



# **Family-Student Handbook 2023 – 2024**

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# **Table of Contents**

Letter from the Principal	Page 4
SPARK Academy Staff Contact Information	Pages 5 – 7
SPARK Academy Overview & Five Pillars	Pages 8 – 9
School Hours of Operation	Page 10
Arrival & Dismissal Procedures	Pages 11 – 12
Attendance	Pages 13
Extracurriculars & Field Trips	Pages 14
Student Code of Conduct	Pages 14 - 18
Uniforms	Page 19
Special Education	Page 20
Homework & Grading Policy	Page 20 - 21
Retention Policy	Page 22
Bathroom Policy	Page 22
Physical Fitness	Page 22 - 23
Health Policy	Pages 23
Visitor Policy	Page 24
Student Supplies	Page 24
Student Support Team	Page 24 - 25
Student Information	Page 25
Food Policies	Page 26 - 27
Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity	Page 27
Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB) Policy	Pages 27 - 29

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

Alcohol/Substance Abuse Policy	Pages 29 - 30
Electronics/Acceptable Use Policy	Pages 30 - 32
Gifted & Talented Policy	Page 32
FERPA Notification of Rights	Pages 32
Directory Information Policy	Pages 33
Child Abuse & Neglect	Pages 34 - 35
Title IX Policy	Pages 35 - 36
Social Media Policy	Page 37
Student Rights	Page 38
Keeping Kids Safe with Appropriate Boundaries	Page 39-40
School Calendar	Page 41

Dear Families,

This handbook has been prepared as a resource for you and your child. We want to ensure that your family understands the procedures and policies in place at SPARK Academy, that help us to provide consistency, safety, and an excellent education for your child. We hope this handbook answers any questions you may have. However, if you have additional questions, please call the school and we will be happy to assist you in any way that we can.

Thank you for your continued support and we welcome you to the new school year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Killins  
Principal

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# **SPARK Academy Contact Information**

## **SPARK Academy Main Office**

Phone: 973.481.0327

Address: 275 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07107

## **SPARK Academy Staff**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
<b>Killins, Tamika</b>	<b>School Leader</b>	<b>TKillins@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Williams, Princess</b>	<b>School Leader</b>	<b>pwilliams@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Beckford, Alexandria</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader</b>	<b>abeckford@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Miller, Alayna</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader</b>	<b>amiller@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Thomas, Morgan</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader</b>	<b>mminns@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Williams, Inayah</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader</b>	<b>iwilliams@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Wright, Glenn</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader</b>	<b>GWright@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Cafone, Shaina</b>	<b>Assistant School Leader, SPED</b>	<b>scafone@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Burwell, Dyeemah</b>	<b>Associate Director of School Operations</b>	<b>dburwell@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Jackson, Steven</b>	<b>Director School Operations</b>	<b>sjackson@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Barrino, Antrinette</b>	<b>Dean</b>	<b>abarrino@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Cook, Taajia</b>	<b>Dean of Students</b>	<b>tcook2@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Bethea, Gia</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>gbethea@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Council, Shontia</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>scouncil@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Croft, Ruben</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>rcroft@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Cruz-Anin, Nicole</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>ncruzanin@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Drummond, Quiana</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>qdrummond@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Faust, Khadijah</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>ksterlingscott@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Ferguson, Rachel</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>rferguson@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Fernandes, Odessa</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>oferlandes@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Fogarty, Jasmine</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>jfogarty@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Gonzalez, Yineisi</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>ygonzalez@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Gordon, Ny'Asiah</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>ngordon@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Graves, Q</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>sgraves@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Gunter, Camilya</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>cgunter@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Harris, Tyiesha</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>tharris3@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Ijaola, Taiwo</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>tijaola@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Jordan, Linda</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>ljordan@kippnj.org</b>

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

Marchan, Samantha	Teacher	smarchan@kippnj.org
Massa, Adalise	Teacher	AMassa@kippnj.org
McDonald, Keisha	Teacher	kmcdonald@kippnj.org
McFarlin, Bria	Teacher	bmcfarlin@kippnj.org
Nicholson, Simone	Teacher	snicholson@kippnj.org
Orengo, Jessica	Teacher	jjimenez@kippnj.org
Ovalles, Deborah	Teacher	dovalles@kippnj.org
Padilla, Juneisy	Teacher	JPadilla@kippnj.org
Parker, Tamara	Teacher	tparker@kippnj.org
Robinson, Sha'Kea	Teacher	srobinson@kippnj.org
Rogers, Ashley	Teacher	arogers@kippnj.org
Rogers, Charlotte	Teacher	crogers@kippnj.org
Spearman, Jessica	Teacher	jspearman@kippnj.org
Tanks, Nambya	Teacher	ntanks@kippnj.org
Thomas, Carl	Teacher	cthomas@kippnj.org
Thomas, Eric	Teacher	ethomas@kippnj.org
Tillery-Williams, Halimah	Teacher	htillerywillams@kippnj.org
Tolbert, Coach L	Teacher	ctolbert@kippnj.org
Virges, Shanae	Teacher	svirges@kippnj.org
West, Latisha	Teacher	lwest@kippnj.org
Wonder, Samantha	Teacher	swonder@kippnj.org
Brevard, Tasha	Teacher in Residence	tbrevard@kippnj.org
Grant, Danaejah	Teacher in Residence	dgrant@kippnj.org
Kondilas, Sophia	Teacher in Residence	skondilas@kippnj.org
Russell, Kayalee	Teacher in Residence	krussell@kippnj.org
Scarpa, Taylor	Teacher in Residence	tscarpa@kippnj.org
Simon, Devina	Teacher in Residence	dsimon@kippnj.org
Williams, Quamayah	Teacher in Residence	qwilliams@kippnj.org
Williamson, Danielle	Teacher in Residence	dwilliamson@kippnj.org
Ali, Fajr	Paraprofessional	fali@kippnj.org
Alleyne, David	Paraprofessional	dalleyne@kippnj.org
Blain, Leilah	Paraprofessional	lblain@kippnj.org
Brookins, Forte	Paraprofessional	fbrookins@kippnj.org
Brown-Williams, Daryn	Paraprofessional	wbrownwilliams@kippnj.org
Carroll, Angelica	Paraprofessional	awilson2@kippnj.org
Crews, Antoine	Paraprofessional	acrews@kippnj.org

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

<b>Hamilton Charles, Delissia</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>dhamiltoncharles@kippnj.org</b>
<b>McQueen, Jermaine</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>jmcqueen@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Muhammad, Isam</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>imuhammad@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Page, Montel</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>mpage@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Rivera, Karen</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>krivera@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Rosa, Roxanne</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>rrosa@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Santiago, Joshua</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>jsantiago@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Upshaw, Kendra</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>kupshaw@kippnj.org</b>
<b>White, Gerrod</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>gwhite@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Williams, Marcia</b>	<b>Paraprofessional</b>	<b>mwilliams2@kippnj.org</b>
<b>King-Quezada, Elizabeth</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>	<b>ekingquezada@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Pierre, Esther</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>	<b>epierre@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Rochelin, Rachel</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>	<b>rrochelin@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Monterrosa, Lucy</b>	<b>School Operations Manager</b>	<b>lmonterrosa@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Foster, Deirdre</b>	<b>Operations Coordinator</b>	<b>dfoster@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Brown, Amir</b>	<b>Aide - Non-Instructional</b>	<b>abrown3@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Eaddy, Makyah</b>	<b>Aide - Non-Instructional</b>	<b>meaddy@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Johnson, Lashea</b>	<b>Aide - Non-Instructional</b>	<b>ljohnson@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Velez, Felicia</b>	<b>Aide - Non-Instructional</b>	<b>fvelez@kippnj.org</b>
<b>White, Amaya</b>	<b>Intern</b>	<b>awhite2@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Blommestein, Anneliese</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>ablommestein@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Cottle, Courtney</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>ccottle@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Dallas, Karima</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>kdallas@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Farrell, Wadaijah</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>wfarrell@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Ford, Aaliyah</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>aford@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Keenan, Jennifer</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>jkeenane@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Martin, Dennis</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>dmartin2@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Rashid, Shaneeka</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>srashid@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Sweat-Williams, Courtney</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>csweat@kippnj.org</b>
<b>White, Ally</b>	<b>Learning Specialist</b>	<b>awhite@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Epps-Johnson, Tamika</b>	<b>Licensed Practical Nurse</b>	<b>teppsjohnson@kippnj.org</b>
<b>Horn, Kareen</b>	<b>Licensed Practical Nurse</b>	<b>khorn@kippnj.org</b>

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# **SPARK Academy: An Overview**

## **Mission**

To create a network of schools in Newark, New Jersey, that instills in their students the desire and the ability to succeed in college in order to change the world.

## **Vision**

One day, our nation will know Newark and Camden, New Jersey, as cities of world-class public education.

## **School Values**

- ❖ **Seek Knowledge**
- ❖ **Pursue Justice**
- ❖ **Act as a Team**
- ❖ **Reach for Excellence**
- ❖ **Keep Going!**
- ❖ **LOVE Yourself, Your Family, Your Community, and Others.**

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*



## KIPP's Five Pillars

SPARK Academy will be driven by the core operating principles of the Five Pillars that all KIPP schools share as follows:

1. **High Expectations.** KIPP Schools have clearly defined and measurable high expectations for academic achievement and conduct that make no excuses based on the students' backgrounds. Students, parents, teachers, and staff create and reinforce a culture of achievement and support through a range of formal and informal rewards and consequences for academic performance and behavior.
2. **Choice & Commitment.** Students, their parents, and the faculty of each KIPP School choose to participate in the program. No one is assigned or forced to attend these schools. Everyone must make and uphold a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.
3. **More Time.** KIPP Schools know that there are no shortcuts when it comes to success in academics and life. With an extended school day, week, and year, students have more time in the classroom to acquire the academic knowledge and skills that will prepare them for competitive high schools and colleges, as well as more opportunities to engage in diverse extracurricular experiences.
4. **Power to Lead.** The principals of KIPP Schools are effective academic and organizational leaders who understand that great schools require great School Leaders. They have control over their school budget and personnel. They are free to swiftly move dollars or make staffing changes, allowing them maximum effectiveness in helping students learn.
5. **Focus on Results.** KIPP Schools relentlessly focus on high student performance on standardized tests and other objective measures. Just as there are no shortcuts, there are no excuses. Students are expected to achieve a level of academic performance that will enable them to succeed at the nation's best high schools and colleges.

### More Information about SPARK Academy and TEAM Charter Schools:

- [www.kippnj.org](http://www.kippnj.org)
- [www.kipp.org](http://www.kipp.org)

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

## School Hours of Operation

### **Normal School Hours of Operation**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	7:45 AM – 3:30 PM
Wednesday	7:45 AM – 12:30 PM

### **Normal Office Hours of Operation**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	8:45 AM – 3:00 PM
Wednesday	8:45 AM – 12:00 PM

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

### **Arrival Procedures**

Students **must** be dropped off at SPARK Academy no later than **8:00 a.m. each morning**. Please do NOT bring your child before 7:45, as s/he will not be supervised if dropped off earlier. SPARK Academy is not responsible for children dropped off before 7:45 a.m. **Students should not be picked up early unless there is some type of emergency. We reserve the right to request documentation as it relates to any frequently named emergency situations. Our school day is packed with instructional and enrichment content for the entire day and scholars who leave early will miss this material.**

**Students who are tardy must be escorted to the school entry door. Please do not allow your scholar to walk up to the school alone after 8:00 AM. Our schedule for students in the morning is as follows:**

7:45 a.m.	Breakfast (universal free breakfast for all students)
8:00 a.m.	Community Meeting
8:20 a.m.	Students begin classroom instructional time

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

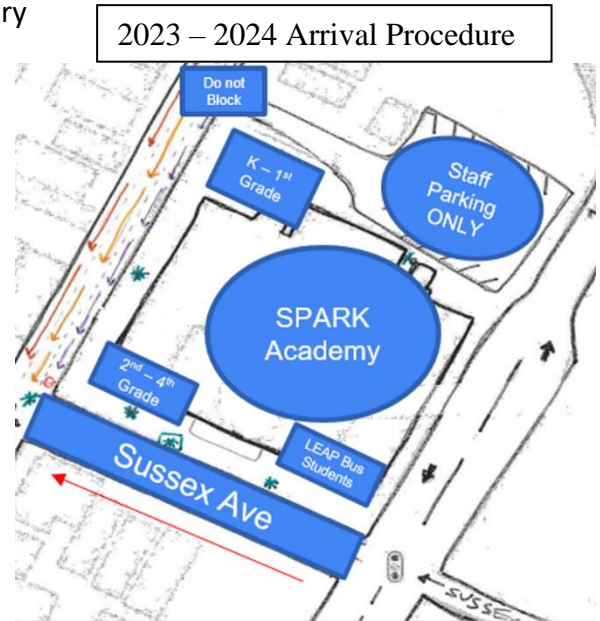
## **Arrival for SPARK Academy**

- All families and students must use the named entry points on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue or Sussex Avenue between 7:45AM – 8:00 AM.
- Staff members will be positioned on 2<sup>nd</sup> & Sussex to welcome and receive students in the mornings

### **Car Drop-Off (morning)**

- **Q: WHO will be there when I drop off my child?**  
A: A staff member will greet all students as they enter school grounds.
- **Q: WHAT is the purpose of following this drop-off procedure?**

A: Due to the number of families dropping off children, we can only ensure safety if all parents follow the procedures. Thanks in advance for helping all staff members and families keep our SPARKsters safe!



## **Dismissal for SPARK Academy**

- All PICK UP students will be dismissed from the same points that families used for arrival. Kinder and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade families will utilize the walk-up gate on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue near the staff parking lot. Additionally, all 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade families will utilize the access point located near the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> & Sussex Avenue.
- Staff members will be placed at a variety of interior and exterior points to ensure safe student transitions to their dismissal points and their exits from the school building.
- All families must present a valid SPARK Academy dismissal card in order to pick up for any SPARK students.
- All families should honor any signage or staff members that are in place enforcing traffic patterns.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# Attendance

Attendance is key to learning and is therefore **mandatory**. All students are expected to be on time and present for the entire day, in order not to lose valuable instructional time. Breakfast begins at 7:45 am. Dismissal Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday is at 3:30 PM. Wednesday dismissal occurs at 12:30 PM. If a student is going to be absent, will arrive late, or must leave early, **the parent must notify the teacher so that a record can be made. A pattern of excessive absences may result in retention as well as communication with CPS when legally obligated.**

## **Tardies**

In order to fully implement our rigorous educational program at SPARK Academy, we must make use of every minute. ***Breakfast begins at 7:45 am and community meeting begins at 8:00 am. Students are considered tardy at or after 8:05 am.*** Tardy students must be escorted to the building to ensure their safety as all staff members are no longer at external posts after 8:00 am. SPARK Academy reserves the right to schedule a meeting and/or administer consequences for families that fail to escort tardy students to the school building after 8:00 am.

## **Unexcused Absences**

Student absenteeism can lead to low academic achievement, school dropout, delinquency, and gang involvement. School districts that have established multi-systemic approaches and policies pertaining to student absenteeism typically experience fewer numbers of dropouts and a greater number of graduates. The compulsory education law (N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31) requires all children between the ages of 6-16 to attend school. The attendance regulations (N.J.A.C. 16:6-7.8), require each district board of education to develop, adopt and implement policies and procedures regarding the attendance of students, including the adoption of a definition of “unexcused absence,” and the provision of mandated services for students with between one and nine cumulative unexcused absences and a mandated court referral for truant students, those with ten or more cumulative unexcused absences.

## **Long Term Absences**

Long-term absences are only permitted for health-related concerns. If your child is absent for a week or more due to health, please make certain to make arrangements with your child’s classroom teacher to pick up long-term assignments. Depending upon the nature of the illness, children will be responsible for keeping up with their class work. If students are absent for any reason for 10 consecutive days without parent notification or 20 consecutive days with notification, the student will be automatically dropped from the roster and will be automatically withdrawn.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

## **Absences Relating to Illness(es)**

If your child is going to miss school because of illness, please notify your child's teacher first thing in the morning to let us know. Acceptable reasons for missing school include unidentified rash, fever, vomiting, and severe cough or cold. This should be followed up the next day with a note signed by the doctor in order to be counted as excused. Absences will be marked as "unexcused" in our school-wide attendance system unless we have verification of an acceptable reason for missing school.

## **Early Dismissal & Appointments**

If your child has a medical or dental appointment or a family emergency, requiring you to come to school requesting an early dismissal, please write a note to the teacher ahead of time. Please try to arrange appointments for after school whenever possible. A child will be dismissed early only to a parent or other properly authorized and identified adult; dismissal cards still are required in the event a scholar is being picked up early. Excessive early pick-ups may result in an attendance conference with teachers and/or an administrator if no medical reason exists as early pick-ups will result in a scholar missing valuable instruction. If your child is placed on an abbreviated schedule, you must also sign them out on the early dismissal log. Pick up before 3:30 (M, T, Th, F) or 12:30 (W) is counted as an early dismissal.

The main office will cease operations at 3:00 PM (normal release days) and 12:00 PM (early release days) to ensure that all staff can report to their dismissal locations.

## **Snow Closings (Inclement Weather)**

- KIPP NJ makes its own decisions regarding school closures, early dismissals, and delayed starts.
- We will always send an all-call and all-email to families as soon as we make a decision.

## **Extracurriculars & Field Trips**

### **After-School Activities**

Any families with scholars participating in SPARK-based after-school activities will need to adhere to the following policies:

- Scholars need to be picked up on time (based on times provided by the after-school activity coordinator(s)). After the third late pick-up, scholars will be removed from the after-school activity roster and will not be able to participate for the remainder of the school year. Scholars will then be able to reapply for activities the following school year.
- Due collection may be a part of some activities and will be set by the after school activity coordinators. Extra dues beyond what was set by the coordinators cannot be accepted based on our school activities account regulations. ***Refunds will not be given***

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

***if a scholar chooses to end their participation in an after-school activity or is removed from the roster due to late pick-ups/behavior.*** Please take this into consideration as you are choosing whether or not to put your scholar in the lottery for participation in an after-school activity.

- SPARK scholars will be entered into a lottery for participation in SPARK-sponsored after-school activities.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

### **Behavior/ Discipline Policy**

Every **Kindergarten to Second** SPARK classroom will use a consistent behavioral color chart system. Our behavior system reinforces the concept of **choices** and scholar agency over their actions. The behavior management system will appear as follows:

<b>Superstar Choices (Kindergarten only)</b> <b>(Purple)</b>
<b>Good choices</b> <b>(Green)</b>
<b>Warning: Think about your choices</b> <b>(Yellow)</b>
<b>Fix your choices. You can do better</b> <b>(Red)</b>

Every **Third and Fourth** SPARK classroom will be use a reward system known as Paycheck. Our reward system reinforces the concept of earning privileges and items through the display of positive behaviors. Third and fourth grade scholars will earn “scholar dollars” by showing behaviors aligned with SPARK’s core values and school rules as well as have the opportunity to earn “bonus scholar dollars” by going above and beyond to serve as an example for the SPARK community to follow. Conversely, scholars may lose “scholar dollars” for misconduct. Examples of components within the reward system will appear as follows but are not comprehensive:

ES SPARK	Bonuses	Demonstrating Values	\$1	Seek Knowledge, Pursue Justice, Act as a Team, Reach for Excellence, Keep Going, Love, Work hard, Be Nce, Be Safe
ES SPARK	Bonuses	Weekly Class MVP	\$5	Announced at grade-level family meeting
ES SPARK	Bonuses	Active Participation	\$1	Tracking, hand raised consistently, on-task T&T, get to work right away

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

ES SPARK	Bonuses	High Quality Work	\$1	Consistently completing classwork with all required components and implementing feedback for improvement.
ES SPARK	Bonuses	Academic Achievement	\$5	CFSA, mid-module, EOM, F&P level growth
ES SPARK	Deductions	Community Disruption	-\$2	Disrespect (suck teeth, eye roll, stomp, kick, talk back), lying, refusal to follow direction after countdown, teasing, name-calling, not working after 2min, non-contact horseplay, sleeping, incomplete work, using technology inappropriately, intentional door slam, talking during assessment or drill
ES SPARK	Deductions	Off-task	-\$1	Disruptive noises, calling out, talking at the wrong time, HALL, not completing work, co-signing, playing with an object during learning time, gum/candy, out of SLANT when asked, out of rug square, excessive wiggling, miss countdown, 3+ min in bathroom, out of seat w/o permission, passing notes, unprepared for class
ES SPARK	Deductions	Community Violation	-\$5	Destruction of school materials, destruction or damage to building, destruction or damage to technology, prolonged tantrum (loud crying, yelling, shouting), physical contact during horseplay, cursing, stealing of non-valuable items, cheating, inappropriate talk
ES SPARK	Deductions	Community Violation + Dean Referral	-\$8	Stealing of valuable item, intentional repeated teasing/meanness over time, severe destruction of school property, leaving the floor without permission, running away from an adult, inappropriate touch, fighting, throwing furniture, repeatedly talking back to/mockling adult disrespectfully after 2+ attempts to disengage

### Daily Log

Each scholar will have a Daily Log documenting the choices made throughout the day and the color achieved. The Daily Log will also report missing homework, lack of uniform, reading log, and other information for families. The log is designed as a two-way form of communication between families and schools, and MUST be signed nightly by families.

### Serious & Suspension-Worthy Misconduct

Physical violence, threats, cursing, and other forms of extreme behavior will not be tolerated at SPARK Academy. Should these instances occur, the scholar will immediately be removed from the classroom and his/her parent/guardian will receive a phone call. Suspensions will be determined based on the severity of the offenses and the quantity of prior misconduct. Additionally, if a scholar threatens to harm oneself and/or others, the scholar making the threat will be screened by the school social worker and may need to be cleared by an authorized crisis center with official documentation of the clearance prior to returning to school. Parents will be asked to accompany their scholar on the first day back from a suspension for a conference with the School Leader and/or Dean of Students.

### Discipline, Suspension, & Expulsion

All disciplinary actions taken by SPARK Academy will comply with policies and procedures and applicable State and Federal Law. The school will seek to remedy misconduct, in appropriate

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

cases, by allowing for a variety of disciplinary actions that may include (but not limited to) the following:

- Counseling and/or social skills training;
- Additional assignments to be completed at home and/or at school;
- Detention during lunch, free choice, or other pre-determined times
- Loss of privileges and school trips; and
- Parent attending classes with students for a day

By creating the following standards and procedures for suspensions, SPARK Academy will also ensure that no scholar presents a danger to people or property, disrupts school activities, or threatens campus peace, safety, and/or security.

### **Grounds for Suspension of Scholars**

A scholar may be suspended for prohibited conduct if the act is related to school activity occurring at SPARK Academy or at a SPARK Academy sponsored event. A suspension can occur for the following reasons but is not limited to:



Action	Definition	Consequence
Harm to Others	Student has purposefully touched another person's body with the intent to cause harm. This includes hitting, kicking, biting, pinching, slapping, or throwing objects at another person.	1 <sup>st</sup> incident – 1 days 3 <sup>rd</sup> incident – 3 days 5 <sup>th</sup> incident – 5 days Egregious incident (fist fighting, group violence, pre-mediated) – 5 days Multiple egregious incidents or more than 5 consecutive days – Mandatory Student Support Program Entry  <i>Reinstatement meetings are required for each suspension.</i>
Harm to Self	Intentional harm to self	A medical suspension will be given and a student will be unable to return to school until written approval from a psychiatric professional has been received from the school.
Fleeing the Building	A scholar has left the designated floor with the intent to flee without permission.	1 <sup>st</sup> incident – 1 days 3 <sup>rd</sup> incident – 3 days 5 <sup>th</sup> incident – 5 days <i>Reinstatement meetings are required for each suspension.</i>
Prolonged tantrum	Crying, Screaming, laying on the ground lasting longer than 30 minutes.	Same day suspension may return following school day with reinstatement.
Destruction of Property	Destruction of School or Teacher Property	1 day suspension may return following school day with reinstatement.  If property is damaged an estimate worth will be provided to the parents to be replaced or paid for within 30 days of initial incident.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

In effort to encourage and maintain a restorative learning environment, a student returning from an in-school or out of school suspension will be required to apologize to their classroom community for his/her behavior. Our objective is to hold each scholar accountable for their actions, acknowledge the impact of their behavior on the community, as well as take steps to have a positive re-entry into their community.

**Any scholar who is not picked up by 12:00 pm of their communicated suspension will be suspended for an additional school day.**

### **Other Administrative Disciplinary Options**

SPARK Academy recognizes that each individual scholar may have unique challenges facing them in and out of the classroom. Because we strive to find solutions for all of our scholars, a variety of other disciplinary and supportive programs may be put in place including (but not limited to):

- *Behavior Plan.* A plan where a student has a daily behavior chart targeting specific behaviors that each teacher fills out and the parents sign each night.
- *Shortened School Day Program.* A plan that only permits a student to attend school during the regular school day only, leaving at the time assigned by the Principal and not participating in extra-curricular activities.

### **Special Education Discipline**

In the case of scholars with special needs- a scholar possessing a specific Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 accommodations- SPARK Academy will ensure that we make the necessary adjustments to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, regarding the discipline of scholars with special needs.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# Uniforms

SPARK Academy scholars are required to wear their SPARK uniforms every day. By now, your scholar should have received/ordered their uniform items for the school year. Scholars must adhere to the dress code and uniform policy.

## **Dress Code**

- Scholars are **required** to wear the ***SPARK polo shirts*** every day (except on designated non-uniform days).
- Scholars may wear ***SPARK cardigan sweaters or hooded sweatshirts*** over their SPARK polo shirts every day.
- Scholars are required to wear **Navy slacks, Navy shorts or Navy skorts**. No other color will be accepted. Jeans are not acceptable as navy pants.

## **Uniform Policy**

- Scholars must wear uniform pants, shorts, or skorts that are appropriate size and length.
- Scholars must tuck all shirts into their pants, shorts, skirts, or skorts.
- Scholars may wear athletic shoes or **rubber sole** dress shoes.
- Scholars **may not** wear jeans of any kind.
- Scholars **may not** wear sandals, shoes with wheels, wedges/heels, or knee high sneakers.
- Scholars **may not** wear hoop earrings.
- Scholars **may not** wear any hats/headwear inside the school except for religious head coverings.
- Scholars may wear boots/other weather permitting attire as applicable.

Any the following may result if a scholar does not meet the expectations of the uniform policy:

- Uniform violation notifications will be sent home and are tracked within a scholar's file
- A scholar's parent/guardian will be contacted to bring proper uniform attire

Families that would like to purchase uniforms can either do so from the FlynnO'Hara Newark Store or online. Please see the information below for information for either option:

FlynnO'Hara  
Newark Store  
196 – 198 Ferry Street  
Newark, NJ 07105  
862-231-2149

Online  
<https://www.flynnohara.com/School-Landing.aspx?scn=NJ610>

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

## Special Education

Students with identified physical, emotional, learning, or developmental disabilities have the right to placement in the least restrictive environment, and may receive special education services according to a written Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students who received special education services at their previous school will receive services at SPARK Academy as so designed in an IEP meeting, which will take place within the first 30 days of school. **If your student has previously received special education services or has been given a Section 504 plan, please make sure to immediately notify the principal.** If you believe that your child may be eligible for special education services, please notify the Principal as soon as possible in writing. If you are interested in more information on special education, please contact the Principal.

## Homework & Grading Policies

### **Homework:**

Homework is a fundamental component of SPARK Academy's academic program. The academic work your child does at home is a complement to the instruction they receive in school and hugely important in helping him/her reach our big goals! SPARK Academy's homework expectations are as follows:

1. The scholar thoroughly completes all homework every night (with family support), including weekends, and return on the due date
2. The scholar reads books on his/her level. After reading, a family member asks the scholar comprehension questions. Time recommendations are as follows:
  - a. K-1<sup>st</sup> grade (20 minutes- mix of adult reading and scholar reading)
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade (30 minutes- scholar reading aloud and reading silently).
3. Reading log must be completed **and signed each night**, indicating that your child has read 20 minutes (K-1) or 30 minutes (2-4).
4. Daily Log must be reviewed **and signed each night**, indicating that the homework and reading are complete and you have discussed your child's daily behavior report.
5. Practice sight words (K) nightly.

*If a child is having a problem completing the homework assigned, parents and students are encouraged to call their child's teacher for assistance.*

**Missing/Incomplete Homework:** If a student does not do an assignment or hands in an incomplete assignment, they will not receive credit and the student may lose privileges during the school day, which may include recess and/or free choice time in order to complete or correct the work. **Even one missing question or signature on a homework assignment will render that assignment incomplete as we want to teach our scholars the importance taking pride in our work from a young age.** Your child's teacher may call a meeting with scholars who are not completing their homework as well as their families so we can put supports in place to set the scholar up for success in completing their nightly assignments.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

## **SPARK Academy's Academic Program**

### **SPARK Academy Academic Standards**

All families will receive a copy of SPARK Academy's academic standards and big goals for the year in August prior to Summer School.

### **Grading System**

SPARK Academy issues report cards on a quarterly basis, or four times during the school year. Report cards will be directly linked to SPARK Academy standards. The grading scale is based on the students' mastery of the content standard using the following scale:

- 4: Above level
- 3: On level
- 2: Below level: approaching standard
- 1: Far below level

### **Quarter System:**

Quarter 1	August 15 – October 27
Quarter 2	October 31 – January 26
Quarter 3	January 30 – March 28
Quarter 4	April 8 – June 11

### **Report Card Conferences (RCCs)**

Report cards will be distributed during Family-Teacher Conferences in November, February, April and June. The Family Conference Schedule is as follows:

- Quarter 1 – RCCs November 15 - 16 (12:30 dismissal both days)
- Quarter 2 – RCCs January 31 – February 1 (12:30 dismissal both days)
- Quarter 3 – RCCs April 17 – 18 (12:30 dismissal both days)
- Quarter 4 – RCCS June 12 – 13 (12:30 dismissal both days)

## **Retention Policy**

### **Retention Process**

Report cards, given quarterly, will indicate whether a student is “at risk for retention” beginning in or after Quarter 1. In addition, families will be informed of on- or off- track performance on progress reports, assessment updates, and communication with teachers. If a student has been listed as at risk for retention in Quarters 1- 3, a letter indicating this risk will be given during an in-person family conference. When considering retention, the teaching team will prepare classwork, assessment data, and any other pertinent documents to present to the principal and family at the conference.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

The school's decision regarding promotion and retention will be based on the totality of the circumstances and will be final and binding.

## **Retention**

SPARK Academy students will be promoted or retained on the recommendation of the classroom teacher/s as well as the consultation of the grade level team, learning specialist and administration, including the principal. This recommendation will be based upon the following criteria:

- Reading level
- Interim quarterly assessments
- MAP scores
- Summative assessment data
- Attendance
- Classwork
- Social/developmental characteristics
- Other pertinent data

Student retention is recommended when considered in the best interest of the student. Retention may be considered at any grade level. The decision to retain should be based on sufficient data gathered over time with the intention of placing the child in the grade level and educational program where he or she will ultimately be the most successful.

## **Bathroom Policy**

### **Bathroom Usage**

The hand signal for a student who needs to use the bathroom will be the American Sign Language sign for bathroom (making a fist with thumb inserted between pointer and middle finger – pictured above). Children can go to the bathroom at the teacher's discretion whenever necessary throughout the day. We ask parents to notify the school if their child has unique needs regarding use of the restroom as we will accommodate these needs. We also ask that each child in K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade bring a change of clothes (including pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) to store at school in case of a bathroom emergency. When emergencies arise, we will send home the uniform to be cleaned.



## **Physical Fitness**

### **Physical Education, Dance, and Recess**

The purpose of physical education (PE), dance, and recess is to provide your child with a short break, fresh air, and informal participation in positive social and physical activities. PE and recess will be held outside when possible or in the gym. You are expected to ensure your child

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

is dressed appropriately for the weather. Parent requests for inside recess during cold weather impose a serious supervision problem, as teachers must be outside with the children, however if there is a medical reason your child may not participate please contact the nurse. Also, our policy regarding PE and dance is in place to provide scholars with a “brain break”, and to encourage students to act in an appropriate/safe manner. Teachers may revoke all or a portion of PE or dance as a child’s behavior dictates in order to ensure the safety of the scholar and/or to other students in the class.

## **Health Policy**

### **Student Medication**

Any and all medication(s) (including but not limited to asthma medications, seizure medications, and antibiotics) cannot be administered or consumed at school unless both a doctor and a parent/guardian have completed the appropriate forms. SPARK Academy strongly encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Ask your physician for a medication schedule that will accomplish this. In those few cases where this is not possible, please bring in the medication to the nurse along with the prescription note or form specifying ‘in-school’ medication administration.

**Please note that all medication(s) needs to be in the original container with the appropriate prescription label (including the name of the student, the name of the medicine, the expiration date, and the dosage information) and the appropriate *Student Health Authorization for Administration of Medication Form or prescription note.***

We store and administer the medicine in a secure location. Please be aware that the medication cannot travel back and forth to school – once it’s given to us for your child’s use, it must remain with us until it needs to be refilled. Therefore, if your child requires medication administration during school hours we strongly encourage you to ask for two separate prescriptions when at the doctor’s office with your child. Students are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school and it **SHOULD NOT** be placed in their book bags. Adults should bring the medication(s) to the nurse, in person. For further information on medication or any health-related issues please call Nurse Horn at 973.481.0327 (EXT 5).

### **Health Documents**

All health documents including the health packet for any new student, CareDox Registration, and updated plans for asthma, food allergies, and other health conditions are due by the first day of the regular school year. Any scholar that does not have a completed health packet with immunizations if they are new or updated plans for students with existing health conditions by September 15<sup>th</sup> will be suspended from school starting September 16<sup>th</sup> until all documents are turned in to the nurse. We are required by the state of New Jersey to ensure that all new students or returning students with health conditions have up-to-date documentation.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

# Visitor Policy

## **Visiting Campus**

SPARK Academy reserves the right to not allow family entry into the school area. Any visitors coming to campus must sign in using our screening system before access can be provided.

## **Student Supplies**

The list of supplies below are recommended but are not mandatory.

*Supplies for scholars to bring to school and use at school:*

- Backpack
- One change of clothes (to keep in cubby), *including socks and underwear* – **this is mandatory for kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade**

*To keep at home for homework assignments:*

- Child-Safe Scissors
- Pencils (lots)
- Large eraser
- Glue
- Crayons
- Reading books (students will need to read a minimum of 20 minutes every night and should bring home books in their book baggies)
- Paper (for writing and drawing)

## **Student Support Team**

At SPARK Academy, we have the privilege of having multiple educators in one classroom. For this reason, intervention services will be provided by the homeroom teachers. If a student is identified as performing below their ability or below their cohort of peers, academically or behaviorally, the classroom teachers will meet to create a plan to provide intervention services. If a guardian is concerned about his/her scholar's progression, the guardian should reach out to the homeroom teacher regarding intervention. The homeroom teachers will also receive teaching strategies, intervention resources, and feedback from the grade level Learning Specialist, who is trained in helping struggling students. In the case that the intervention services are not meeting the needs of the student, a meeting will be held with the homeroom teachers, learning specialist, members of the leadership team, and family.

## **Student Information**

### **Enrollment/Student Registration**

Please email Ms. Burwell at [dburwell@kipgni.org](mailto:dburwell@kipgni.org) if you move, change your phone number, or need to update any other essential student information!

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*



**Student Records**

Parents of current SPARK Academy students may access their children's file by checking in with Ms. Burwell in the main office. She will then give the parent the file to view in the office, but the file may not leave the office. Student records, including final report cards, will not be transferred at the end of the year until all student fees have been paid.

**Student Privacy**

SPARK Academy will comply with all New Jersey state regulations regarding student privacy. We respect the privacy of all parents and students in regard to student records.

Lockers and their contents are the property of SPARK Academy and may be searched by an administrator at any time. SPARK Academy will only initiate search and seizure to protect the safety of students and the stability of the learning environment.

# Food Policies

## **Cafeteria Rules**

- Leave your area cleaner than you found it.
- Scholars may talk to one another using an appropriate restaurant voice.
- The first 2-5 minutes of lunch will be **silent** until all scholars are seated.
- The final 5 minutes of lunch will be **silent**.
- Bottom stays in the chair at all times.
- No talking with food in your mouth.
- Do not be wasteful or play with food.
- Clean up after yourself and others.

All students are expected to behave in a calm and appropriate manner. Students are to walk in the cafeteria and line up quietly. If your child misbehaves in the cafeteria, he/she will lose free time, may need to sit by him/herself, and/or will receive a mark on his/her Daily Log.

## **Food Service**

**All families must fill out an income verification form.** Families may choose to have their children eat breakfast at home and/or send a bag lunch.

## **Snacks**

In order to promote a healthy learning environment, we allow the consumption of healthy snacks on campus. Students may bring items similar to what is served at SPARK as per the national guidelines listed above such as fruit, vegetables, **single** servings of crackers, sandwiches, and fruit snacks.

Students are not allowed to bring soda, fruit drink that is not 100% juice, gum, chips (pretzels and Sun Chips are okay but potato chips/cheese puffs are not), cookies, donuts, any type of candy, or any other food with excessive sugar or salt. Fast food is only permitted if it is the equivalent of what is being served at school (i.e., a bagel with cream cheese, oatmeal, a Dunkin Donuts breakfast sandwich or wrap, or a muffin, would be acceptable as those are on the menu at school but fast food breakfast sandwiches – McDonald's, Burger King, etc., pancakes, donuts, pastries, Pop tarts, hash browns, French fries, etc. would not.) If a student brings any of these items, we will bag them to send them home with a note asking that you not send these items to school with your scholar.

We will also be holding ourselves to the same standard by not serving candy or unhealthy treats throughout the day in classrooms.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

In compliance with USDA guidelines, food sent to school from home must meet the following requirements:

- Calorie limit:
  - Snack items: less than or equal to 200 calories
  - Entrée items: less than or equal to 350 calories
- Sodium limits:
  - Snack items: less than or equal to 230 mg
  - Entrée items: less than or equal to 480 mg
- Fat limits:
  - Total fat: less than or equal to 35% of calories
  - Saturated fat: less than 10% of calories
  - Trans fat: zero grams
- Sugar limit:
  - Less than or equal to 35% of weight from total sugars in foods

## **Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity**

We are committed to equal opportunity for all of our students. We prohibit discriminatory practices against any person by reason of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, pregnancy, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, domestic partnership status, familial status, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, nationality, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait of any individual, genetic information, or refusal to submit to a genetic test or make the results of a genetic test known, on account of disability, social or economic status, pregnancy, childbirth, actual or potential parenthood, or family status.

## **Harassment, Intimidation, & Bullying (HIB) Policy**

The Board of Trustees expects students to treat each other with civility and respect and will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Like other disruptive or violent behaviors, this conduct interferes with the rights and abilities of students to learn and our ability to educate students in a safe and productive environment.

**The Board prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying against any student.**

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" are defined as any gesture or any written, verbal or physical act, inclusive of the use of cell phones, electronic communication devices, or other electronic devices, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school- sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

- A. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; or
- B. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause disruption in, or interference with, the orderly operation of the school; or
- C. creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

### **Reporting Procedure**

1. Report to School Leader: All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be reported verbally to the School Leader on the same day when an individual – student, employee, or contractor – witnesses or receives reliable information regarding an incident.
2. Report to Parents: The School Leader shall inform the parents or guardians of all students involved in the reported incident and may discuss, as appropriate, the availability of counseling or other intervention services.
3. Reported in Writing: All acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be reported in writing to the School Leader within two school days of when the individual witnessed or received reliable information about the incident.

### **Investigation Procedure**

Within one school day of receipt of a written report of an incident, the School Leader may initiate an investigation at his or her discretion, which shall be conducted by a school anti-bullying specialist (and additional personnel appointed by the School Leader, if necessary). The investigation shall be completed at the latest within 10 days of receipt of the written report. The results of the investigation shall be reported to the Board of Trustees no later than the date of the Board meeting next following completion of the investigation. Information presented to the Board shall include, but shall not be limited to, training established, discipline imposed, or any other action taken or recommended by the School Leader.

### **Right to a Hearing**

Parents/guardians of students who are parties to the investigation shall be entitled to receive information about the investigation. This information shall be provided within 5 school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the Board. A parent/guardian may request a hearing before the Board after receiving the information, which shall be held within 10 days of the request during executive session. At the hearing, the Board may hear from the school

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

anti-bullying specialist about the incident, recommendations for discipline or services, and any training programs instituted.

### **Board Decision**

At the next Board of Trustees meeting following its receipt of the report, the Board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject or modify the School Leader's decision.

### **Consequences and Remedial Action for a Student who Commits an Act of Bullying**

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be determined by the School Leader and may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. In considering what response is appropriate, the School Leader shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm to all individuals involved, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

### **Retaliation/False Accusations**

Any employee, student, volunteer, or member of the public who witnesses or has reliable information that any student has been subject to harassment, intimidation or bullying as defined in this policy must report the incident to the appropriate school official designated by the administration. The Board will not tolerate any act of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Individuals are also prohibited from falsely accusing another as a means of retaliation or as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

### **Consequences:**

- Students: The appropriate remedial action shall be determined, in each particular case, by the School Leader after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act. The consequences for a student found to have retaliated against another for reporting an act or falsely accusing another of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or recommendation of expulsion.
- School Employees: Consequences and appropriate remedial action shall be determined by the School Leader in accordance with school policies, procedures and agreements.
- Visitors or Volunteers: Consequences and appropriate remedial action shall be determined by the School Leader after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials when appropriate.

## **Alcohol/Substance Abuse Policy**

We are committed to the safety and well-being of all scholars and their families in our schools. All staff receive training and education on substance abuse prevention and intervention to ensure we are creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for all scholars. We

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

recognize the harmful effects of drugs, alcohol, steroids and tobacco on scholar development, success, and life outcomes. As a result, we are committed to implementing wellness and recovery strategies to promote prevention, intervention, referral for evaluation, referral for treatment and continued care for drug, alcohol, steroids and tobacco use and abuse.

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3D-17, the use of tobacco products and smoking of any substance is prohibited in school buildings and on school grounds. We are committed to promoting a healthy learning and working environment, free from unwanted smoke, for our scholars, family, and visitors.

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Alcoholic beverage, of any kind
- Over-the-counter and prescription drugs/medications that are improperly used to cause intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction, or dulling of the brain or nervous system.
- Any controlled dangerous substance, including anabolic steroids, as defined in N.J.S.A. 24:21-2 and 2C:35-2; and N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-9
- Any chemical or chemical compound which releases vapor or fumes causing a condition of intoxication, inebriation, excitement, stupefaction or dulling of the brain or nervous system, including, but not limited to, glue containing a solvent having the property of releasing toxic vapors or fumes, as defined in N.J.S.A. 2C:35-10.4.

The comprehensive alcohol and substance abuse policy is available at your child's school upon request.

### **Searches**

The School Leader or his/her designee may conduct a search of a student's person or belongings if the search is necessary to maintain discipline and order in the school, and the school official has a reasonable suspicion that the student is concealing contraband. All searches and seizures conducted by designated school staff shall comply with the standards prescribed by previous court decisions and in compliance with applicable law.

## **Electronics/Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones are not permitted at SPARK due to the distraction to the learning environment. All of our scholars either take a SPARK bus or are dropped off by families, and thus do not travel alone. If a teacher or staff member hears a cell phone or sees one, s/he will turn it into the main office and a family member will need to come retrieve it. The school's authority to implement and enforce a policy related to cell phone usage (including confiscating cell phones) is pursuant to its common law responsibility to maintain a safe and orderly environment at the school. In addition, it is consistent with the statute prohibiting the possession of pager devices on school grounds, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.8.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

### **iPods/Toys/Games/Gadgets**

Students are not permitted to carry iPods, toys, games/game systems, or gadgets to school. All of these items will be confiscated and *only returned to an adult family member*. Family members must come to the office to pick up confiscated items from our office manager. If an item is for show and tell, please contact your child's homeroom teacher to confirm that the item in question is supposed to be brought to school.

Access to our network is a privilege and must be treated as such by all users of the network and its associated systems. Our technological resources are intended to be used for educational activities. To ensure that our network remains secure, each and every user must protect the rights of the community. By using the school's systems, each student agrees to follow this policy and all applicable laws.

### **Prohibited Activities**

- Users shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access (hacking) to the school's systems or to any other computer system via the school's network, nor shall they go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another individual's account or accessing another's files.
- Users shall not deliberately attempt to disrupt the school's computer systems' performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses, malware or any similar product that can damage computer systems, firewalls, servers or network systems.
- Users shall not use the school's systems to engage in illegal activities or any activities that could expose the school, its employees, or other persons to criminal or civil liability.
- Users shall not access material that is profane or obscene, that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or hate. Inadvertent access to such material should be reported immediately to the supervising staff person.
- Users shall not utilize the school's network for the transaction of any non-school related business and/or any commercial purposes. Users shall not make use of the school's network or computer systems for any product advertisement.
- Users shall not plagiarize material that is available on the Internet. Plagiarism is presenting another's ideas/words as one's own.
- Users may not intentionally waste limited resources. Users must not post chain letters or engage in "spamming". Spamming is the sending of an annoying and unnecessary message to a large number of people.
- The school's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) policy is in effect for all network activity and users will be held responsible for any violation of the HIB policy. Users are prohibited from cyberbullying one another.
- Users shall not send or receive messages that contain obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, abusive, or threatening language. Users shall not use the school's systems to spread messages that can reasonably be interpreted as harassing, discriminatory, racist, hateful or defamatory. Prohibited language applies to public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

### **Students using the school's computer systems**

- Students must not reveal personal information about themselves or other persons on social networking sites, in chat rooms, in emails or other direct electronic communications, or any other forum over the Internet. For example, students must not reveal their home address, or telephone or cell phone number. Students must not display photographs of themselves, or the images of others.
- Students should not meet anyone in person who they have met only on the Internet.
- Students must promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message or other activity they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Although students generally will be supervised when using the school's computer systems on school property, it is not practicable for the school to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Parents/Guardians are primarily responsible for transmitting their particular set of family values to their children, and discussing with their children what material is and is not acceptable for their children to access through the school's Internet systems.

The school reserves the right to take immediate action regarding activities that (1) violate this policy or law, or (2) create security and/or safety issues for the school, students, employees, schools, network or computer resources, or (3) expend school resources on content that the school determines lacks legitimate educational purpose, or (4) the school determines are inappropriate.

Our full policy is available upon request at your child's school.

## **Gifted and Talented Policy**

The school will provide all gifted and talented students with programs which provide for gifted and talented students basic education while encouraging optimum development of the students' special abilities. Programs shall be developed or located which stimulate students to participate constructively in, and contribute to, the activities of the school, the community and society.

The full Gifted and Talented Policy is available upon request to the school.

## **FERPA Notification of Rights Policy**

### **FERPA Notification of Rights**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*



1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the School Leader a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The School Leader will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the district to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school leader, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also includes a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, insurance investigator, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202

## **Directory Information Policy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that the district, with certain exceptions, obtain parent/guardian consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

information from a child's educational records. However, the district may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless the parent/guardian has advised the district to the contrary. The primary purpose of directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, is to allow the district to include this type of information in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill or concert program showing your student's role or listing your student's name
- The annual yearbook
- Honor roll or other recognition lists
- Graduation or "stepping up" programs
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing the weight and height of team members.

Directory information can be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent.

The district, has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student name
- Grade
- School/Homeroom
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Parent/guardian name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Honors and awards received
- Dates of attendance

If you do not want the district to disclose any of the above-listed directory information about your child you must notify the school. Absent this notification it will be assumed you consent to having your child's information available as directory information.

## **Child Abuse & Neglect**

Student safety is our first priority. All school staff are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect and are legally required to call the Division of Child Protection and Permanency if there is suspected child abuse or neglect.

In New Jersey, anyone with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused should immediately call the Child Abuse Hotline. If the child is in immediate danger, call 911 as well as 1-877 NJ ABUSE. Calls can be made anonymously, and you do not need proof to report an allegation of child abuse. The Hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

Examples of abuse and neglect include-

When a student reports:

- being abused at home.
- witnessing drug use in the home.
- being sexually abused.
- engaging in child pornography or prostitution.
- witnessing domestic abuse.
- being threatened at home.
- being afraid to go home.

When a staff member suspects or witnesses:

- physical abuse
- such as bruises, burns, fractures, etc.
- other potential indicators of abuse such as wariness of adult contact, behavioral extremes (aggression, withdrawal), fear of parents/guardians or going home, difficulty walking or sitting.
- neglect- including lack of basic food and clothing, poor hygiene, consistent hunger, fatigue or falling asleep in class, lack of appropriate supervision, lack of medical treatment, or the child is residing in an inappropriate or dangerous environment.
- engagement in risky behavior (including sexual behavior, drug use, etc.) where the parents/guardians are either unable or unwilling to intervene.
- absence from school to care for family members or to do chores/work around the house.
- absence from school to hold down a job.

When parents/guardians:

- repeatedly fail to return phone calls, respond to notes/letters home, or attend school meetings.
- withdraw a student and fail to provide compulsory education

Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected has a legal responsibility to report it to the Division of Child Protection and Permanency at 1-877-NJ ABUSE (652-2873).

## **Title IX Policy**

We are committed to providing students, employees, and volunteers with an environment that is safe, welcoming, and inclusive. We take seriously its obligations to ensure that no student or employee suffers discrimination on the basis of sex, as defined in Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 ("Title

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

IX"). Title IX requires that "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..." 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a). We do not discriminate against or tolerate discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

The following acts are prohibited and will not be tolerated:

- Dating violence
- Discrimination on the basis of sex
- Domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking

Any person may report sex discrimination, whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of sexual harassment, in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail.

Reports may be made to any staff member with whom the person reporting feels comfortable, including our Title IX Coordinator, any teacher, counselor, the school Assistant Principal, the school Principal/designee, or any Dean. A report may be made at any time (including during non-school hours) and as soon as possible in order for us to maximize our ability to respond promptly and effectively.

Our complete Title IX process and contact information can be found at [www.kippnj.org/compliance](http://www.kippnj.org/compliance) or at your school's main office.

*SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.*

## **Social Media Policy**

Social media has become a powerful communication tool. With the power of social media come responsibilities. These guidelines provide best practices under which members of the KIPP community (families, teachers, students, and staff) should operate when using these tools. **The basic principle is that community members are expected to adhere to the same levels of civility in their online and face-to-face conversations. The same laws, school policies, guidelines, and personal and professional expectations for interacting with all KIPP community members apply online as in the real world.** For example, posting defamatory or confidential information about students or teachers may violate existing school policies and be handled as such.

**Family members who engage in disrespectful or disruptive behavior on social media and/or while on campus may have their access to campus revoked or limited, per KIPP NJ policy. Off-campus conduct that interferes with the orderly operation of the school may result in discipline to a child under the student code of conduct.**

Harmful social media posts not only negatively impact our community, but make it more difficult for our school team to respond to and resolve issues quickly and effectively, especially in instances where student privacy is at stake. We encourage everyone to consider the unintended and long-term effects of social media posts that may refer to or include children, whether family or otherwise. In order to maintain an environment where all students can thrive, our expectation is that all KIPP family members also maintain mutually respectful relationships with all school staff.

We also encourage all families to speak with their children about the potential negative impact of social media and the consequences of engaging in behavior that negatively impacts others, and to actively partner with their child's school in ensuring that your child does not engage in unsafe or harmful behavior outside of school.

We will investigate any threat made toward the school or our school community (by anyone) which may also include involving the police and/or other authorities in the investigation.

Since social media are constantly changing, these best practices may be updated frequently.

*See our Code of Conduct for our policies and procedures in dealing with conflict.*

## **Students Rights**

An effective, instructional program requires an orderly school environment, and the effectiveness of the educational program is, in part, reflected in the behavior of students. Such an environment includes respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property.

- Students have the right to receive an education that allows for maximum personal growth and prepares them to be productive members of our society.
- Students have the right to participate in all aspects of the school, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, genetic identity, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. This includes transgender or gender non-conforming students. (N.J. Law Against Discrimination, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq).
- Students have the right to present information and a written statement that has a bearing on disciplinary action and due process based upon the disciplinary action. In addition, the student has the right to appeal decisions to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.3 through 1.17; and, where applicable, N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.7 and 2.8, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2 through 7.5; in accordance with the procedures and timelines established for each specific infraction.
- Students have the right to a safe, comfortable, secure, and orderly school environment.
- Students have the right to confidentiality regarding their student records as per federal and state laws.
  - i. Advance notice of behaviors that result in suspensions and expulsions that have been identified pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-2;
  - ii. Attendance at school irrespective of students' marriage, pregnancy, or parenthood;
  - iii. Parent notification consistent with the policies and procedures established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-6.2(b)3, in instances of law enforcement interviews involving their children to the extent permitted by law, and N.J.A.C. 6A:16- 7.2 through 7.8 suspensions and expulsions; and
  - iv. Protections pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 34 CFR 99, Family Educational Rights and Privacy; 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, Protection of Pupil Rights; 34 CFR Part 98, Student Rights in Research, Experimental Programs, and Testing; P.L. 104-191, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; 45 CFR 160, General Administrative Requirements; 20 U.S.C. § 7165, Transfer of school disciplinary records; 42 CFR Part 2, Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records; N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-7.1, Confidentiality of certain information provided by pupils, exceptions; N.J.A.C. 6A:16-3.2, Confidentiality of student alcohol and other drug information; N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19, Pupil records, creation, maintenance and retention, security and access, regulations, nonliability; N.J.S.A. 2A:4A-60, Disclosure of juvenile information, penalties for disclosure; N.J.A.C. 6A:32-7, Student Records;

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.9, Student records; as well as other existing Federal and State laws and rules pertaining to student protections.

## **Keeping Kids Safe with Appropriate Boundaries**

KIPP's first priority is to ensure the well-being, safety, and protection of each of its students as well as the adults who work and volunteer at the school. **Healthy, supportive relationships are a pillar of the KIPP community.**

**Students and Families should be aware that the following practices are followed at KIPP:**

- Staff must ensure that if spending any time outside of school with KIPP students, that it is school sanctioned, permission is granted by the student's parent/guardian and other adults are present. In general, staff should not "hang out" with students outside of school or spend an inordinate amount of time "hanging out" with students even inside the school for any non-school sanctioned purpose in order to ensure healthy boundaries are being kept.
- Staff shall not direct or encourage a student to keep a secret from or not share information with his/her/their parent/caregiver or other adults
- Staff not be alone with a KIPP student in a non-observable setting.
- Staff shall not discipline students in any physical manner.
- Staff shall not have extended physical contact with a student or recent alumni. Any contact should be limited to a supportive or congratulatory quick hug, arm squeeze, or pat on the back and should always be student initiated.
- Staff shall not converse with a KIPP student or recent alumni about the student's sexual or romantic life. Staff shall not make sexual jokes, comments or engage in any conversation that has a sexual innuendo, or contains sexual stories.
- Unless it is an emergency, and if at all possible, staff should wait to speak to the child in school the following day. Staff shall never speak with an elementary school or middle school child on the phone unless they first speak to the parent/guardian and obtain consent. If necessary, a staff member may call a high school student provided there is parental permission.
- Staff shall not have students at their private residence unless it is an officially school sanctioned event with parent/caregiver permission and multiple adults present. Exceptions are if the staff member's own child has an age appropriate friendship with the other students.
- Staff shall only email students using official KIPP email accounts to a student's official school account.
- Staff shall only text message a student if there is a separate adult on the text thread. If a student texts an adult then the adult shall reply with another adult on the thread.
- Staff shall not use apps or websites with private messaging to communicate with students. If a student needs to discuss a sensitive matter then it should be done at school or must involve another adult.

- Staff shall not use their social media pages to “friend” a student or accept a “friend” request from a student.
- Staff shall not engage in gaming with KIPP students.
- Staff shall not babysit students.

If students or families are aware of any violation of the above policy then it should be immediately reported to the School Leader.



# School Calendar

## KIPP NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 2023-2024 CALENDAR

\*\*Updated 4/24/23

### CALENDAR SYMBOLS KEY

- No School for Students
- Half Day Dismissal
- Summer Reduced Hours
- Start Dates
- Last Day of School
- Report Card Conferences
- Beginning / End of Quarter
- \* Half Day HS Only (Midterms/Finals)

### Delayed Openings & Early Dismissals:

KIPP may call a delayed opening or an early dismissal because of an emergency or winter inclement weather. For winter inclement weather, KIPP will follow the decision made by the Newark Board of Education.

### Emergency Days:

If we use 5 emergency days before March 1st, 3/29 and 5/24 become half days for students (and half PD days for teachers).

If we use 4 emergency days before March 1st, 5/24, becomes a half day for students (and half PD day for teachers).

If we use exactly 3 emergency days before March 1st, there is no change to the calendar.

If we use only 2 emergency days before March 1st, 3/15 becomes a day off for staff and students.

If we use only 1 emergency day before March 1st, 3/15 and 5/24 become days off for staff and students. In this case, 5/23 would become a staff PD Day in place of 5/24.

If we use 0 emergency days before March 1st: 3/15, 4/19, and 5/24 become days off for staff and families. In this case, 5/23 would become a staff PD day in place of 5/24.

For more information about our schools:

[www.kippnj.org/schools](http://www.kippnj.org/schools)

For important updates, follow KIPP on Instagram at:



@kippnewark

### JULY 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Jul 4 Closed - Holiday

### AUGUST 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Aug 15 First Day - Entry Grades\*\*

Aug 17 First Day - All Grades

Aug 28 No School - Staff PD Day

### SEPTEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Sep 4 No School - Labor Day

Sep 29 No School - Staff PD Day

### DECEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Dec 21 Half Day Dismissal

Dec 22-31 No School - Winter Break

### OCTOBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Oct 9 No School - Indigenous Peoples' Day

Oct 30 No School - Staff PD Day

### NOVEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Nov 10 No School - Veteran's Day

Nov 15-16 Half Day Dismissals - Q1 RCCs

Nov 22-24 No School - Thanksgiving Break

### JANUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Jan 1 No School - Winter Break

Jan 2 No School - Staff PD Day

Jan 15 No School - MLK Day

Jan 29 No School - Staff PD Day

Jan 31 Half Day Dismissals - Q2 RCCs

### FEBRUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Feb 1 Half Day Dismissals - Q2 RCCs

Feb 16 Half Day Dismissal

Feb 19-23 No School - Mid-Winter Break

Feb 26 No School - Staff PD Day

### MARCH 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Mar 29 No School - Staff PD Day

### APRIL 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Apr 1-5 No School - Spring Break

Apr 10 No School - Staff PD Day

Apr 17-18 Half Day Dismissals - Q3 RCCs

### MAY 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

May 24 No School - Staff PD Day

May 27 No School - Memorial Day

### JUNE 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Jun 10-13 Half Day Dismissals

Jun 12-13 Half Day Dismissals - Q4 RCCs

Jun 13 Last Day of School

Jun 19 Juneteenth

\*\*Aug 15 Entry Grades: SPARK, THRIVE, Seek, Life, and KURA - K  
TEAM, Rise, BOLD, Purpose, and Justice - 5th  
NCA and NLHS - 9

SPARK the change you wish to see in the world.