crafts, natural dyes, mobiles, creating sets for productions, etc)

2024-25: Approaches, Structures, and Processes

- Overview of 2024-25 Theme and Organizing Values
- Learning Frameworks
- Homerooms (near-aged classrooms)
- Circles
- What's the Curriculum?
- What do you mean by Strategy, Skill, and Concept? What's the difference?
- Worktime, Workshops, Learning Centers
- Reporting Student Progress
- Master Schedule
- 2024-25 Academic Calendar
- Parent-Student-School Expectations (SIGN OFF)

Overview of 2024-25 Organizing Theme and Values

Let's think about the absolute most important values we have regarding children and childhood. Reflect about learning, and what makes it meaningful, exciting, and relevant. Let's wonder about this institution called "school" and all we have learned about the way schooling provides experiences that align or diverge from child-centered values. SPECTRUM BUILDS is the integrating theme this year. What comes to your mind with this term? It takes only a few minutes of reflection to realize the depth and breadth to which this theme can extend.

What do we MOST WANT for children from their time in school? As a professional learning community, we have asked ourselves this question, and share below some of our thinking and organizing towards making it happen.

Continuing this year, we are naming and organizing Spectrum by the values of [BELONGINGNESS](#), [EMPATHETIC HEARTS](#), and [UNHACKABLE BRAINS](#).

Teachers are intentional, collaborative, and creative in how they are planning and implementing a program of learning that supports opportunities to experience and nurture these values in every child. We are publishing a library of short vlogs to explain each of these organizing values in detail. Links are available on our website.

Learning Frameworks: Plan-Do-Review and the Relational Learning Framework

A common learning framework supports coherence. This is an important school characteristic, so that educators, assistants, parents, and students have a common language and a shared understanding when in conversations about school, learning, and children. At Spectrum, our frameworks prioritize student choice and voice in their own learning. The purpose of this is to develop efficacy and ownership in their own learning processes, based on their interests and strengths. We refer to this as *Learning How to Learn*. Rather than quizzes, assignments, homework, and tests, our frameworks foster students' thinking and planning how to demonstrate their learning in meaningful ways to others, whether it be high-quality work products or performances chosen by the learner. Furthermore, we want students to be able to articulate the relevance of their learning, and its relationship to other ideas and people. Finally, we want the application of a learning framework to strengthen a child's identity and sense of self as a learner.

At Spectrum, we align to two learning frameworks, one which builds on the other. For our youngest learners, we have long implemented a process from early childhood experts at High Scope called **Plan-Do-Review**. It leverages learning stations and centers, as well as workshop and teacher-supported activities, in the classroom for each student to **Plan** their learning (with discussion from the teacher or assistant), **Do** their plan, and then **Review** how and what they did- what was successful, what might next steps be, what might be done differently. Sharing work in a closing circle of the day is a way for children to explain their learning to others and develop confidence in their ability to accomplish a plan. Imagine how much children can learn from each other in these sharing circles.

As students mature, John Spencer's *Launch* and Erika Twani's *Becoming Einstein's Teacher* extends and builds on Plan-Do-Review in complexity, scope, and depth. Students are deeply involved in a six-step process that cultivates and nurtures increasing autonomy and ownership of learning. Units of inquiry, concepts and skills in the content areas, teacher-directed assignments, theme-based challenges, and learning projects (e.g. Genius Hour or Personal Project) are all organized by the student inside this framework, where it is the responsibility of the student to make sense of, set the goals and pace, and determine the direction and outcome of the intended learning objectives. The steps are elegant:

1. **Planning/Goal Setting**,
2. **Exploring** (prior knowledge and assumptions, asking questions),
3. **Researching** (with teacher support, gathering and using a variety of resources on the topic, content, focus, or learning challenge),
4. **Practicing** (in the application of skills and concepts),
5. **Relating** (connections to other ideas, self, others, the world), and
6. **Reflecting** (How did I do? What's next?).

The steps of Relational Learning develop self-direction by having the students deeply engaged and even leading the WHAT, WHAT ABOUT IT, HOW, WHY DOES IT MATTER, and WHO AM I inside the learning process, expectations, and environment. As students apply these steps again and again, they increase in their ability to direct their own learning for their own purpose and towards their own goals.

From Fontan *Sistema de Pedagogia Relacional* and Twani's *Becoming Einstein's Teacher

Homeroms (near-aged classrooms) (a.k.a. Levels)

As in the past, Spectrum does not separate children by age into grades. As a progressive school, we believe that understanding that learning and growth are developmental, and children progress at a wider range of variable paces in different areas of life and learning. **Homeroms** will continue organizing children into near-age **Preschool, Early, Intermediate,** and **Upper** classrooms.

We are shifting away from calling our oldest children Middle School, which implies segregating subjects and levels. Instead, we are naming these students **UPPER**, and providing academic learning through three major structures:

- Project-based learning that integrates inquiry, content areas, and student ownership of learning
- Literacy and Numeracy workshops that ensures application of strategies, knowledge, and skills through relevant and meaningful challenges to ensure students are making strong progress
- Theme-based personalized learning paths that allow students to delve deeply into content and areas of interest to them, with increasing complexity and cognitive demand

While maintaining multi-age classrooms, we are adding several other structures and processes to foster learning experiences across the school, involving students in a variety of learning contexts – with near-age classmates in their homeroms, in small groups based on interest or readiness for the next level of skills and concepts, with older or younger buddies, in circles and houses and workshops that have specific themes, foci, or purposes and may or may not include children from a range of ages.

Buddies and All School Shares

We value how littles humanize bigs...how littles feel when an older child gives them attention, and how much a younger child can bring out the best in an older child. We have time built into the master schedule for these interactions, through Literacy Buddies, Theme Days, and All School Shares.

Community Circles

Circles will be utilized in Homeroms and at times workshops to focus on communication, connection, themes, and topics, giving students many opportunities to relate and extend their interpersonal and intrapersonal learning.

[From *Circle Forward* by Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis p 3]

“The Circle is a simple structured process of communication that helps participants reconnect with a joyous appreciation of themselves and others. It is designed to create a safe space for all voices and to encourage each participant to step in the direction of their best self. Circles are relevant for all age groups. While the language may vary to be developmentally appropriate, holding certain conversations in Circle is equally beneficial for all members of the school community, from the youngest to the eldest. We believe that the practice of Circles is helpful for building and maintaining a healthy community in which all members feel connected and respected.”

At Spectrum, we will use community circles in a variety of spaces and contexts for connection and reflection, both about learning, about one’s feelings, and on relationships. The goal of circles is relationship building by creating spaces for speaking, sharing, listening, and understanding. Where necessary, and once other restorative practices and peace processes have occurred to resolve conflict between individuals, circles will be used to restore groups of children to a better social or emotional dynamic.

As we nurture and grow our learning community, we remember a very fundamental theory about human growth and development: Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, which contends that higher level needs cannot be fully developed unless the prior ones have been. The five steps in the hierarchy: (1) Basics (food, water, shelter), (2) Safety (Security and Stability), (3) Relationships (sense of belonging and love, (4) Esteem (respect for self and others), and Self-Actualization (realizing one’s full potential). Circles provide opportunities to do deep work on steps 2, 3, and 5 of the Relational Learning Framework.

What’s the Curriculum?

Although progressive approaches do not rely on learning standards set by the state to map a curriculum, or to sanction or reward learning with letter grades and percentages, we must still benchmark ourselves against what is expected of learners across a continuum in every subject. Note: The danger of any learning continua is it becoming a checklist that says once taught, we move on, and instruction becomes a matter of getting through the list rather than being responsive to the needs, interests, and passions of the learner. Learning becomes a grind.

So how do we organize learning to ensure our students, when leaving Spectrum, can go toe-to-toe with other children in their grade? Three really important premises: We teach them **HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS**, we teach them **HOW TO THINK**, and we teach them **HOW TO LEARN**.

Spectrum teachers develop units of inquiry with plenty of opportunities for students to be engaged in inquiry, thinking, and learning. We use the frameworks described above (**Plan-Do-Review** and the **Relational Learning Framework**) to organize content learning by these units. These units change every year based on prior units in which students have been engaged, the schoolwide theme, current events and innovations in the educational world, and topics that emerge from teacher and student inquiry. Teachers are actively thinking about ways to embed relevant learning of the various content areas, integrated by arts and sciences and humanities, into their instructional units. For example, the past theme *EXPLORE* lent itself in Intermediate to units across the year about each continent. These units explored and integrated cultural, literary, historical, geographical, ecological, artistic, and musical topics. Last year, the oldest students did a deep exploration of space, space travel, and survival on Mars. The youngest students explored the differences between different kinds of plants and animals, patterns in math, fairy tales, and tall tales, to name a few. Unit content is brainstormed and shared collaboratively across the teaching staff to ensure and support coherence and to avoid redundancy. Spectrum teachers spend much time in the summer and shared professional time during the year to discuss, enrich, and get feedback from each other on their unit plans.

We are also informed by best practice professional literature and core standards. The Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Harvey’s *Strategies that Work*, and the [Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practices](#) are embedded into the planning and instructional processes via workshops and learning tasks set forth in the unit.

Within any unit, teachers set goals for learning and practicing specific concepts and skills within the theme or topic, as well as opportunities to apply and practice thinking strategies. Flexibility in how a unit is implemented allows Spectrum teachers to identify the specific strategies, skills, or concepts that may need strengthening or deeper development. We also look at each individual learner's goals, needs, and strengths to build opportunities for that child to make academic progress within the unit.

While planning the unit, teachers decide how they will have students interact with content and instruction. Teachers plan within the unit their instructional strategies and approaches with whole groups, small groups, and individuals. This can be via workshops, co-designed challenges embedded into personal projects, targets for online learning as students get older, learning centers, and assigned tasks for work time.

Learning opportunities may take the form of a specific task or assignment from the teacher, or they may evolve as a result of the student's understanding of what they need to do and how they need to show what they have learned. Flexibility is critical here as well. Some students may want to "explain" what they learned and how, where others write, draw a picture or diagram, or make a video. The importance here is students intentionally using and demonstrating their knowledge and skills regarding specific and defined learning targets. The frameworks are important to ensure we allow and support this in a coherent manner.

Some resources and approaches which inform curricular planning and/ or provide actual curricular content:

- **Literacy:** Readers' Workshop (which includes guided and independent reading as well as read aloud), Writers' Workshop, Reading Horizons, Literature Circles, Book Clubs, Novel Studies, NewsELA
- **Numeracy:** Math Essentials (Intermediate and Upper), Math Talks, Number Talks, Data Talks, and Wild Math (Early and Intermediate), Dreambox Learning (online), College Prep Math (Upper), Math Their Way (PreK, EE)
- **Inquiry-Based:** Inquiry based approaches provide opportunities to explore prior knowledge, cultivate curiosity, and ask questions - lots and lots of questions that are factual, conceptual, big questions, little questions, off-the-wall questions. Teachers embed these opportunities into workshops, all stages of the framework, projects, and basically everywhere. Curiosity and interest drive the learning.
- **Multiple Intelligences / Multimodal Learning:** Although his theories are currently in debate, Dr. Howard Gardner shifted the educational paradigm by positing that there were different knowledge and ways of knowing that come out of preferences and strengths for "perceiving and doing". Being intentional about different ways a learner can access and express learning is one of the stand out features of Spectrum's approach to planning curriculum and instruction. A "multiple intelligences" approach supports active learning and students' experience knowledge beyond numbers and text. It allows students choice in how they show what they know- whether through art or music, making a model, writing, mixed media, or a presentation.
- **Outdoor, Nature-Based Learning:** As often as possible, learning will go outside. Outdoor and field studies and explorations are planned within the context of a unit or as a stand-alone experience to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for nature. Project Wild, Project WET, Wild Reading, Tinkergarten are a few of the resources used.
- **STEAMcM:** This acronym stands for an approach to provide multi-dimensional, interdisciplinary learning opportunities that integrate science, technology, engineering, the arts, math, coding, and making.

What do you mean by Strategy, Skill, and Concept? What's the difference?

By **strategy**, we mean just that - an intentional, planned approach to thinking, learning, communicating, or accomplishing a task. A strategy can be used across content areas, across learning tasks, and across projects. Strategies are planned and applied THINKING interactions - whether interacting with text, in conversation, with hands-on resources or manipulatives, or in any step of the framework. For example, COMPARING AND CONTRASTING is an important cross-curricular thinking strategy. As students understand from simple to complex

the importance of being able to observe, categorize, and explain information and ideas, (whether visual, textual, video, or material) they develop the skills to analyze and synthesize. They become more critical observers and eventually more critical thinkers, not doing a task to simply get it done, but to really understand.

Skills on the other hand are specific to the subject area and topic. Examples include the skills of finding the third angle of a triangle when two are given, finding the main idea in a paragraph, and knowing to capitalize the first word of a sentence. They are the knitty gritty items on a standardized test, in most of the end-of-chapter questions in a textbook, and what most math practice pages are set to practice. Applying skills can be devoid of any connection to content or life, which is what we try to avoid at Spectrum. However, we do need to ensure students move along the continua of skills in order to ensure progress and growth are happening.

Concepts can be either broad (gravity seems to be the basis for solar systems) or specific (e.g. the Earth is a planet with one satellite). They can be factual or debateable. Approaching learning using a conceptual approach often requires shared understanding of a basic concept and how it can be interpreted across content and contexts. For instance, the concept of *conflict*. It can be looked at from a historical perspective, a personal perspective, a scientific perspective, or a literary perspective. Embedding opportunities for conceptual understanding into the unit design allows for teachers to check for basic understanding of key concepts as well as deeper understanding in their application. The [Next Generation Science Standards](#) uses the term “crosscutting concepts” in its approach to organize science into a system for planning science curriculum. Some examples of these concepts are as broad as *patterns*, *change*, and *energy*. These concepts can be explored in every aspect of science instruction and topic. Once students have an understanding of a concept, it becomes part of their strategic thinking repertoire.

Worktime, Workshops, Learning Centers

Spectrum has long utilized “**worktime**” as a way to allow students to work on their work and projects. It is a time to get stuff done, get guidance from an adult, work with others/ We have also adopted ideas like “personal projects,” “passion projects,” and “Genius Hour” as a way to further structure and support student-driven project-based and inquiry-based learning. This all sounds like jargon when put into one paragraph, but it is important to understand the process by which we are enabling student choice, voice, and interest in deciding **WHAT** they are learning, **HOW** they are learning it, with **WHOM** they are working, what **RESOURCES** they are using, and **HOW** they will demonstrate their learning. **Worktime** is included in the master and homeroom schedules to give students time to do just that- move forward with projects, assignments, and tasks. Strategies are often developed on anchor charts and often use graphic organizers to help students develop that particular thinking approach.

Workshops, on the other hand, are teacher facilitated sessions based on specific strategies, skills, or concepts that we want students to learn and apply. Think of workshops as teacher-directed instruction. Workshops can be facilitated in large groups or small small groups that focus on helping students understand and apply specific skills, concepts, or strategies in their learning tasks. Groupings are both fluid and flexible, based on students’ needs, interests, or strengths They could be in mixed age/ability small groups, intensive learning groups, tutoring, or even peer tutoring groups. They are often based on specific learning needs from tasks that have emerged from shared projects. They are not lengthy in terms of direct instruction. Teachers, assistants, or even student leaders explain, model, demonstrate, and show examples and non-examples of the concept or skill. They give opportunities for students to discuss, ask questions, and practice in the group before practicing independently. These mini-lessons are often taught by revealing or constructing together **anchor charts**. Anchor charts are visual aids naming and showing the specific strategy, skill, or concept being taught. These posters are then displayed in the classroom for review as the students need them. After the mini-lesson, time is set aside for immediate application of the strategy, concept, or skill in assignments, projects, or tasks, with opportunities for teacher and/or peer feedback. You can tell walking into a classroom if it has a workshop approach by its anchor charts. You can tell it is effective when a teacher simply points or directs a child to an anchor chart when giving a student feedback on a task.

A **workshop** model is different from a teacher teaching a class and assigning a worksheet. There is an expectation of interaction, co-construction of the shared resource, and increasing independence using these resources. If a child already shows proficiency in a skill, that child may even be asked to facilitate a mini-lesson rather than sit through

one. Teaching and explaining to others are hallmarks of deeper learning, and the workshop model allows for this in a flexible and responsive way.

Learning Centers (and Stations) are familiar structures in an inquiry-based school. Each center or station is taught and explained by the teacher and then left available for student exploration and use during worktime. Effective centers and stations should have a variety of challenge levels - differentiated by task, level of complexity or demand, and by different learning styles and modalities. We use the terms interchangeably, but consider centers to be closely aligned to the current units or topics, where we would employ "stations" for schoolwide programs and events like Pi Day or Dino Day or even Fun Run.

Reporting Student Progress

The reporting process varies throughout the school year program. Early in the school year, teachers will inform families of how and when their students will be assessed. An intake conference will be scheduled so that parents and students can set goals to be addressed during the year. Conferences regarding your child's progress will also be scheduled, mid and end of year. We expect family attendance at conferences and encourage parental questions and suggestions.

For additional opportunities to discuss your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher. If a conference is needed or requested, it can be scheduled. Conferences are generally scheduled before or after school hours and not when classes are in session. It is expected for all families to attend regular conferences.

If you have questions, the teacher is the first point of contact. Questions regarding programming, the school's approaches to instruction, curriculum, and assessment can be directed to Spectrum's lead teacher, Jacquie - j.lind@spectrumschool.org. You can also schedule a meeting with Spectrum's Education Committee through our Administrative Coordinator Gloria Gustafson at g.gustafson@spectrumschool.org.

2024-25 MASTER SCHEDULE:

How does the day flow with these approaches, structures, and processes?

The first several weeks of school will be getting acquainted and reacquainted, introducing students to and practicing routines and procedures, and determining where we can maximize learning for individuals, small groups, whole groups, and schoolwide experiences.

The schedule will accommodate all we wish to do, but we also recognize flexibility and adjustment will be crucial. Teachers are engaged in ongoing collaborative planning on a regularly scheduled basis to ensure responsiveness to the needs of our learners and ongoing improvements to the learning flow and culture. Each Homeroom is unique but incorporates the general flow below. The schedules below are the typical week for each level, but we often have special projects and events around which we make adjustments.

Keep in mind- literacy and numeracy are embedded throughout the curriculum in a variety of structures like workshop, outdoor math, small group, and projects.

Preschool Schedule

| Time | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 8:10-8:40 | Morning Arrival, Table Activities | | | | |
| 8:40-8:45 | Clean Up | | | | |
| 8:45-9:00 | Morning Circle | | | | |
| 9:00-9:15 | Plan Time Work Time | Music or Snack | Storytime friends | Music or Snack | Plan Time Work Time |
| 9:20-9:35 /10:00 | | Snack or Music | Snack | Snack or Music | |
| 10:00-10:30 | Worktime Learning Centers and Stations - attention to shared or common learning theme Integrated Drama during Worktime on Monday and Wednesday. | | | | |
| 10:30-10:40 | Clean Up | | | | |
| 10:40-11:00 | Review, Story, choice: art, science, language, math activity | | | | |
| 11:00-11:25 | Outdoor free play (recess) followed by dismissal of AM students outside | | | | |
| 11:30-12:00 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:00-12:30 | Centers in Rug | | | | |
| 12:30-12:45 | Reading Friends, Story | | | | |
| 12:45-1:15 | Quiet Rest for non-nappers, naptime for nappers until 2:30 | | | | |
| 1:15-2:40 | Non-nappers Worktime, outside time, Spanish, activity with Early Elementary | | | | |
| 2:40-2:50 | Pack backpacks, rug time for goodbye ritual, dismissal | | | | |

Early Elementary Schedule

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 8:10-8:45 | Welcome Activity | Welcome | Welcome | Welcome | Welcome |
| 8:45-9:15 | Calendar | | | | |
| 9:15-10:15 | Math | Math | Math | Math | Math |
| 10:15-10:30 | Snack | Snack | Snack | Snack | Snack |
| 10:30-11:30 | Literacy Block | Literacy Block/ Drama | Literacy Block | Literacy Block/ Drama | Literacy Block |
| 11:30-12:00 | Recess | Recess | Recess | Recess | Recess |
| 12:00-12:30 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:30-1:30 | Worktime | Worktime | Worktime | Worktime | Worktime |
| 1:30-2:10 | Independent Reading | Music | Independent Reading | Music | Independent Reading |
| 2:10-2:50 | Review/ Read Aloud | Art | Review/ Read Aloud | Art | Review/Read Aloud |

Intermediate Elementary Schedule

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-------------|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 8:10-8:30 | Opening activities, planning, daily goal setting | | | | |
| 8:30-9:00 | Class Meeting, Circles, number talks, thinking/literacy strategy of the day | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 9:00-10:00 | Math | Math | Math | Math | Math |
| 10:00-10:15 | Snack | Snack | Snack | Snack | Snack |
| 10:15-11:30 | Literacy Block | Drama | Literacy Block | Drama | Literacy Block |
| 11:30-12:00 | Recess | Recess | Recess | Recess | Recess |
| 12:00-12:30 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:30-12:50 | Independent Reading | Independent Reading | Independent Reading | Independent Reading | Independent Reading |
| 12:50-1:30 | Learning Framework | Integrated Arts | Learning Framework | Integrated Arts | Learning Framework |
| 1:30-2:10 | Learning Framework | Learning Framework | Learning Framework | Learning Framework | Learning Framework |
| 2:10-2:50 | Read Aloud | Music | Read Aloud | Music | Learning Framework |

Upper Grade Schedule

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 8:30-9:00 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.O.W (word of the week) • Root Word lessons • State of the Classroom • Weekend Shares | 8:30-9:00 Tuesday Newsday | 8:30-9:00 Writing Prompt | 8:30-9:00 Tech Thursday (games, puzzles, coding) All School Shares | 8:30-9:00 Journaling/Goals Flexible Fridays |
| 9:00-10:00 Math Block | 9:00-10:00 Math Block | 9:00-10:00 Math Block | 9:00-10:00 Math Block | |
| SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | |
| * 10:45-11:30 Drama | 10:15-11:30 Lit Block | * 10:45-11:30 Drama | 10:15-11:30 Lit Block | |
| LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH |
| RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS |
| 12:30-1:00 Zen Reading | 12:30-12:50 Zen Reading | 12:30-1:00 Zen Reading | 12:30-12:50 Zen Reading | Friday Project Time |
| 1:00-2:30 Interdisciplinary | 12:50-1:30 MUSIC | 1:00-2:30 Interdisciplinary | 12:50-1:30 MUSIC | Field Trips Makerspace |
| | 1:30-2:10 ART | | 1:30-2:10 ART | |
| Community Circle TRIBES SEL | 2:10-3:00 Work Time Clean Up | Community Circle TRIBES SEL | 2:10-3:00 Work Time Clean Up | |
| DISMISSAL | | | | |

Spectrum School 2024 - 2025 Academic Calendar

| | |
|---------------|--|
| August 26 | First day of School |
| September 2 | NO SCHOOL Labor Day |
| September 13 | NO SCHOOL Intake Conferences - Compass Available |
| September 26 | Fall Pictures – All Students should schedule |
| October 11 | NO SCHOOL SCHOOL Staff Development - Compass |
| November 8 | NO SCHOOL Staff Development - Compass Available |
| Nov. 27-29 | NO SCHOOL - FALL BREAK |
| Nov. 21 | Picture Retake Day |
| December 20 | ½ Day Dismissal, No PM Compass |
| Dec. 23-Jan 5 | NO SCHOOL- WINTER BREAK |
| January 6 | Students return from break |
| January 20 | NO SCHOOL MLK Day |
| February 7 | NO SCHOOL Staff Development - Compass Available |
| February 17 | NO SCHOOL Presidents' Day |
| February 28 | NO SCHOOL Conferences - Compass Available |
| March 24-28 | NO SCHOOL SPRING BREAK |
| April 18 | NO SCHOOL Staff Development - Compass Available |
| May 9 | NO SCHOOL Conferences - Compass Available |
| May 21 | Last day of school ½ Day Dismissal No PM Compass |

SPECTRUM SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS – Parents, School, Student

Parents, Staff, and Students are all part of the learning team at Spectrum. Parents are expected to be involved in their students' academics, as well as in the life of the school. Parents, staff, and students will interact frequently so that each is aware of the student's activities and academic and social development. Any concerns will be promptly discussed and resolutions agreeable to all parties sought, including specific plans for following up on the situation.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY / EXPECTATIONS

- Attend all scheduled conferences **Sept. 13, February 28, May 9**
- Read the weekly eBlasts and other emails and social media posts
- Read all information sent by note, emails, fliers, etc.
- Read and become familiar with the contents of the Spectrum School Handbook
- Help you child reflect on the school day on a daily basis
- Visit the web site at <http://www.spectrumschool.org>
- Attend and/or volunteer at school functions
- Be a room parent, participate in fundraising efforts, serve as a Board Member, serve as a committee member, or other activities as time and availability allow
- If a concern arises regarding your child (e.g. academic or social development) or a situation in school, contact the classroom teacher. If questions or concerns persist, contact Jacque Lind - j.lind@spectrumschool.org
- If behavioral issues arise and become unresolved, parents may be advised to seek outside counseling. If the issues are not significantly improved, reconsideration of enrollment at Spectrum will be addressed.

SPECTRUM RESPONSIBILITY / EXPECTATIONS

- Offer opportunities during the school year for parents to understand and appreciate Spectrum's Progressive Educational approaches which include responsive curriculum, project-based learning, cultivation of creativity, problem-solving, and student choice and voice
- To support students toward intellectual and social growth in their journey toward autonomy.
- To encourage and support frequent communication between staff and parents to support the student's overall development.
- To give students the opportunity, in a non-threatening community, to experiences and natural consequences of their own actions, begin to understand the viewpoint of others, share mutual respect with all, and construct for themselves appropriate rules of social behavior
- To request consultation with parents regarding any concerns staff may have about the student's health, learning, social adjustment
- To recommend appropriate professional specialists if there are concerns beyond Spectrum's expertise
- Advise parents promptly of any changes in hours, closures, staffing, or policies
- Clearly outline technology expectations to students and families every year and seek input from students, staff, and families in developing responsive technology policies
- Guide students through developing the self-management skills necessary to be successful with technology and ensure that all staff, faculty and students follow the technology policy
- Support instructing students on appropriate technology use and behavior
- If social, or academic expectations are endangered, a process described in the Spectrum Handbook involving the student, parents, and staff will be initiated to resolve concerns.
- Provide proactive and intentional supervision during the entire school day, including lunch, recess, and field trips, with an eye for safety, fostering positive peer interactions, and helping children make positive, productive choices.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY / EXPECTATIONS

- Student must be committed as a learner and involved with others as a person and as a learner
- Student has respect for the learning environment – to other people, property, and to the community
- Student will speak, act, and behave respectfully towards each other and staff. This includes appropriate school environment language.
- Student is curious – knows how to ask questions and is unafraid to do so
- Student is willing to try, to learn from mistakes (both social and academic), to recognize and take responsibility for one’s own efforts and behaviors
- Student takes time to reflect, in both a guided way and in a self-directed way, using the opportunities and tools available to improve over time
- Student learns how to learn, to ask questions, seek support, research, and find what is needed to succeed
- Student is willing to grow in self-management – in behaviors, academic tasks, social interactions, projects, and interests

Parent Signatures _____

Teacher Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Guarantee of Non-Discrimination

Spectrum Progressive School does not discriminate in its programs on the basis of color, race, national origin, sex, refugee status, disability, or age in its programs and activities. However, as a small private school, we may not be able to ensure specialized services.

For questions regarding this policy, please contact Spectrum’s Education Committee through c.rotolo@spectrumschool.org

2024-25 Staff Organization, Roles, Responsibilities

Administrative Team

- Jacque Lind, Lead Teacher:, student relationships, teacher/staff support and development, improvement, ongoing innovation, Board interactions, family engagement, community building, [Reunification Coordinator] j.lind@spectrumschool.org
- Marci Hallgren, Director of Finance and Operations: payroll, tuition, enrollment as related to tuition, oversee and support fundraising and PTO, budget, expenditures, financial reporting, maintaining financial database, grant support, student and parent relationships, some student supervision and supports as needed, supervise and support Compass program, advising to board on financial matters, [Safety Officer] m.hallgren@spectrumschool.org
- Gloria Gustafson, Administrative Coordinator: Front office management, student information system, family engagement and relationships, student relationships, some student supervision and supports as needed, calling substitutes [Public Information Officer] g.gustafson@spectrumschool.org
- Rickey Barnett, Communications, Outreach, and Media Coordinator: Newsletter, social media, website management, media outreach, videography, marketing, support development of promotional materials r.barnett@spectrumschool.org

Classroom Teachers and Assistants

- Preschool
 - Shelley Forss s.forss@spectrumschool.org
 - Kristin Bileto k.bileto@spectrumschool.org
 - Kelli Soutar k.soutar@spectrumschool.org
 - MacKenzie Shiffman m.schiffman@spectrumschool.org
- Early
 - Jacque Lind j.lind@spectrumschool.org
- Intermediate:
 - Shawwna Worley s.worley@spectrumschool.org
- Upper:
 - Lindsay Passwaters-Cordero l.passwaters@spectrumschool.org
 - Elijah Lowry e.lowry@spectrumschool.org

Specialists

- Music: Sue Puetz s.puetz@spectrumschool.org
- Visual Arts: Christina Gierut c.gierut@spectrumschool.org
- Drama: Elijah Lowry e.lowry@spectrumschool.org

Facilities and Compass

- Facilities/Operations: Marci Hallgren m.hallgren@spectrumschool.org
- Compass Coordinator: MacKenzie Shiffman m.schiffman@spectrumschool.org
- Custodial: Michelle White

2024-25 Spectrum School Board of Directors and Officers

- Alan Robinson, President a.robinson@spectrumschool.org
- Susan Sunday, Vice President, Recruitment Chair and fundraising suzsunday13@gmail.com
- Cindy Zastrow, Secretary southdakotagirl733@yahoo.com
- Dave DeCastris, Treasurer, Finance Chair davedecastris@gmail.com
- Claire Rotolo, Education Chair c.rotolo@spectrumschool.org
- Jen Culhane, Parent, janders520@yahoo.com
- Jenni Hassler, Parent, jenni@ahassler.net
- Shelton Kay, Community member shelton@rockfordhealth.org

Board Committees – parent, grandparent, community participation is always welcome, needed, and appreciated

- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Outreach / Parent and Community Engagement
- Education
- Finance
- Discipline / Safety / Policy and Procedure
- Leadership

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

- Classroom volunteer (e.g. tutoring, projects, activity support, reading, research buddy)
- Room Parent or Grandparent (coordinate classroom events, drivers, parties, teacher appreciation)
- Lead or help with a school event, interest group, Circles, All School Share
- Building and Grounds Beautification
- Fundraising
- Gardening
- Field trip chaperone / driver

Education Committee

Purpose:

- To provide ongoing thought partnership and feedback to Spectrum leadership and teachers on efforts at increasing curricular coherence and relevance.
- To provide insights on best practices for assessing process and product as we seek to sustain and build assessment models based on the learner rather than random academic standards and numbers.
- To sustain and build on opportunities for community partnerships, especially with local universities and colleges.

- To provide insights into areas of innovation and grant-seeking to ensure Spectrum is staying at the cutting edge of best practices and innovations.

Home-School Communication

Communication is best when it is reciprocal, with parents and family members interacting with staff in the interests of all our children. Communication FROM the school takes three formats:

Home Folders

On a DAILY basis, colored, personalized plastic folders will be used for multiple purposes.

- Anything that must be reviewed, reflected on, responded to, filled out, and returned to school will be in the RIGHT pocket.
 - Student work product for sharing, reflection, and parent/family feedback
 - Home-support cue cards if printed
 - Anything requiring parents response or signature
- Anything that is informational or can stay at home will be in the LEFT pocket

Spectrum Weekly Email Blasts and Teacher Emails

- Spectrum utilizes the email addresses given on the annual registration form to keep families up to date on a variety of events via a weekly eNewsletter, usually coming on Fridays from info@spectrumschool.org. We are currently using Mail Chimp for these communications.
 - Event fliers and invitations, the school handbook, FAQs, pictures or videos of events, students working, and student work will be emailed and posted as relevant.
- Teachers also utilize email to keep parents informed on classroom curriculum, events, and discussions covered each week. Digital versions of home support cue cards, field trip forms, and classroom volunteer and resource requests will also be included in these emails.

Social Media

- We also use social media platforms to post what is happening in the school community.
 - We are still looking for a schoolwide communication platform to replace Class Tag, which has become cost prohibitive.
 - We will utilize ONE private Spectrum Facebook group, and use hashtags (#) to label posts from homerooms. This allows everyone to see what is going on across the school.

Please remember to check your email and other accounts (as applies) for these regular communications and posts. If you need to update your email, please do so at the front office.

Please feel free to **communicate TO the school via phone, texts, email, or a written note to the teacher**. It is best protocol to first contact the staff member closest to your child or the situation should a question or concern arise.

Communicating about Student Progress

The reporting process varies throughout the school year program. Early in the school year, teachers will inform families of how and when their students will be assessed. Conferences regarding your child's progress will also be scheduled. We expect and encourage parental questions and suggestions. For additional opportunities to discuss your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher. If a conference is needed or requested, it can be scheduled. Conferences are generally scheduled before or after school hours and not when classes are in session. It is mandatory for all families to attend regular conferences.

If you have questions, the teacher is the first point of contact. Questions regarding programming, the school's approaches to instruction, curriculum, and assessment can be directed to Education Chair, Claire Rotolo - c.rotolo@spectrumschool.org. You can also schedule a meeting with her through our Administrative Coordinator Gloria Gustafson g.gustafson@spectrumschool.org

Emergency School Cancellations or Delays

Spectrum Progressive School will alert you as soon as possible via email of school cancellations or delays due to weather or other emergencies. To ensure you receive these messages, please keep your email address(es) up to date with the school. Notifications will also be announced on local media and TV stations.

Weather closures and delays at Spectrum School are at the discretion of the Director of Operations. Information monitored to inform the decision includes other closures in the area and any weather data available. During predicted weather events and when other closures are being published on local media - snow storm, ice or dangerous wind chills - please begin monitoring your emails or the local TV and media to see if Spectrum is closed. It is the responsibility of Spectrum families to monitor emails and local media regarding closures.

Knowledge of Spectrum School Levels of Urgency - Scenarios and Communication Protocols

| Level | Sample scenarios | Actions | Communication |
|--------------|---|---|---|
| Peer-to-Peer | Fight or aggression Bullying Possible "trauma" to a witness | Behavior contracts Safety Plan Determine impact on individuals | Staff Parent conferences Parents of students involved |
| Concern | A child is hurt and has to leave for medical attention Unexpected inappropriate exposure to some website or other material (Incidental vs intentional) Children feeling unsafe with comment or behavior in the classroom Negative behavior impacting classroom culture | Address with problematic child(ren) If classroom time is taken to address the situation as a whole group Team meeting to discuss approaches and options | Inform parents of students in class where incident occurred, and how it happened Teachers and/or admin will let parents of level know with suggestions for conversations at home |
| Threat | Threat of bodily harm to self or others School wide Classroom Individual (adult) | Ensure the safety of all students and staff Alert authorities Follow threat protocol | Communication incident has occurred - no immediate danger, but process is in place See below Processes for managing threats |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|--|---|
| | Individual (child) | | |
| Emergency | Evacuation Disaster Actual intrusion Violent action | Call 911 Staff cell phones in all emergency | See below: Communication of threat or emergency |

Process to manage threat

- Ensure immediate safety of all students and staff
- Determine level of threat and where it occurred
 - School wide, classroom, individual
- Implement this level of our protocol as far as action and communication
- Contact Rockford Police Department
- Ensure internal communication with all staff
- Contact parents of students directly involved
- Communicate by phone and/or email with school parents that this has happened
- Ensure follow up communication with parents, including who to go to with questions

Communication of threat or emergency

- 911 or Police Department (report)
- Administrative Team
- If before or after school, Compass Staff (MacKenzie Schiffman, Shawwna Worley)
- Church if 911 called, notify office/Matthew Johnson
 - Mon-Friday- UU’s Woodsong
 - Staff at home
- Emergency Alert - blast call/text -via Bright Arrow
- Board Executives

Student Instruction

Clarity regarding unacceptable or inappropriate language or action:

- Teaching all children levels and that this extends to social media
 - Sign a contract about language and safe behavior
 - Internet and behavioral safety
- Peer response to statements and actions of others
- Say Something Week
- Confidentiality
- Strategies for when you don’t feel safe

Scheduled Drills

- Mock Disaster Drill
- Evacuation Drill
- Shelter in Place Drill
- Intruder Alert Drill

Firearms, Drugs, Battery & Student Information Reporting System

Battery against school personnel:

#1. The chief school administrator shall immediately notify local law enforcement officials of written complaints from school personnel concerning instances of battery committed against school personnel; and,

#2. The chief school administrator shall notify the Illinois State Police within 3 days of each incident of battery (#1) through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS) in IWAS.

Firearms & Drugs:

For purposes of #1 and #2 only, school grounds are defined as the real property comprising any school, any conveyance owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or a school related activity, or on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school

#1. The chief school administrator shall immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of firearm incidents on school grounds. If a student is in possession of a firearm, then the school administrator shall also immediately notify the student's parent or guardian.

#2. The chief school administrator shall immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of verified incidents involving drugs occurring on school grounds.

#3. The chief school administrator shall notify the Illinois State Police of such incidents (#1 – 2) through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS) in IWAS.

Student Teachers – Prior to approval, all student teachers and pre-clinical students must meet all requirements for their program, pass a fingerprint-based criminal history records check, and be subject to a review of the sexual offenders database.

Fundraising

Tuition and fees do not cover the entire operating costs of the Spectrum School. We attempt to fill this gap through grant writing and various fundraisers. The largest and most important fundraising effort of the year is the Annual Fund/Monthly Giving Campaign. This drive is the yearly opportunity to help sustain and improve Spectrum School through a financial contribution. Each family is expected to participate in the school's fundraising activities and gather donations toward these efforts.

Spectrum Progressive School Tuition, Past Due Policy

Payment of Tuition & Fees

Payment Plans Families selecting a payment plan (other than one single payment) are required to use Direct Withdrawal from their bank account, with funds transferable either on the 5th or 20th of each billable month. A credit card guarantee of payment is also required to be kept on file.

Compass fees are billed on a monthly basis. Please see the sections Fee Payment and Termination from Compass, under the Compass Program procedures for payment and past due account information for the before and after school care program.

Past Due Account Procedures

Spectrum policy requires prompt payment of tuition and fees. The Board of Directors has the responsibility of supporting the school's mission and vision by ensuring that the school is both fiscally and educationally sound. To address their fiscal responsibilities, the Policy and Finance Committees developed the following past due account procedures at the March 17, 2003 Board Meeting. They have been revised at the March 22, 2016 Board of Directors meeting.

Immediately after receiving notice that an ACH or other approved method of payment has not been honored, staff will notify the family via phone, email or mail within five days to let them know the credit card on file will be billed for the missed tuition payment. If the credit card on file rejects the payment, then the family has 15 days to pay the past due tuition or the child(ren) will be unenrolled.

Students' whose families have a past due balance are not allowed to attend elective field trips that require additional money beyond the enrichment fee.

Registration for the following school year is not allowed if there is past due tuition. All previous year's tuition must be paid prior to the student attending class at the beginning of the school year. Past due tuition that cannot be collected by voluntary efforts will be sent to collection. All costs of collection, including attorney's fees, shall be the responsibility of and charged against the past due account.
Revised: 4/26/2016

There is a process to apply for tuition assistance, funding for which is very limited and for which in-kind volunteering is required. Please see the principal for more information.

School Life

Social Behavior

In today's world, helping children grow socially in developmentally appropriate ways is challenging for both parents and teachers. Traditional family support systems have declined and environmental stresses have increased. Spectrum Progressive School teachers and administrators are committed to working with parents to facilitate their children's social and academic growth.

Frequent communication between teachers and parents is essential to a team approach in this most important aspect of a child's overall development. The following statements outline Spectrum's philosophy and methods for fostering social skills. We expect parents to join with us in this vital effort.

Helping students to learn to be responsible for their own actions is a major goal of Spectrum Progressive School's educational philosophy. We believe that this is accomplished when children:

- Have the opportunity, in a non-threatening community, to experience natural consequences of their own actions.
- Begin to understand the viewpoint of others.
- Are close to adults who share mutual respect.
- Construct for themselves appropriate rules of social behavior.

To accomplish these goals, students and teachers discuss the idea that at Spectrum School each person shows respect for oneself and for another person's rights, feelings, needs and property. Since physically aggressive acts and rude or abusive language do not show respect, these actions cannot be tolerated. A few simple rules are made for each classroom based upon these concepts. The rules are then enforced by pointing out to individuals and groups of students the occurrences of proper behavior, as outlined in their list of rules.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, children are reminded of the rules. Techniques for solving conflicts such as talking together, looking for alternatives, and compromising are discussed with children in individual and group situations. When necessary, an appropriate consequence is applied.

- Exclusion from the group for a limited time until the child expresses readiness to comply with the rules.
- Pointing out the consequences of the child's act.
- Helping the child see how the act affected the situation and the group.
- Devising with the child alternative actions which would be more acceptable next time.
- Depriving the child of the time that was misused.
- Helping the child make restitution for the act.

Teachers also share with parents any significant difficulties and successes children have in their growth in self-discipline and the understanding of others' viewpoints. Parents may be asked to be involved in a conference with the child and the teacher. Through such conferences, the children know that we are all concerned and can gain new information they can use to further construct a system of values that respects both themselves and others.

When appropriate behavior is not achieved in a reasonable length of time, the parents will be asked to come to a meeting with the teachers and the principal to create a plan to help the child. A plan in the form of a contract may include such strategies as daily parent and teacher communication, a check-list monitoring system, and/or professional counseling. Any services outside of Spectrum will be the financial responsibility of the parents.

If, after implementation of the special plan and an agreed upon amount of time, it does not appear that the child is going to achieve appropriate behavior at Spectrum School, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the school and seek another placement which may be more appropriate for the child's particular needs.

Cell Phone Policy

At Spectrum Progressive School, we recognize that cell phones are an important part of our students' lives and can be used for various purposes such as communication, education, entertainment, and safety. However, we also believe that cell phone use in the classroom can be a source of distraction, disruption, and disrespect; and cell phones can sometimes interfere with our students' learning process and our school climate.

In order to preserve the teaching and learning environment for our students, removing cell phones from the school day is one proven way we can help our students succeed.

Therefore, we have established the following cell phone policy to balance the benefits and drawbacks of cell phone use at school.

1. Students are not allowed to use cell phones during class time, including in the hallways. This includes texting, calling, browsing, gaming, social media, receiving calls, or any other activity that involves the use of a cell phone.
2. During class time, cell phones must be stored away in the caddies provided by the teacher.
3. Cell phones must be turned off or silenced and must not be visible or accessible to the students during class time.
4. Students may use their cell phones before school, at lunchtime, and after school. However, students must follow the school rules and expectations regarding appropriate interactions and respectful behavior when using their cell phones.

5. We ask that parents call the school office at (815) 877-1600 if there is an emergency and they need to reach their child. The office staff will relay the message to the student or the teacher as soon as possible. Please do not call or text your child directly during class time as this may disrupt the learning environment.
6. If students need to place a call during the day, they should request to go to the main office to use an office phone. In the event of an urgent communication need that can only be addressed by using the student's cell phone as opposed to a school phone (i.e. "the office doesn't have mom's new cell number and I need to look it up"), the student must request permission to use their personal device to complete the call or text. The phone is then to be immediately turned off and returned to the classroom caddy.
7. If there is a medical reason to use a cell phone, those correspondences will be made via the main office and as required by the 504 or health plan.
8. Students and their parents must read the cell phone policy and return a signed copy to the office at the beginning of the school year. Signing the policy acknowledges acceptance. Students will not be permitted to have their phones at school until the signed policy is returned.

The following temporary exemptions may be made available to students at the discretion of individual teachers/staff. All exemptions are subject to the device being used appropriately and only for the purpose specifically permitted by the teacher.

- Class teachers may give permission for students to use personal devices in the classroom for specific learning activities.
- Individual students may negotiate with their teachers if they wish to use a personal device for a non-educational purpose for a wellbeing reason.
- Students will be permitted to bring personal devices on field trips for learning purposes and/or to facilitate contact with their families at specified times. Class teachers may give permission for students to use personal devices as music players or gaming devices.

If students violate the school's cell phone policy, the following may occur:

- ***First offense:*** *The student's cell phone will be confiscated by a staff member and held in the main office until the end of the school day. Before being allowed to pick up their phone at the end of the day, students must discuss and review the cell phone policy with an administrator.*
- ***Second offense:*** *The student's cell phone will be confiscated and held in the main office until the student's parents can pick it up. The student's parents will be contacted and informed of the refusal to follow the school's cell phone policy.*
- ***Third offense:*** *The student's cell phone will be confiscated and held in the main office until the student's parents can pick it up. The device may be banned from school for the remainder of the semester.*

*****Any cell phone or personal device brought to school by students will be the responsibility of the student. Spectrum Progressive School will not assume responsibility for damaged, lost, or stolen personal devices.***

Student Clothing Requirements

Spectrum School does not impose a uniform dress code. Students should feel free to wear clothing that is casual and comfortable. The way one dresses is a form of self-expression we do not wish to unduly restrict. We simply expect our students to make appropriate, sensible, and responsible decisions that do not disrupt or distract from the learning and working environment.

Learning to dress appropriately for different situations and occasions is an important part of growing up. When choosing what to wear each morning, students (with the help and guidance of their parents) should keep the weather and possible physical activity in mind. At all times, students' choices should reflect safe and responsible choices, as well as respect for self, others, and the learning environment.

We ask that your student dress within the following guidelines:

- Student clothing should not display wording, or depictions that might offend members of our diverse community, including, but not limited to political issues, gore, offensive and/or suggestive pictures, and language. Text or pictures about controlled substances (drugs, cigarettes, or alcohol) are not allowed on school clothing.
- For other than religious reasons, caps, hats, hoods, and other headgear are not appropriate inside the school building. Students may, however, wear hats during outdoor activities and on special occasions at school which involve costumes and /or "dress up play".
- Bare midriffs, visible undergarments, and strapless tops are not considered appropriate at school.
- Shorts are permitted if they are the length of the student's mid-thigh. Students wearing pants with rips and tears (2000's fashion) should be conscientious of what those rips expose.
- Clothing should not disrupt the learning environment or distract a learner from the activity/lesson.
- There are occasions, such as graduation and performing in public events, such as band concerts, presentations to visitors, and certain field trips, that we may require students to be more "dressed up", or in specific clothing colors. Staff will communicate specific expectations for these events or occasions.
- For the protection of their feet, students will wear closed shoes (toes, sides, and heels are enclosed) or boots when outdoors. Students may keep an extra pair of shoes/boots at school for this purpose.

Clothing for Fitness, Movement, and P.E.

- A student should always have clothing and footwear on hand that will allow them to enjoy outdoor relaxation and exercise.
- A student should wear, or be able to quickly change into, clothing appropriate for their classes entailing activity and exercise (i.e. physical education and movement). Such activities require athletic footwear and clothing that is loose fitting and that will not expose the student in an embarrassing manner.
- The student's name should be written (in indelible ink) on all articles of clothing that may be stored in common areas of the school and, thus, might be misplaced.
- At times, we may benefit from Rockford University's PE Student teachers providing instruction to our students at Rockford University's gym.

Outdoor Activities and Cold Weather

Going outdoors for fresh air and exercise is very important for our students. However, in the event of extreme cold weather, we will not allow the students outdoors. The school's guidelines state that the students will not go out if the wind chill is 5 degrees or below. If the wind chill is between 6 and 15 degrees, teachers will use their own judgment if going outdoors is appropriate. Their decision is based on wind speed and amount of sunshine. If the wind chill is 16 degrees or above the students will be taken outside. Students should keep appropriate cold weather clothing at school including a coat, snow pants, boots, hats and gloves.

Birthday Observances

We honor every child on his/her birthday in appropriate ways such as singing special songs, reading birthday stories, and giving him/her the opportunity to personally choose satisfying activities.

Each month a special celebration is held in each classroom for all the children who had a birthday, or half-birthday for those with summer dates. (Preschool and Early Elementary groups celebrate birthdays on or close to each child's birthday). If contributing, parents/guardians of the celebrants are asked to send individually wrapped store packaged snacks and paper products needed for a classroom celebration.

The observance of a child's birthday at school is not intended to take the place of an "at home" party and must blend in with the regular daily program. Invitations for "home" parties should not be distributed at school unless all the children in the class are invited. Transportation to after school parties is the responsibility of parents. The school will not release a child for a party to a parent other than his/her own without written permission from his/her parent or guardian (email consent is fine). Please use the same consideration for after-school party transportation as you would for invitation distribution.

Field Trips - Protocols and Safety Rules

Field trips are a valuable part of a child's education and expand his/her learning experiences. Every field trip at Spectrum Progressive School serves an educational purpose. Extra precautions are taken to ensure the safety of every student while participating in the field trip.

Parents/Guardians indicate their permission of the student to attend field trips by enrolling their child at Spectrum Progressive School and by signing both the registration form and the field trip form. Parents are always informed of field trips prior to the event.

During the summer of 2019, staff decided to institute a policy similar to public schools and not have teachers as drivers. Teachers need to be able to get to and from the location to manage the excursion, and need to be available to manage emergencies. It is critically important for parents and guardians to sign up to drive. If we do not have enough drivers, the trip will be canceled.

Also, we do not want to put teachers and staff in the position of having to install car seats. This will require driving chaperones and parents of children with car seats to show up early enough to put the car seats in before school or before the start of the trip. Teachers will determine who is going in which car well enough in advance to coordinate this for families. We know this is inconvenient but we strongly believe in field-based experiential learning and that it is worth it both for learning and safety.

Parent Drivers

The success of field trips depends upon the help of the parent drivers.

Our school staff requests that families make child care arrangements for siblings while parents are driving for, or chaperoning a field trip. Spectrum requires a copy of your automobile insurance card for anyone transporting our students during school-sponsored field trips and activities.

Extended Trip

On occasion, Upper school students will have the opportunity to participate in an overnight trip. The goal of the trip is to expand learning outside the school walls, in an area of the United States different from Rockford and/or the Midwest, and allow students to experience independence in a safe and fun environment.

Chaperones are selected by a lottery from the pool of parents that have agreed to and signed the Responsibilities of a Chaperone form. A health officer will also be selected by a lottery from the pool of parents that have agreed to and signed the Responsibilities of a Chaperone form **and** who meet the health officer credentials. In addition to the school forms, any forms/policies from the camp must also be agreed to and signed. Students will have the opportunity to participate in fundraising to reduce the cost of his/her trip.

Special Events

During the school year, student learning activities may culminate in an evening presentation for parents as well as sharing times for the student body during the day. Parents are invited to come to any of the daytime presentations. Several times a year, evening programs may also be held and parents should plan on attending.

Student Choice Learning

Spectrum School has a rich tradition of providing students the opportunity to choose a topic of interest, which is led by a facilitator in deep inquiry on their chosen topic. These may be accomplished as a “passion project” or “genius hour” by an individual or as a small group. .

Homework

Family time is an important productive time for social interaction and enjoyment of group projects planned by the family. To accommodate this essential sharing time, homework is not regularly scheduled. We do, however, suggest time each day to be set aside for quiet activities, thus building a time for study. We also encourage daily independent reading at home as well as reading as a family. If you go on a trip, we ask that you leverage opportunities to reflect and talk about new experiences. Every shopping trip, restaurant visit, museum, or event provides an opportunity to talk about money and budget. Look for shapes and patterns. Have fun playing board games that require thinking and interaction.

Homework may be assigned as children mature, especially in Upper School, in order to develop organizational skills, study skills and time management. When assigned, homework is an extension and expansion of daily class work. It is usually part of the student’s plan implementation; the work portion of his/her self-selected activity. Homework could also be the result of a specific contract that has been agreed upon by both the teacher and student. Your child may need the materials or equipment which you have at home, resources from the public library, or he/she may need more time than the school day allows for completing the work.

It is important that the student accepts and carries out the responsibilities she/he has assumed in school and that the child knows that his or her parents are interested in the project and are supportive by helping to provide time and space at home to do school work.

Parents need to facilitate and guide their child in their project but not do it for him/her. If your child's homework seems to be stressful, feel free to contact the teacher to discuss the problem. Homework should be satisfying, not stressful.

Lunch

If your child is enrolled in a full-day program, please send a daily, healthy lunch and beverage. We ask each student to bring a filled water bottle to school each day. Spectrum does have filtered, cooler water onsite for refills. No soda, energy drinks or gum are allowed at school.

Food deliveries

Spectrum School is dedicated to ensuring the safety and security of our students and staff. We do not accept deliveries from outside food vendors/delivery services. This includes DoorDash, Uber Eats, and other delivery services.

Every delivery person is considered a stranger and we do not have the staff available to monitor outside food delivery drivers, drivers leaving deliveries at the wrong door, or getting the deliveries to the students throughout the day. Any food deliveries should be made by parents or other family members and should arrive during their lunch hour. To avoid interruption to the learning day, any food deliveries arriving outside of the lunch period will be kept in the refrigerator for the student to pick up after school. If a student forgets their lunch and if a parent/guardian is unable to bring one, a peanut butter and jelly or cheese sandwich will be provided.

Snacks

In addition to lunch, a healthy snack from home should be provided each day. Consider sending fruits, vegetables, crackers, yogurt, or other healthy options, as well as a juice box or water. No soda, energy drinks or gum are allowed at school.

Tote Bags/Backpacks

It is essential that each child have a tote bag or backpack large enough to accommodate a lunchbox, books, and papers. Even children who do not carry lunch boxes often have art and construction projects to transport. If every child's belongings are in a well-secured single container, arrival and dismissal procedures run more efficiently with few delays. Some teachers may request specifications for these totes and will let parents know before school begins in the fall.

General Supplies

At the beginning of each school year, teachers provide a list of supplies which students need to bring to school. Occasionally, additional supplies are needed throughout the year as supplies are depleted or new needs become evident. You will be notified if and when these supplies are needed.

Arrival, Dismissal, Traffic, Safety and Drills

School parking lots can be incredibly busy places in the morning when children arrive and in the afternoon when children are leaving. Safety is a primary concern of the school staff, but it requires everyone's participation.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival/Dismissal Preschool and families needing extra time or assistance

- Please enter off of Turner St. and park in Spectrum's parking lot (lot on the left).
- Walk your child up the long blacktop sidewalk and enter Spectrum's main door under the blue Spectrum banner.

Arrival: Early Elementary through Upper School Students

- Please enter off of Turner St. and continue up the driveway to the upper part of the campus; circling around the island and dropping off at the courtyard (red line on the map).
- There will be a staff person and/or parent volunteer to escort your child into Spectrum's secondary door off of the courtyard.

Regular Afternoon Dismissal: Early and Intermediate Elementary

- Please continue up the driveway to the upper part of the campus; circling around the island and picking up at the courtyard (red line on the map).
- Please pull as far forward as you are safely able to allow space for other vehicles.
- School staff will wave your car forward as far as possible.
- Vehicles that stop and drop off too far back create backups in the dismissal line.
- To ensure everyone's safety and to keep the line moving smoothly, please remain in your vehicle until a staff person directs your student to his/her vehicle.
- Spectrum staff will not secure safety belts, so please plan to ensure your child (ren)'s seat belts are securely fastened.
- Safety is our priority! Crossing the car line can be dangerous! Please do not park and cross the car line to pick up your child.
- For parents who walk up to pick their child up please park in the lower Spectrum lot and pick your child (ren) up at Spectrum's main door. Please notify the teacher and/or administrative coordinator.

Regular Afternoon Dismissal: Upper School

- Please continue up the driveway to the upper part of the campus; pulling into the middle upper parking lot (yellow box on map).

Compass Arrival / Dismissal

- Please come to the main office. For Compass, come to the main office and sign your child in and out for before and after school programs sessions.

Late Arrival / Early Dismissal

- Please plan to walk your child to the office to ensure safe arrival. If you need to pick your child up early, please notify the teacher and/or administrative coordinator.



Safety Drills

Fire, natural disaster, and intruder drills are held regularly to train the students in evacuation and safety procedures. Spectrum follows an Incident Command System that is reviewed by the local police and fire departments annually. Please see pages 10-11 of this Handbook for more detailed information.

Health Information

Medical Certificates

To comply with the school code of the State of Illinois and the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Health, all children who enroll in Spectrum School shall have a health examination within six months prior to entering Spectrum School for the first time and in the years when they will be five or ten years of age. Evidence of these examinations, which must include documentation of required immunizations, will be presented, on an official State of Illinois form, no later than the first day of the school year or the first day of attendance.

In addition, all children who will become four or five years old during the school year shall become appropriately immunized or present a schedule of planned immunizations approved by the child's doctor at the time of their birthday. Failure to comply with these rules may result in your student's exclusion from class until complete records are available. Children, whose parents or legal guardians object to health or dental examinations, or to the required immunizations, may submit a letter explaining their religious beliefs and request an exception to the law.

Per Illinois School Code, students will be excluded from school by October 15 if requirements for health examinations and immunizations have not been met.

Absence Because of Illness

Absences Because of Illness - Entering into the 2024-25 school year the safety, health, and well-being of our students, staff, and visitors while providing a first-class education remains our top priority.

If your child becomes ill and you are keeping him/her home, please contact the office with that information.

Students must be kept home from school if they have any of the following:

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature over 100 degrees. Students may not return to school until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication).
- Diarrhea: defined as 4-5 loose stools within a 24-hour period. Students may not return to school until 12 hours after the last episode.
- Vomiting: students may return to school 12 hours after the last episode and are able to tolerate food.
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): children must be treated with prescription antibiotic drops for a full 24 hours before returning to school.
- Acute infections: this could include, *upper respiratory infections, strep throat, scarlet fever, etc.* Any infection requiring an antibiotic will require that the child be excluded from school until they are fever free and on the antibiotic for a full 24 hours.

- Chicken Pox: students may not return to school until they are fever free for a full 24 hours and all of the lesions are dry and crusted.
- Head lice: students may return to school once the first treatment is complete and the child is nit (egg) free.

Because disease is easily spread among young children by means of coughs and nasal discharge, we urge parents to keep their children at home when they have these symptoms, even when not accompanied by a fever. Those children returning to school after an illness may miss outdoor recess with a note from a physician. Please keep your child home until fully recovered.

Illness or Injury at School

If your child becomes ill in school and develops a fever, the school will contact you first and then the emergency number, if necessary, to arrange for pick-up. Each parent is required to sign an emergency waiver, giving the staff at Spectrum permission to administer emergency first aid and/or transport to a health care facility for treatment and to obtain medical care in an emergency.

Medications

Our school policy states that all prescription and non-prescription medications that are to be given during school hours must have completed the *Authorization for Administration of Medication Form*. Classroom staff members at Spectrum School are not authorized to administer any medications to your child. When requested, most doctors will schedule dosages around school times. If such scheduling is not possible, the parent must sign a special permission form for each prescription. These forms are always available in the office. Medication will not be given to your child without such permission. All medication sent to the school must be brought to the office:

- In the original prescription bottle or, for non-prescription medication, in the original manufacturer's package.
- Properly labeled with the name of the student, prescribing physician, the name of the medication, dosage, route, and time to be given, as well as the name of the pharmacy.
- By the Parent/Guardian or other responsible adult.

The school is not responsible for returning unused medication. Students are not allowed to take any medications in school without parent and school knowledge.

Asthma, Diabetes, and Allergy Medications

The school and school personnel incur no liability for injuries occurring when administering asthma medication, an epinephrine auto-injector, or an opioid antagonist. The parents or guardians must sign a statement acknowledging this protection. A Safety Plan is required annually for children with Asthma, Diabetes, or any other chronic health concern.

The school allows the self-administration and/or self-carry of asthma medication, epinephrine injectors, and diabetes medication upon receipt of the necessary documents.

Use of Sunscreen

A student may possess and use a topical sunscreen product while on school property or at a school-sponsored event or activity without a physician's note or prescription if the product is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

Medical Cannabis

Per Illinois School Code, Spectrum School has adopted a policy for the administration of a medical cannabis infused product to a student who is a registered qualifying patient. The policy/procedures allow a parent or guardian or other designated caregiver to administer the product subject to the restrictions outlined in 105 ILCS 5/22-33. The policy/procedures allow for a school administrator or school nurse to administer the product and may also allow a student who is a registered qualifying patient to self-administer the product under the supervision of a school administrator or school nurse, subject to the restrictions outlined in 105 ILCS 5/22-33.

Other Related Health and Safety Topics

- Spectrum may opt out of the Lockdown Drill, or if necessary allow individual students to opt out to avoid overwrought anxiety and stress. If this occurs, we will provide alternative education about safety.
- Health related information and education will be expanded to include e-cigarettes and other vapor devices.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

School Hours

Full Day Programs

Greeting Times: 8:10 - 8:30 a.m.
Classes Begin: 8:30 a.m.
Classes End: 3:00 p.m.

Half-Day Preschool

Morning:
Greeting Times: 8:10 - 8:30 a.m.
Classes Begin: 8:30 a.m.
Classes End: 11:30 a.m.
Pick-Up Begins: 11:30 a.m.

Attendance and Absences

Spectrum School's educational program is built on the premise that regular **DAILY** attendance is vital to a student's success. Ensuring that a student maintains regular attendance requires a cooperative effort by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and school personnel. A student who is frequently absent or who is tardy misses class instruction and discussion as well as social interaction even if written work is made up. Please schedule family vacations and excursions accordingly.

Attendance expectations:

- DAILY attendance is REQUIRED of all EE- Upper students.
- Spectrum expects parents or guardians to make reasonable efforts to ensure the regular attendance of their children.
- Parents or guardians are expected to inform the school of any absences and their causes by calling the school each day the student is not in attendance by 9:00 a.m.
- The school records each student's daily attendance, and a teacher or staff member will call you if you have not reported a student absence.
- A student's attendance record is provided to you with the progress report.

Attendance related issues:

- Students accumulating 10 or more absences during the school year will receive a call or letter from the principal to discuss the student's attendance record.
- Absences of more than 10% of the school year (approximately 16 days) requires a conference with teachers and/or an administrator to discuss educational implications including, but not limited to, repeating a level or denial of enrollment for the next academic year.
- Tardiness counts as ½ day absence if a child is more than 1 hour late. Students are recorded as a full day absence if they are tardy more than half of the school day.

Appointments and Vacations

Spectrum encourages parents to schedule dental, doctor, and other appointments as well as vacations outside school hours whenever possible. If an appointment must be scheduled on school time, students must be signed in and out of the office. Spectrum realizes the value of extended trips and requests that families taking an extended vacation during school months contact the office and teachers, at least one week in advance of the trip. Homework assignments will be given to the student after he/she returns to school. Please do not request homework before the vacation as actual assignments may change during the absence.

Compass: Before and After School Program

Please see the separate guide for our Compass program, which includes early morning drop off beginning at 7:00 a.m. and inclusive of a healthy breakfast, after school play, snack, and enrichment sessions, and opportunities for group activities. All day Compass is available on professional development days. The calendar and sign up for Compass is provided monthly, as well as the fee scale.

Assessments and Testing

New students applying for enrollment are assessed for personal learning needs and appropriate class placement before acceptance. The very nature of the program at Spectrum requires that teachers use both formal and informal methods of assessment throughout the entire academic year.

Standardized achievement tests are administered to students in Upper School, and optional for older Intermediate students.

Specialized Services

In specific cases, parents may request, or teachers may recommend that a student be evaluated by their home district's educational specialist or by another private educational diagnostician. Generally, this recommendation is made when a student is not making satisfactory school progress either academically or socially. After completion of an appropriate evaluation, parents and Spectrum Progressive School staff will determine any necessary changes in the child's educational program. If necessary, personalized plan that may involve special tutoring and/or counseling may be developed. Services outside the regular classroom program will be the financial responsibility of the student's family. When appropriate professional expertise outside the field of education is needed for a child to successfully continue in the education program, continued enrollment in Spectrum Progressive School is contingent upon the parents providing that professional help.

Private and Parochial Special Services

Children may receive special education testing by their home school district via the Private and Parochial Special Services program of the public-school systems. Contact Jacquie Lind - j.lind@spectrumschool.org - or your local school district for scheduling and other details.

Toys, Electronics & Computer Policies

Toys from Home

Unless requested by the teacher or given permission by a teacher for special times, toys, trading cards, and sports items should not be brought to school. The school accepts no responsibility for them. If such items become a problem, they will be kept in the office until they can be sent back home.

Electronics Policy

Spectrum Progressive School recognizes the fast-paced changes in technology and therefore allows students in Intermediate Elementary and Upper School to bring technology from home for academic purposes. They are for approved instructional purposes only and use requires permission from a teacher or staff member. These items are not allowed to be in the student's possession at any other time. If electronic devices are being used inappropriately, they will be confiscated and released only to a parent/guardian.

Computer and Internet Access Policies

Internet access is available to students, teachers, and guests at Spectrum School. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in our school by facilitating research, resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

With access to information and people from all over the world, also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting.

On a global network it is impossible to control all material. While the school Internet access has set filters to limit accessibility, new technology such as 3G and 4G internet access, make it impossible for the school to control all the material that is available on the Internet. We firmly believe that valuable information and interaction on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of Spectrum. Therefore, we rely on proper conduct and adherence to guidelines.

All users are expected to conduct their online activities in an ethical and legal fashion. The use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. Misuse of these resources will result in the suspension or loss of these privileges and may have additional disciplinary, legal and/or monetary consequences.

Spectrum staff will never require a password to a staff, student, or parent account. We may reset passwords of our school email system as necessary. To ensure the proper use of email, computer network and/or related equipment, Spectrum Progressive School reserves the right to monitor and access those systems and equipment, including the listing of Internet sites visited, downloaded material, and the contents of any hard drive, network drive or storage media. Such monitoring or accessing may occur at any time and without notice.

Appropriate and acceptable educational uses of these resources include:

- Accessing the Internet to retrieve information from libraries, databases, and World Wide Web sites to enrich and expand curriculum and as an aid to research projects.
- Using e-mail to facilitate distance learning projects.
- Using Listservs and newsgroups to gain access to current information on local, state, national and world events.
- Practicing appropriate network etiquette.

Unacceptable practices include and are not limited to:

- Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright, contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulations.
- Downloading copyrighted material for other than personal use.
- Unauthorized downloading of software.
- Wastefully using shared resources, such as file space.
- Invading the privacy of others, including accessing or retrieving files without proper authorization.
- Using another user's password or account.
- Posting anonymous messages or using pseudonyms or anonymous sign-ons.
- Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, illegal material, and/or materials that are inconsistent with the objectives and/or teachings of Spectrum School.
- Vandalizing in any way or form, including but not limited to, attempting to harm or destroy the data of another user, the internal school network, or any networks or sites that are connected to the network/Internet or introducing a virus into the computer or the network.

Attempting to breach security codes and/or passwords will also be considered a form of vandalism.

Student Internet, Social Media & Technology Contract

Prior to bringing in technology from home and using the Internet at Spectrum Progressive School, students must sign and agree to abide by the Student Internet, Social Media & Technology Contract.

As a condition of using the Internet, students and parents/guardians accept that access is for educational purposes and that Spectrum Progressive School prohibits the access of materials that may be defamatory, inaccurate, offensive or otherwise inappropriate in the school setting or violate this policy.

The school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website. However, the school will require the student's cooperation in an investigation if there is sufficient evidence to suggest the student's social network account violates the school's disciplinary policy; and the school may require the student to share content during such an investigation. **Such investigations will be conducted by school administration, and if necessary, involve authorities. Students will be given due process and the results of any investigation will be shared with parents in a timely fashion.**

Students and parents/guardians further accept that the school does not control the content of the Internet and it is impossible for Spectrum Progressive School to control or restrict access to all controversial and/or inappropriate materials.

Students and parents/guardians agree to hold Spectrum Progressive School harmless, its employees, administration, Board, and agents from any harm caused by materials or software obtained by themselves or their child via the Internet and any associated costs.

Parents/guardians agree to discuss the terms of this policy with their child, and accept all responsibilities and/or liabilities arising from their child's compliance or non-compliance with this policy and/or Internet use. We will also be providing support and workshops for parents to build strategies to help their children manage the increasingly complex world of social media in a digital universe they find almost irresistibly compelling.

Licensing/Copyright

Spectrum Progressive School licenses the use of computer software from various outside companies and does not own this software. All users are required to use the software only in accordance with the License Agreement. Computer software is copyrighted, therefore, duplication (except for back-up purposes or as permitted in the license agreement) is against the law.

Most license agreements limit the use of the software to a single registered machine or to non-concurrent use through a server/client network, unless specifically authorized by a school administrator. Users are prohibited from installing or copying software on school computers or borrowing licensed school software for installation on non-school computers.

This prohibition on copying does not extend to individual or shared user files, but only to licensed computer software. Penalties for infringement include liabilities for damages or lost profits attributed to the copying, or statutory damages of up to \$100,000. Unauthorized duplication is a federal crime with individual penalties of up to \$250,000 and imprisonment up to five years. These penalties can be extended to both the individual and the school.

Compliance with school policy, software licenses, software agreements and copyright law is the responsibility of each user. This policy will be strictly enforced. Any student or employee found copying software without authorization, other than for back-up purposes, is subject to disciplinary action ranging up to suspension or expulsion or immediate discharge as deemed appropriate by school administrators.

Students, teachers, or staff who learn of misuse of school software must immediately notify a school administrator.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask a member of the administrative team.

Thank you for choosing Spectrum Progressive School!

Policy 904: Bullying Policy & Prevention - Revised 8/16/24

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important goals.

Students, parents, guardians and all staff participate in the revisions and implementation of policy that promotes positive school culture that takes a clear stand against bullying in all its forms. This policy is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents or guardians. Focus groups were conducted with parents by a Board committee and Education Committee, which includes administration, Board members, teachers, parents, and community members.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of Spectrum School. This policy does not infringe upon and is consistent with free exercise of religion.

This policy is consistent with the policies of the Spectrum School Board.

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, 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 if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school related activity, function, or program.

Definitions from Section 27-23.7 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7)

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.

Cyber-bullying 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. Cyber-bullying 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. Cyber-bullying 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.

Bullying Prevention

In today's world, helping children grow socially in developmentally appropriate ways is challenging for both parents and teachers. Traditional family support systems have declined and environmental stresses have increased. Spectrum Progressive School teachers and administrators are committed to working with parents to facilitate their children's social and academic growth. Frequent communication between teachers and parents is essential to a team approach in this most important aspect of a child's overall development. The following statements outline Spectrum's philosophy and methods for fostering social skills. We expect parents to join us in this vital effort.

- Helping students to learn to be responsible for their own actions is a major goal of Spectrum Progressive School's educational philosophy. We believe that this is accomplished when children:
 - Have the opportunity, in a non-threatening community, to experience the natural consequences of their own actions.
 - Begin to understand the viewpoint of others.
 - Are close to adults who share mutual respect.
 - Construct for themselves appropriate rules of social behavior.

To accomplish these goals, students and teachers discuss the idea that at Spectrum Progressive School each person shows respect for oneself and for another person's rights, feelings, needs and property. Since physically aggressive acts and rude or abusive language do not show respect, these actions cannot be tolerated. A few simple rules are made for each classroom based upon these concepts. The rules are then enforced by pointing out to individuals and groups of students the occurrences of proper behavior, as outlined in their list of rules.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, children are reminded of the rules. Techniques for solving conflicts such as talking together, looking for alternatives, and compromising are discussed with children in individual and group situations. When necessary, an appropriate sanction is applied. These sanctions may include:

- Exclusion from the group for a limited time until the child expresses readiness to comply with the rules.
- Pointing out the consequences of the child's act.
- Helping the child see how the act affected the situation and the group.
- Devising with the child alternative actions which would be more acceptable next time.
- Depriving the child of the time that was misused.
- Helping the child make restitution for the act.

Teachers also share with parents any significant difficulties and successes children have in their growth in self-discipline and the understanding of others' viewpoints. Parents may be asked to be involved in a conference with the child and the teacher. Through such conferences, the children know that we are all concerned and can gain new information they can use to further construct a system of values that respects both themselves and others.

When appropriate behavior is not achieved in a reasonable length of time, the parents will be asked to come to a meeting with the teachers and the Director to create a plan to help the child. A plan in the form of a contract may include such strategies as daily parent and teacher communication, a check-list monitoring system, and/or professional counseling. Any services outside of Spectrum will be the financial responsibility of the parents.

If, after implementation of the special plan and an agreed upon amount of time, it does not appear that the child is going to achieve appropriate behavior at Spectrum Progressive School, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the school and seek another placement which may be more appropriate for the child's particular needs.

Procedures for Bullying Complaint

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the Safety Officer, or any other staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted

- The staff member and/or Safety Officer will investigate the report with only the necessary people within 10 school days from the reporting.
- The staff member and/or Safety Officer will determine if bullying in fact did occur.
- The staff member and/or Safety Officer will discuss bullying with the student who displayed bullying behavior.
- Conversation will be documented and placed in the student's file.
- The staff member or Safety Officer will inform parents of the incident.
- If same student/staff has other issues, Safety Officer will take the following steps:
Depending on the severity of the situation, the staff member or Safety Officer will choose to have students spend time outside of the classroom or school. This can/will vary depending on the incident and age of the child.
- Frequent occurrences of bullying by the same student could result in the student being asked to leave the school.

This policy prohibits students from any type of retaliation to any person who reports bullying in the school. Restorative practices and meaningful consequences will be enforced as stated above

Persons found to have falsely accused another person of bullying will be required to participate in restorative practices with relevant actions and consequences.

This policy is posted in our family handbook, and is available on our website.

The school will maintain a log of all behavior incidents, including bullying allegations, and conduct check ins with parents and students at least twice a year regarding school culture and behavior concerns.

Starting with the 2024-25 school year, the Public Act- Racism-Free School Law ([Public Act 103-0472](#)) requires that, all Illinois school districts; charter schools; and nonpublic, nonsectarian elementary or secondary schools collect, maintain, and submit to ISBE non-identifiable data pertaining to incidents of bullying, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

This policy must be updated every 2 years and sent to the Illinois State Board of Education

Restorative Practices

The school will promptly inform parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of restorative practices facilitated by teachers and administration.

"Restorative practices" means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that

- (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community,
- (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety,
- (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate,
- (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society,
- (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and
- (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.
- (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Restorative practices will be utilized to determine further action, including the development of a safety plan if deemed necessary, check in-check out with a lead teacher, and community circles if the behavior is impacting classroom culture.

Jacque Lind or Marci Hallgren [815-877-1600](tel:815-877-1600)

Appendix B

Spectrum School Anaphylaxis Response Policy and Procedures

(Revised 4/13/2023)

Overview:

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction from exposure to allergens that is rapid in onset and can cause death. Common allergens include animal dander, fish, latex, milk, shellfish, tree nuts, eggs, insect venom, medications, peanuts, soy, and wheat. A severe allergic reaction usually occurs quickly; death has been reported to occur within minutes. An anaphylactic reaction can occur up to one to two hours after exposure to the allergen. Illinois' model anaphylaxis policy is based on the Virginia Department of Education Anaphylaxis Policy

Parental Responsibility:

Parents of students with known life-threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis should provide Spectrum School with written instructions from the student's health care provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student-specific order **on an annual basis**.

Recognizing Anaphylaxis:

Anaphylactic reactions typically result in multiple symptoms, but reactions may vary. A single symptom may indicate anaphylaxis. Students with allergies that may lead to anaphylactic reactions sometimes have an accompanying diagnosis of asthma that could compound the reaction.

Possible Symptoms of Anaphylaxis

- Shortness of breath or tightness of chest; difficulty in or absence of breathing.
- Sneezing, wheezing, or coughing.
- Difficulty swallowing.
- Swelling of lips, eyes, face, tongue, throat, or elsewhere.
- Low blood pressure, dizziness, and/or fainting.
- Heartbeat complaints -- rapid or decreased.
- Blueness around lips, inside lips, eyelids.
- Sweating and anxiety. (Watch for signs and behaviors that someone may be experiencing an allergic reaction.)
- Itching, with or without hives; raised red rash in any area of the body.
- Skin flushing or color becomes pale.
- Hoarseness. • Sense of impending disaster or approaching death.
- Loss of bowel or bladder control.
- Nausea, abdominal pain, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- Burning sensation, especially face or chest. (Common symptoms of anaphylaxis may be wheezing; coughing; complaining of itchy throat; swelling of lips, face, tongue, or throat; blue tongue/lips; flushing of skin or paleness; hoarseness.)
- Loss of consciousness. Epinephrine should be administered promptly at the first sign of anaphylaxis. It is safer to administer epinephrine than to delay treatment for anaphylaxis.

Responding to Anaphylaxis

- A. Student-specific orders that are on file should be followed for students with known life-threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis.
- B. If there is a suspected case of anaphylaxis, instruct someone to call 911 immediately.

1. If your school does not have undesignated epinephrine:
 - a) Stay with the person until EMS arrives.
 - b) Monitor the person's airway and breathing.
 - c) Implement local emergency notification to activate trained personnel to respond. Call school nurse/ front office school personnel immediately and advise of situation.
 - d) Direct someone to call parent/guardian.
 - e) Administer CPR, if needed.
 - f) EMS transports individual to the emergency room. Document individual's name, date, time of onset of symptoms, and possible allergen.
2. Even if symptoms subside, 911 must still respond and the individual must be evaluated in the emergency department or by their personal allergy health care provider. A delayed or secondary reaction may occur.
 - Once epinephrine is administered, the student should be transported to the emergency room for follow-up care. The symptoms sometimes go away, only to return one to three hours later. This is called a "biphasic reaction." Often, these second-phase symptoms occur in the respiratory tract and may be more severe than the first-phase symptoms. Therefore, follow-up care with a health care provider is necessary.
 - The student will not be allowed to remain at school or return to school on the day epinephrine is administered.

Post-Event Actions

A. Reporting

1. Document the incident, and complete a report to be placed in the student's file and shared with the student's parents if requested.