

Sparta High School

Student and Athletic Handbook

V 8.1
Sparta Area Schools
HS Administration



Sparta High School

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Mrs. Michelle Moody	Secretary
Mrs. Veronica Rollston	Attendance Secretary
Mr. Josh Sepenak	Athletic Director
Mrs. Teresa Converse	Guidance Counselor
Mr. Blake Schanski	Guidance Counselor
	Social Worker
Mr. Kevin VanderMeer	KSSN Liaison
Mrs. Kim Pfeffer	Guidance Secretary

The Sparta Area Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in its programs and activities. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, the Sparta Area School District has appointed Mr. Steve Johnson as Coordinator of Title II, IX, VI, and the Age Discrimination Act. Mrs. Erin Kavanagh as the Coordinator of Section 504. The district Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers are Mrs. Erin Kavanagh and Mr. Steve Johnson.

Dear Spartan,

Welcome to the 2025-26 academic year. As a Sparta Spartan, you are called upon to enrich the strong tradition and history of our school community. We encourage you to approach this school year as an important step toward becoming a productive and responsible citizen of the United States of America. To maximize the opportunities available to you at Sparta High School, we strongly encourage you to:

- I. **Practice regular attendance.** Be here, and be on time. Attendance is essential to academic success, and it is an important life and job skill that will help ensure future successes.
- II. **Take challenging courses.** Challenge yourself within rigorous and relevant courses: Focus on your goals, and choose classes that will allow you to achieve those goals.
- III. **Try your best.** Giving a good faith effort will help you succeed within your course work. If you encounter any obstacle, proactively communicate with a teacher or counselor.
- IV. **Be respectful and responsible.** You own your actions and words. Disrespect and irresponsibility will not be tolerated. The Spartan Values will drive our interactions.
- V. **Get involved.** Sparta High School offers a number of co-curricular activities that will certainly enrich your school year. Join today.

The professional staff at Sparta High School is committed to partnering with you to ensure your success.

Go Spartans!

Introduction

Sparta High School must balance the interests of students and the community in a safe and conducive educational environment with its duty to provide educational services to students who engage in misconduct or behaviors that interfere with the safety and the delivery of educational services. Board of Education policies addressing student misconduct and this Student Code of Conduct are intended to strike that balance. However, these documents do not limit Sparta High School's lawful authority.

Purpose of this Handbook

Many questions arise regarding procedures that affect the children and parents of Sparta High School. The information in this handbook is an attempt to answer your questions, and at the same time, provide some definition to our policies and procedures. This handbook is intended to proactively communicate our expectations and practices, student accountability, as well as the steps we will follow in problem solving. Please keep this as a reference throughout the school year, and we encourage you to call Stacey Rumsey at 887-8213 with any questions or comments you may have about it. We look forward to working with you and your students this year.

Parent Involvement

District Parent and Family Engagement Policy, [Board Policy 2112](#), can be found on the District website. SHS teachers and staff are committed to providing a quality educational program that will challenge all children to reach their potential. When school and parents work together children succeed in school and throughout life. Neither home nor school can do the job alone. Parents play an extremely important role as children's first teachers. Parents' support for their children and for the school is critical to the children's success at every step along the way.

We will provide you with ongoing communication concerning school events (via the building newsletter, District website and teacher communications), your child's academic progress (via conferences, on-line access to grades and use of phone and digital communication to keep in touch). We welcome your input and perspective and encourage you to contact your child's teacher via the phone or e-mail with any concerns or positives!

Table of Contents

SPARTAN ALMA MATER	8	1.12.3 Assessment Requirement	13
SPARTA FIGHT SONG.....	8	1.12.4 Administrative Modifications	13
ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION:.....	8	1.13 Valedictorian, Salutatorian and Latin Honors System	14
1.0 COUNSELING DEPARTMENT.....	9	1.14 Personal Curriculum	14
1.1 Guidance	9	1.15 Limited English Proficiency	14
1.2 Counseling Services	9	1.16 Individuals with Disabilities	14
1.3 Enrolling in the School	9	1.17 Student Records	14
1.4 Course Grades and Earning Credit	9	1.18 Review of Instructional Materials and Activities	14
1.4.1 Progress Reports/Report Cards	9		
1.4.2 Grading System	10	2.0 ATTENDANCE	15
1.4.3 Online Grade Book (PowerSchool):	10	2.1 Contact Information	15
1.4.4 Low Grades	10	2.2 Philosophy	15
1.4.5 Weighted Grades	10	2.3 Absence: Definition	15
1.4.6 Good Faith Effort Behavior Includes:	11	2.4 Absence Categories	15
1.4.7 Drop/Add Policy	11	2.4.1 *Excused Absences (X marked in attendance)	15
1.4.8 Prerequisites	11	2.4.2 *Unexcused Absences (U marked in attendance)	15
1.5 Grade Level Classification	11	2.4.3 School Business (S marked in attendance)	15
1.5.1 "On track to graduate"	11	2.4.4 Medical (M is marked in attendance)	15
1.6 Honor Roll/Academic Letter	11	2.4.5 Funeral (F is marked in attendance)	15
1.7 Academic Probation	11	2.4.6 Absent (A is marked in attendance)	16
1.8 Student Assessment	12	2.4.7 In-School Suspension (I marked in attendance)	16
1.8.1 PSAT 8/9 TEST	12	2.4.8 Out-of-School Suspension (O marked in attendance)	16
1.8.2 PSAT 10 TEST	12	2.5 College Visits	16
1.8.3 PSAT/NMSQT	12	2.6 *Prearranged Absences, Extended Absences, & Homework Requests	16
1.8.4 Redesigned SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)	12	2.7 Attendance Required to Earn Credit	16
1.9 School Withdrawal/Transfer	12	2.7.1 Earning Credit	16
1.10 Scheduling and Assignment	12	2.7.2 Credit NOT Earned Because of Attendance	16
1.11 Dual Enrollment	12		
1.12 Graduation Requirements	13		
1.12.1 Class of 2019 and beyond	13		
1.12.2 Full-Time Student Requirement	13		

2.7.3 Attendance Resolution	16	3.4.4 Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students	20
2.8 Emergency Closing and Delays	16	3.4.5 Definition of Hazing ^{Note2}	21
2.9 Early Dismissal	17	3.4.6 Reports of Harassment (harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and hazing)	21
2.10 Illness During the School Day	17	3.5 Code of Conduct for Students	21
2.11 Closed Campus	17	3.5.1 Controlled Substances and Medication, Self- Medication Policy	21
2.12 Perfect Attendance	17	3.5.2 Abusive/Threatening Actions	23
2.13 Skip Day	17	3.5.3 Property and Facilities	23
2.14 Field Trips	17	3.5.4 Inappropriate Practices and Behaviors	23
2.15 Visitors	17	3.5.5 Attendance	24
2.16 Chronic Absenteeism	17	3.6 Consequence Tables	24
2.17 Student/Parent Appeal Procedure for Attendance Issues	17	3.7 Definitions of Consequences	24
2.17.1 Request a Formal Hearing	17	3.7.1 Detention	24
2.17.2 Notification of Hearing	18	3.7.2 In-School Suspension (ISS)	24
2.17.3 At the Hearing:	18	3.7.3 Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)	24
2.17.4 Further Appeals	18	3.7.4 Long-Term Suspension & Expulsion	25
2.18 Students of the Age of 18 and Above	18	3.7.5 Law Enforcement Contact	25
2.19 KISD Program Attendance (KCTC, KTC, LaunchU, and ATYP)	18	3.7.6 Search and Seizure	25
2.20 Homebound Instruction	18	3.8 Procedure for Registering Complaints or Appeals	25
3.0 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY 18		3.8.1 Step 1: Contact Staff Member	25
3.1 Philosophy	18	3.8.2 Step 2: Contact Principal	25
3.1.1 Due Process	19	3.8.3 Step3: Contact Superintendent	25
3.1.2 Progressive Consequences	19	3.8.4 Step 4: Request the Attention of the Board of Education	25
3.1.3 Student Responsibility Plans	19	3.9 Student Rights of Expression	26
3.1.4 Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)	19	3.10 Services Available to Students and their Parents	26
3.1.5 Students of the Age of 18 and Above	19	4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION26	
3.2 Weapon Free School Zone/Safe Schools Policy	19	4.1 2024-2025 Sparta High School Daily Schedule	26
3.4 Harassment Policy	20	4.1.1 Lunch Period	26
3.4.1 Definition of Harassment:	20	4.2 National Honor Society Selection Procedure	27
3.4.2 Definition of Sexual Harassment ^(Note 1)	20		
3.4.3 Definition of Sexually Inappropriate Behavior (Note 1)	20		

4.2.1 Eligibility	27	4.23 Academic Honesty Pledge	31
4.2.2 Responsibilities for Students Applying for Membership	27	4.24 School Sponsored Clubs and Activities	31
4.2.3 Selection	27	4.25 Non School-Sponsored Clubs and Activities	31
4.2.4 Notification	27	4.26 Transportation to and from School	31
4.3 Driving to School	27	4.26.1 - Bus Transportation to School	31
4.4 Computer Usage	27	4.26.2 Bus Conduct	31
4.4.1 Computer Use Policy	27	4.26.3 Penalties for Infractions	32
4.4.2 Internet Registration Contract	27	5.0 SPARTAN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT.....32	
4.4.3 Computer Lab Acceptable Use Policy	28	5.1 Letter to Parents	32
4.5 Lockers	28	5.2 STUDENT-ATHLETE DEFINED	32
4.6 Student Dress Code	28	5.3 Message to the Student-Athlete	33
4.6.1 Philosophy	28	5.4 RESPONSIBILITY	33
4.6.2 Dress Code	29	5.4.1 Responsibility to Yourself	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.7 Auditorium/Gym Usage	29	5.4.2 Responsibility to your Academic Studies	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.8 Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) Programs: Kent Career Technical Center (KCTC), Kent Transition Center (KTC), and Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP)	29	5.4.3 Responsibility to Your School	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.9 Dance Policy	29	5.4.4 Responsibility to your Community	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.10 Library Media Center	29	5.4.5 Responsibility to Others	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.12 Student Announcements	29	5.4.6 Responsibility to Younger Athletes	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.13 Bulletin Boards	30	5.5 Purpose of the Athletic Code	33
4.14 Work Permits	30	5.6 SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS PROGRAM	33
4.15 Student Deliveries Policy	30	5.6.1 GIRLS' SPORTS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.16 Gambling	30	5.6.2 BOYS' SPORTS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.17 Electronic Communication Devices and Filming/Shooting Video	30	5.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	34
4.18 Search and Seizure	30	5.8 PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS	34
4.18.1 Canine Detection	30	5.9 OVERALL ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS	34
4.19 Testing for Drugs and Alcohol	30	5.10 THE FOUR C'S	35
4.20 Lost and Found	30	5.10.1 Competence	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.21 Pets and Animals	31	5.10.2 Character	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.22 Student Fines	31		

5.10.3 Civility	Error! Bookmark not defined.	5.20.6 District/Regional/State/National Activity vs. “Regular” Activity	41
5.10.4 Citizenship	Error! Bookmark not defined.		
5.11 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS	36	5.21 ATHLETIC AWARDS	41
5.11.1 Forms	36	5.21.1 Varsity Letter	41
5.11.2 Injuries	36	5.21.2 Freshmen Teams	41
5.11.3 Age	36	5.21.3 Sophomore (JV) Teams	42
5.11.4 Semesters of Competition:	36	5.21.4 Senior Year	42
5.11.5 Semester of Enrollment:	36	5.21.5 MHSAA Guidelines	42
5.11.6 Undergraduate standing:	36	5.21.6 Championship Awards	42
5.11.7 Amateur practices:	37	5.22 CONDUCT AND VALUES OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE	42
5.11.8 Awards:	37		
5.11.9 Limited team membership:	37	5.23 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS	43
5.11.10 College Recruitment:	37	5.23.1 SELF-DISCLOSURE	43
5.12 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY	38	5.23.2 CATEGORY I - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE (Minor Infractions)	43
5.12.1 Weekly Eligibility	38	5.23.3 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY I VIOLATIONS	44
5.12.2 Semester Eligibility	38		
5.13 ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS	39	5.23.4 CATEGORY II - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE (Major Infractions)	44
5.14 EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS	39	5.23.5 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY II VIOLATIONS	44
5.15 TRANSPORTATION	39	5.23.6 CATEGORY III – Controlled Substances and Medication / Abusive / Threatening Actions	46
5.16 DROPPING A SPORT	40	5.23.7 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY III VIOLATIONS	46
5.17 SUMMER DEAD PERIOD	40	5.23.8 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS AND RULE ENFORCEMENT	47
5.18 PRE-SEASON DOWN TIME	40	5.23.9 COOPERATION DURING INVESTIGATION	47
5.18.1 Down Time and Sport Start Date	Error! Bookmark not defined.	5.23.10 APPEALS PROCESS	47
		5.23.11 ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS	47
5.20 PLAYING DUAL SPORTS IN THE SAME SEASON	40	6.0 Sparta Internet/Technology Responsible Use	48
5.20.1 ACTIVITIES CONFLICT GUIDE	40	6.1 Technology Responsible Use Policy	48
5.20.2 Guidelines	40	6.2 Internet Registration Policy	49
5.20.3 Performance/Competition vs. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act:	41	7.0 Overview and Purpose of School Safety Webpage	50
5.20.4 Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act vs. Practice/Rehearsal/ Optional Act	41		
5.20.5 Performance/Athletic Contest vs. Performance/Athletic Contest	41	Sparta Area Schools Emergency Drill Reports	50

SAS District Safety Teams	51
Resources and Information for Members of the School Community Overview of Purpose	52
Appendix A: General Procedures	53
Appendix B: Unauthorized Access to the Building/Pranks	53
Appendix C: Promotion, Placement, AND Retention	54
Appendix D: Weapons and Criminal Acts	54
Appendix E: Expectations of Student Conduct Board Policy 5500 describes Sparta Area Schools' expectations for student conduct as follows:	55

Appendix F: BYOD Acceptable Use Policy	55
Appendix G: Control of Communicable Disease and Pests	57
Appendix H: Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard	57

SPARTAN ALMA MATER

O' Alma Mater glorious,
 Forever more victorious,
 We pledge to thee,
 Undying Faith and Loyalty.
 O' may your wisdom guide us,
 Forever stand beside us,
 Through all our lives we pledge,
 Devoted faith in thee.

SPARTA FIGHT SONG

Sparta on to victory,
 Let them hear our story,
 Sparta spirits conquer,
 Go out and win this game.
 RAH, RAH, RAH!
 Bring the victory back tonight,
 Do it for the Blue and White,
 Oh, may our colors ever fly,
 For the dear ol' Sparta High.
 FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!!

ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRETION:

The principal reserves the right to amend any provision in this handbook, which she deems to be in the best interest of the educational process. The principal retains the right to apply consequences for student choices not specifically stated herein and to alter consequences as she considers necessary.

Public Complaint Procedures are located on the District Web Site under: Departments/Board of Education/9000 Relations/9130 Public Complaints = neola.com.

These are part of our School Board Policy/Written Procedures – translations available.

1.0 COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

1.1 Guidance

The guidance office is located in the main office. As a high school student, you will have to make many decisions. The counselors will help you understand your options in making these decisions. Some of the major areas you should consider are: educational planning, interpreting test scores, and obtaining information for career planning and scholarships. **Whenever you wish to see your counselor, submit a [virtual yellow slip](#) to schedule an appointment.**

1.2 Counseling Services

The guidance counselors and social workers are available to provide counseling and information about drugs, alcohol and other problems (home/school). All conferences are strictly confidential within the State and federal guidelines/laws. Outside referrals may be suggested.

1.3 Enrolling in the School

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides.

() unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.

() unless enrolling and paying tuition.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document,
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- C. proof of residency,
- D. proof of immunizations.

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. Susan Narvaez will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

New students eighteen (18) years of age or older are not required to be accompanied by a parent when enrolling. When residing with a parent, these students are encouraged to include the parents in the enrollment process. When conducting themselves in school, adult students have the responsibilities of both student and parent.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

1.4 Course Grades and Earning Credit

1.4.1 Progress Reports/Report Cards

Progress reports are available at any time by logging in and checking PowerSchool grades online. Posted grades indicate the percentage academic score to date and the attendance/tardy totals of the student. Parents and students should review the PowerSchool carefully and discuss it. In the case of unsatisfactory or low grades (below 60%), **a conference with the teacher, student and parent are highly recommended.** Please call the teacher to arrange a conference. Final grades are posted on PowerSchool at the end of each semester. Students and parents can access up-to-date assignments and progress online through PowerSchool at www.spartaschools.org. To obtain a username and password, please contact the high school office. Weekly emails are sent to parent/guardians in the event that a student has a grade that is less than 60% in a course.

1.4.2 Grading System

Sparta High School uses the following grading scale:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Average (GPAP Value)
100-93%	A	4.0
92-90%	A-	3.667
89-87%	B+	3.333
86-83%	B	3.0
82-80%	B-	2.667
79-77%	C+	2.333
76-73%	C	2.0
72-70%	C-	1.667
69-67%	D+	1.333
66-63%	D	1.0
62-60%	D-	0.667
Below 60%	F	0.0

Additional Grading Marks:

W: **Withdrawal** from class/No Credit

NC: **No Credit** due to excessive absences or failure to earn credit in a credit/no credit course

CR: **Credit** earned in credit/no credit course or credit earned but no grade due to attendance

WF: **Withdrawal** from class due to **Failing** grade, no credit earned

P: **Pass**, earns credit but no grade

F: **Fail**, no credit earned

NM: **No Mark** due to attendance or time owed. Time must be made-up by the end of semester to earn a grade.

I: **Incomplete**, no credit earned

An "I" may be assigned when extenuating circumstances exist. The teacher assigning the incomplete shall supervise the completion of the course requirements in cooperation with the guidance office. This should be completed within two weeks of the end of the semester. Exceptions to this deadline must be arranged in writing with administration.

1.4.3 Online Grade Book (PowerSchool):

Grades and attendance records will be updated on a regular basis through our online grade book program called PowerSchool. Parents and students can monitor their academic progress online, including attendance, communication with teachers, etc. To access a student's account, a username and password are needed. This information may be obtained from the high school office. PowerSchool can be accessed through the district's website: www.spartaschools.org.

1.4.4 Low Grades

Student grades can be continuously monitored in PowerSchool. Guidelines for re-testing and late/missing work are determined by the classroom teacher and are to be consistent with departmental guidelines. All semester work must be completed by the end of the semester. The classroom teacher, in an effort to provide academic, behavioral or social support for a student, may initiate a Plan for Success. All plans will be coordinated through the guidance office. All Educational Plans (I.E.P's, 504's, etc.) may incorporate alternative policies.

1.4.5 Weighted Grades

Courses using weighted grades include but are not limited to: Honors Algebra 1, Honors Algebra II, Honors Chemistry, Honors English 9, Honors English 10, Honors Geometry, Honors Physics, Honors or AP Spanish 4, AP Biology, AP Calculus, AP Computer Science, AP English Language and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, AP European History, AP Government, AP Psychology, AP Environmental Science, AP Statistics, AP U.S. History, and any approved AP online classes. Students will earn an additional .5 for honors and/or AP courses that are calculated into their GPA. As outlined in section 1.10, dual enrollment courses are not used for GPA. They appear as credit or no credit on a student's transcript.

1.4.6 Good Faith Effort Behavior Includes:

- Student attempts all homework assignments in a timely manner at quality standards.
- Student actively participates in class.
- Student arrives on time and is prepared for class with materials including Chromebook, notebook, textbook, pencil, etc.
- Student pursues help outside of class if he/she has difficulties.
- Students will follow the Sparta High School Academic Honesty Pledge found in section 4.23

1.4.7 Drop/Add Policy

Students may drop/add a class within the first four days of each semester and must have parent/guardian permission. Any deviation from this policy has to be approved by an administrator. Classes dropped after the four-day period may be recorded as a “W” and computed as an “F,” adversely affecting the student’s GPA.

1.4.8 Prerequisites

Some courses (honors and Advanced Placement) require earning credit at a 90% or better level in previous courses before a student can enroll in the class. These requirements are determined by the department.

1.5 Grade Level Classification

A student's classification will be based on the number of credits earned, not on years of attendance, and will be reflected in the student's course schedule, yearbook picture, prom eligibility, etc. The classification will be determined at the beginning of the school year as follows:

- 9th grade: *Freshman*
less than four credits
- 10th grade: *Sophomore*
four to ten credits
- 11th grade: *Junior*
eleven to seventeen credits
- 12th grade: *Senior*
eighteen or more credits

1.5.1 “On track to graduate”

It is important that students remain “on track” to graduate in four years. If a student falls below the pace of graduating with his/her class, the student may be required to earn credit outside the normal school day or during the summer, or he/she may be placed in an alternative setting. Currently, students can earn 26 credits at Sparta High School and 24 are required for graduation, (refer to **1.13 Graduation Requirements**). A student who has failed to earn credit or meet the prerequisite for consecutive courses more than four times is no longer on track to graduate. A student may also be off track if he/she does not have enough semesters remaining to complete a course sequence. For example, a senior who reaches the final semester and still needs credit in English 11 and English 12 cannot complete both in the same semester. **Also see section 1.8 Academic Probation.**

1.6 Honor Roll/Academic Letter

Students are eligible to be on the Honor Roll each semester if their grades average 3.00 or better without “W”, “NC” or “NM”, or “I.” Criteria for earning an academic letter are:

- Sophomores at the end of the second semester who have completed six and a half semester credits and have a GPA. of 3.90.
- Juniors who have completed fourteen semester credits at the end of the fourth semester and have a GPA. of 3.75.
- Seniors at the end of the sixth semester who have completed twenty semester credits and have a GPA. of 3.60.
- To graduate with academic honors, a student must not have a “W,” “NM,” “NC,” or “I” grades on his/her transcript.

1.7 Academic Probation

(1) Any student who falls below the minimum credit requirements, according to grade level classification, will be placed on academic probation.

(2) **Any student whose grade-point average falls below a 2.0 will also be placed on academic probation. Academic probation means students are not in good standing at Sparta High School. Any student on academic probation will be given one semester to meet the credit and grade-point average requirements to graduate from Sparta High School. If these requirements are not met in one semester, steps toward an alternative placement will be taken.**

1.8 Student Assessment

Please consult with your counselor. The following items are necessary or highly recommended for students to complete prior to college entrance. Check with counseling for test dates.

1.8.1 PSAT 8/9 TEST

The PSAT 8/9 is the first test in the new SAT Suite of Assessments and is designed for 8th and 9th graders. Tightly aligned with the SAT and PSAT/NMSQT, it focuses on the knowledge and skills that current research shows are most essential for college and career readiness and success. It will support all students with early feedback on the skills and knowledge that matter most for college and career success.

1.8.2 PSAT 10 TEST

The PSAT 10 is the second test in the new SAT Suite of Assessments and is designed for 10th graders. Tightly aligned with the SAT and PSAT/NMSQT, it focuses on the knowledge and skills that current research shows are most essential for college and career readiness and success. This test is very similar to the PSAT/NMSQT but is offered in the spring. However, students may not qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program with scores earned on the PSAT 10.

1.8.3 PSAT/NMSQT

The newly redesigned Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is a program co-sponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). It is designed for 10th and 11th graders and is tightly aligned with the redesigned SAT. The purpose of the PSAT/NMSQT is: to give students feedback on strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study; to show students how their performance on admissions test might compare with others applying to college nationwide; to enter scholarship competitions (11th grade students only); to participate in the Student Search Service; to gain access to online study plans and career and college planning tools; and to help prepare for the SAT.

1.8.4 Redesigned SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)

The redesigned SAT is a globally recognized college admission test that gives students the opportunity to show colleges what they know and how well they can apply that knowledge. It tests students' knowledge of reading, writing and math. All students will take the SAT during their junior year (in April) as required by the State of Michigan. Students may take it again if they choose but are responsible for payment of subsequent tests. Almost all colleges and universities use the SAT to make admission decisions.

1.9 School Withdrawal/Transfer

Any student who is leaving Sparta High School must obtain a checkout form from the guidance office. This form must be signed by all teachers, the librarian, counseling office and athletic director. All schoolbooks and property must be returned and all fees paid in full.

1.10 Scheduling and Assignment

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the Counseling Department. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need to pass prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a pass or schedule change.

Foreign students and foreign-exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

1.11 Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment is an opportunity for students to take classes at a post-secondary institution (college/university), while still attending high school. If interested in dual enrollment between 9th and 12th grades, PSAT, SAT or ACT scores from the previous year will be used to determine eligibility. A senior's MME (Michigan Merit Exam) scores from the student's junior year may also be used to determine eligibility for Dual Enrollment. A student will be eligible if the following criteria are met:

Earn State and/or college-specified scores on one of the aforementioned standardized tests. Earn a high school GPA specified by the college. Courses taken at the post-secondary institution cannot be in the area of a hobby, craft, recreation, physical education, theology, divinity, or religious education. Students wishing to apply for dual enrollment must meet with their guidance counselor,

complete the proper paperwork at the local college or university and receive written approval from the building principal. Dual Enrollment grades are not used to calculate a student's GPA.

Dual/Concurrent Enrollment: Dual and Concurrent Enrollment courses will be assigned Credit/No Credit, and will not be assigned grades. These courses will NOT receive weighted grades. (For prospective collegiate student-athletes, they may receive a non-weighted grade per NCAA regulations).

1.12 Graduation Requirements

Participation in commencement ceremonies is a privilege, not a right.

1.12.1 Class of 2019 and beyond

- a) 24 credits
- b) Educational Development Plan
- c) Satisfying all student debts
- d) Serving all disciplinary actions
- e) Complete Sparta High School and Michigan Merit Curriculum Requirements:
 - English (4 credits) NOTE: *Students must be enrolled in and earn credit for an English course every year*
 - English 9 OR Honors English 9
 - English 10 OR Honors English 10
 - English 11 OR AP English Language and Comp.
 - College Prep, English AP English Literature and Comp. OR Ferris State University English
 - Math (4 credits) NOTE: *Students must be enrolled in and earn credit for a math course every year.*
 - Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1 OR Honors Algebra 1
 - Algebra, Geometry OR Honors Geometry
 - Geometry, Algebra 2 OR Honors Algebra 2
 - Algebra 2 OR Math elective
 - Science (3 credits)
 - Physical Science OR Biology
 - Biology OR AP Environmental
 - Environmental Science, Honors Chemistry, OR Honors Physics
 - Social Studies (3 credits)
 - World History
 - U.S. History OR AP U.S. History
 - Civics/Economics OR Honors Civics/Honors Economics
 - Physical Education (.5 credit)
 - Health (.5 credit)
 - Visual, Performing and Applied Arts (1 credit)
 - World Language (2 credits in the same world language)
 - Electives (6 credits)
 - Online Experience (no credit is requirement, but the experience is required by the State of Michigan)

1.12.2 Full-Time Student Requirement

All students must be enrolled in seven classes (including Focus) each semester or the equivalent as specified by the State of Michigan Pupil Accounting Manual (1098 instructional hours). **Note:** Students may meet the requirements through a State approved, personal (modified) curriculum.

1.12.3 Assessment Requirement

All students must actively participate in all components of the SAT with Writing and Michigan Merit Exam (or appropriate MI-ACCESS assessment if deemed appropriate in the student's IEP) and the Career Readiness Certificate Assessment Program, in order to be eligible to earn a Sparta High School diploma. Further, the student must attempt the standardized assessments with good faith effort in order to demonstrate their level of skill and knowledge. Students' good faith effort will be determined by the assessment administrator. The resulting scores on these assessments are not a condition for earning a high school diploma.

1.12.4 Administrative Modifications

The administration has the ability to modify these graduation requirements as circumstances merit.

1.13 Valedictorian, Salutarian and Latin Honors System

The Valedictorian, Salutarian, and honors recognition as a member of the graduating class will be determined by the administration. Factors utilized in this determination are GPA, attendance (see section 2.7.3) and citizenship, **which includes behavioral choices** (including but not limited school and co-curricular suspensions).

Sparta High School uses the Latin Honors System to include honors at the following three levels:

- cum laude, meaning "with praise" or "with honor" 3.50 – 3.69
- magna cum laude, meaning "with great honor" 3.70 – 3.99
- summa cum laude, meaning "with highest honor" 4.0 and higher

1.14 Personal Curriculum

What is a personal curriculum?

The personal curriculum (PC) is a process to modify specific Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) high school credit requirements and/or content expectations based on a student's unique learning needs and post-secondary goals. It is designed to serve students who want to accelerate or go beyond the MMC requirements and students who need to individualize MMC requirements to earn a high school diploma.

Who may request a personal curriculum?

- The parent/guardian of a student for whom a personal curriculum is sought
- The student, if the student is of the age of majority
- An emancipated minor
- A teacher who is currently teaching the student (who currently teaches in, or whose expertise is in, a subject area proposed to be modified by the PC, or who is determined by the principal to have qualifications otherwise relevant to developing a PC)
- A school counselor or school employee qualified to act in a counseling role.

If the request for a PC is made by the student's parent/legal guardian or, if the student is at least age 18 or is an emancipated minor, by the student, the school district shall develop a PC for the student pursuant to the parameters outlined in 380.1278b(5).

When may a personal curriculum be requested?

If the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the personal curriculum request may be submitted prior to 9th grade. If the student does not have an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the personal curriculum request may be requested after the student has completed 9th grade.

1.15 Limited English Proficiency

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular programs offered by the District. Parents should contact the high school main office to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

1.16 Individuals with Disabilities

The American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. The District's full Board approved policy 2260.01, and procedures can be found on the [District website](#). Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact Joel Stoner or Tina Mortensen at 616-887-8253 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

1.17 Student Records

In accordance with Board Policy 8330 "the Board of Education must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, the Board recognizes the need to safeguard student's privacy and restrict access to student's personally identifiable information." [The full policy can be found on the District website.](#)

1.18 Review of Instructional Materials and Activities

The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, including printed and representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials

accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or assessments. [The full Board Policy 9130 can be found on the District website.](#)

2.0 ATTENDANCE

2.1 Contact Information

Mrs. Veronica Rollston, Attendance Secretary

Attendance Line: 616-887-1741 or veronica.rollston@spartaschools.org

2.2 Philosophy

The staff of Sparta High School believes that the maximum educational achievement occurs for students through regular attendance in classes. The student and their parents/guardians are responsible for regular class attendance. Excessive absences from any class may result in poor achievement and/or failure to earn a grade/credit required for graduation.

Class attendance is necessary for learning and academic achievement, as well as for developing the habits of punctuality, dependability, and self-discipline. The purpose of the attendance procedures is to help students develop these responsibilities and to maintain academic standards for earning a grade or credit. Sparta High School believes that students should arrive to class on time, and regularly attend class.

2.3 Absence: Definition

When a student misses more than five minutes of a class period, the student is considered absent.

2.4 Absence Categories

*2.4.1 *Excused Absences (X marked in attendance)*

These are absences excused by a parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should place a call to the attendance line (887-1741) and report the student's name, grade, reason for absence, and the name of the parent/guardian making the call. If a call or note is not received within 24 hours, the absence will be considered unexcused. **The high school administration reserves the right to determine if an absence can be considered excused.**

*2.4.2 *Unexcused Absences (U marked in attendance)*

This is an absence that has not been excused by a parent/guardian or occurs when a student is absent for an unacceptable reason. The student may lose credit for work missed with the understanding that the student will have the opportunity to complete missed work to gain content knowledge and comprehension of that material.

2.4.3 School Business (S marked in attendance)

This mark is used when a student has missed a class for a school event or activity. These types of absences must be pre-arranged with the appropriate forms through the staff member supervising the activity or the main office. College visits are allowed under this category if it is pre-arranged, the paperwork is completed, and documentation of visit provided. Forms are available in the main office. With documentation, court ordered appointments are categorized as school business. School business absences are not included in the maximum allowable total for earning credit.

2.4.4 Medical (M is marked in attendance)

A medical absence is allowed when official documentation from the medical provider is given to that attendance secretary stating there was a medical reason for the absence (appointments, illness, doctor's orders, etc.). Medical absences are not included in the maximum allowable total for earning credit.

2.4.5 Funeral (F is marked in attendance)

A student is absent to attend a funeral. Documentation may be required. Funeral absences are not included in the maximum allowable total for earning credit.

2.4.6 Absent (A is marked in attendance)

An absence that has not yet been classified using the above codes remains as an 'A' in attendance until it is resolved.

2.4.7 In-School Suspension (I marked in attendance)

In-School Suspensions (ISS) means a student has spent the class period in the ISS room. Students will receive credit for all work completed during an in-school suspension. Suspensions are not included in the maximum allowable total for earning credit.

2.4.8 Out-of-School Suspension (O marked in attendance)

Out-of-School suspensions (OSS) means a student has been removed from school for a period of time. Depending on the length of the suspension, students will be given the opportunity to complete assigned work during the suspension or when they return. Suspensions are not included in the maximum allowable total for earning credit. 1-day suspensions are not appealable.

2.5 College Visits

Students are allowed one college visit as a junior and two as a senior, for a total of three days for college visits. These absences need to be pre-arranged to be marked as school business. See section 2.4.3 for procedures.

2.6 *Prearranged Absences, Extended Absences, & Homework Requests

Students who know they will be absent for four or more consecutive school days can make arrangements in advance of the absence by picking up a pre-arranged absence slip from the office. This informs teachers of the impending absence and the need to make the work for that time available to the student. Make-up work must be completed according to each classroom teacher's expectation and should be completed outside of scheduled class time. All assignments that will need to be completed can be found on the teacher's Schoology page. If a student is absent for two or more days, the office should be contacted for homework assignments. Assignments requests will be forwarded to teachers and the work will be posted to Schoology. For short term absences, the student should contact the classroom teacher directly.

2.7 Attendance Required to Earn Credit

2.7.1 Earning Credit

Daily attendance is critical for student success in the classroom where student participation in classroom discussions, activities, and peer-to-peer interactions all enhance the learning process.

2.7.2 Credit NOT Earned Because of Attendance

When a student does not attend enough class periods to earn credit, a mark of "NM" is placed in the grade book until attendance is earned. Students may earn credit by scheduling a meeting with the Attendance Review Committee. **EXCEPTION:** A failing grade (or below C- in core classes) will remain on the student's report card and transcript.

2.7.3 Attendance Resolution

- a) Attendance Review Committee: Upon receiving a request from a student for a meeting with the Attendance Review Committee, the committee will meet in a timely manner to hear from the student and guardian in regard to the absence in question and determine appropriate accountability.
- b) Demonstrating Content Mastery: Students that do not make-up time, but demonstrate content mastery, will receive credit for the course. They will not, however, receive a grade for the course. Mastery of the content is demonstrated by achieving a 77% grade on the testing out criteria for the course. Students must also already be passing the course with a 60% or higher. **Note: Students who receive credit but no grade due to absences during their junior or senior years are not eligible for academic honors, which includes valedictorian and salutatorian. See section 1.14.**

2.8 Emergency Closing and Delays

In accordance with Board Policy 8400.01, [which can be found on the District website](#), emergency closing and delays due to weather, transportation, or other unforeseen circumstances that impact the school day or extra-curricular activities will be communicated with students, parents and staff via digital messaging through the use of district wide communication tool. This may include, but is not limited to, recorded voice messages, texts and/or emails. Please make sure your contact information in

PowerSchool is up to date to ensure that you receive these messages. Please call the main office if you need assistance updating your information.

2.9 Early Dismissal

If a student has to leave during school for an appointment, a note, email, or phone call from the parent must be received by the main office prior to the appointment. The office will then issue to the student an Early Dismissal Pass, so the student may leave at the assigned time.

VIOLATION: Students leaving school without office permission will be held responsible for their choice.

2.10 Illness During the School Day

If a student feels sick during the day, he/she must report to the main office. The student must call a parent/guardian to go home. Any class time missed will count as an excused absence. The school is not authorized to administer any medication, including over-the-counter medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.) without physician and parent permission.

2.11 Closed Campus

The Board of Education has deemed Sparta High School a closed campus. Once students arrive on school grounds, they are to remain in the school building for the rest of the day. **Students are not allowed in the parking lot areas or leave the school building during the school day, for any reason, without staff permission.** Students who leave school without office permission will be held responsible for their decision.

2.12 Perfect Attendance

Starting with the 2008-2009 school year, Sparta High School chose not to provide perfect attendance awards, because there are students with health conditions that will not allow them to be in attendance every school day, although they are present every day that they are capable of attending.

2.13 Skip Day

The high school will **not** approve or sanction any such day.

2.14 Field Trips

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extracurricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent. All applicable school rules apply to all field trips. [Board Policy 2340](#) regarding field trips can be found on the District website.

2.15 Visitors

Any student wishing to bring a visitor into the school must have the permission of the administration and their teachers at least one school day in advance. Permission may not always be granted. The visitor may not miss their home school to visit at Sparta High School. Any student wishing to bring a visitor to a school activity must have the permission of the administration as well. Visitors must follow all Sparta High School rules including dress code. Forms are available in the office for visitor passes.

2.16 Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10% of the scheduled school days, regardless of whether or not they are excused or unexcused absences (see Section 2.4 for absence categories that count in a student's accumulated absence numbers). A student with excessive absences will miss a large portion of the content of a course and may hinder their ability to pass the course. This 10% rule equates to not missing any more than 2 days per month, on average. **Additionally, students under the age of 18 may be referred to the county truancy officer for chronic absenteeism.**

2.17 Student/Parent Appeal Procedure for Attendance Issues

2.17.1 Request a Formal Hearing

Requests for a formal hearing with the Attendance Committee are made by contacting either the Principal or Assistant Principal.

2.17.2 Notification of Hearing

The Attendance Committee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the next available meeting date following the receipt of the appeal. The Attendance Committee shall consist of three or more staff members, including administrators and guidance staff and will consider input from staff members involved.

2.17.3 At the Hearing:

- a) Parents and/or the student will have the right to examine all evidence.
- b) Parents and/or the student shall be given the opportunity to present any pertinent information regarding the student's attendance patterns. This would include any medical documentation.
- c) The decision made by the Attendance Committee will be conveyed to the parents and/or student in a timely manner.

2.17.4 Further Appeals

- a) If the parent and/or student feel that they have not received due process, they may appeal the decision to the Principal of Sparta High School.
- b) If a parent and/or student feel that they have not received a satisfactory response from the above, they may appeal to the Superintendent.
- c) If a parent and/or student feel that they have not received a satisfactory response from the above, they may appeal to the District Board of Education.

2.18 Students of the Age of 18 and Above

Attendance policies and all school rules are the same for eighteen-year-old and above students. This includes requirements for a parent/guardian to approve actions. Students may complete an Age of Majority form to remove the requirement for parent/guardian permission. Parent/Guardian permission is also required for this action.

2.19 KISD Program Attendance (KCTC, KTC, LaunchU, and ATYP)

LaunchU, KCTC, ATYP, and KTC absences are excused by calling the Sparta High School attendance line and are considered the same as absences from classes at SHS. An absence for a class that counts as two periods at SHS is treated as two absences.

Students enrolled at the KISD are required to attend classes on days when those schools are in session, even when Sparta High School is not.

2.20 Homebound Instruction

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability. Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the building administrator. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days. [Board Policy 2412](#) regarding homebound instruction, can be found on the District website.

3.0 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & CODE OF CONDUCT

Sparta Area Schools must balance the interests of students and the community in a safe and conducive educational environment with its duty to provide educational services to students who engage in misconduct or behaviors that interfere with the safety and the delivery of educational services. Board of Education policies addressing student misconduct and this Student Code of Conduct are intended to strike that balance. However, these documents do not limit the School District's lawful authority.

3.1 Philosophy

Each student at Sparta High School is responsible for their own actions and words. Sparta High School expects that students conduct themselves with high levels of respect, responsibility, and safety. These attributes will help to ensure that our students will experience the highest levels of academic performance and productive citizenship. (also see Appendix E for Board Policy)

3.1.1 Due Process

It is the belief of the Board of Education, supported by the employees of this district, that all infractions of rules identified in this document are to be treated fairly and openly, and that rules, and the consequences of breaking them, will apply to all. Due process is the right of the accused to:

- a) Receive oral or written notice of charges
- b) An opportunity to state his/her side of the story
- c) Have access to an appeal process. (1-day suspensions are not appealable.)

The Principal may review any disciplinary action, taking into consideration all extenuating circumstances which might alter the student responsibility process.

3.1.2 Progressive Consequences

Progressive consequences serve as the basis of Sparta High School's Student Responsibility guidelines.

3.1.3 Student Responsibility Plans

Each time a student is assigned a consequence, that student might be required to complete a Student Responsibility Plan. These plans are intended to help students create alternative strategies and behaviors, as well as to problem solve with the appropriate staff member. A student must complete a successful plan, with staff signature(s), before he/she is allowed to return to class.

3.1.4 Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)

These students may be subjected to alternative consequences outlined in behavior improvement plans (BIPs) created by the IEP team.

3.1.5 Students of the Age of 18 and Above

All school rules are the same for eighteen-year-old and above aged students.

3.2 Weapon Free School Zone/Safe Schools Policy

The Board of Education of Sparta Area Schools, as both an employer and a public-school district, is concerned with and interested in protecting the health, safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors. The Board recognizes that school buildings, facilities, vehicles, grounds and other school property are best utilized in the educational process in the absence of threats to physical well-being and safety, by individuals possessing weapons and/or dangerous articles. Furthermore, the Board of Education of Sparta Area Schools shall permanently expel a pupil from attending school in the School District, if the pupil possesses a weapon or dangerous article (including look-a-likes), commits arson or rape, on district grounds or at district or school events. Such expulsion is mandatory, unless the pupil establishes, in a clear and convincing manner, at least one of the following:

- a) That the object or instrument possessed by the pupil was not possessed for use as a weapon or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon.
- b) The weapon or dangerous article was not knowingly possessed by the pupil.
- c) The pupil did not know or have reason to know that the object or the instrument possessed by the pupil constituted a weapon or dangerous article.
- d) The weapon or dangerous article was possessed by the pupil at the suggestion, request, direction of, or with the express permission of school or police authorities.

Expulsions mandated under this policy shall be imposed in accordance with the procedures for student discipline as established by the school district and as set forth in the Student Handbook or other appropriate documents. (also see Appendix D)

The consequences for any offense under this category are up to a 10-day suspension, police contact, and possible recommendation for expulsion or long-term suspension.

3.3 Zero Tolerance for Gang Activities

Sparta Area Schools is committed to keeping the district schools and students free from threats or harmful influence of any groups or gangs which advocate drug use, violence, or disruptive behavior. Our goal is to provide quality education in a safe, healthy, and violence free environment. The district does not permit the presence of any apparel, jewelry, accessories, and manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color arrangement, trademark or any other attribute, denotes membership in a gang. The district does not permit gang activity of any kind including, but not limited to, graffiti, gang symbols, intimidation, and threats. A student may be suspended or expelled for any gang related behavior.

The consequences for any offense under this category are up to a 10-day suspension, police contact, and possible recommendation for expulsion or long-term suspension.

3.4 Harassment Policy

Sparta Area Schools' policy prohibits harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and hazing of students. This behavior disrupts the educational process and interferes with this District's commitment to provide a stable environment to its students. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others. The Sparta Area Schools, because of its desire to prevent and prohibit this behavior, adopts this policy and gives notice that it is wrong and will not be tolerated by this District.

If a pattern of harassment is established, or if the circumstances of an individual incident are identified as harassment, the following consequences will be applied: up to a 10-day suspension, police contact, and possible recommendation for expulsion or long-term suspension.

3.4.1 Definition of Harassment:

- a) Submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District
- b) Submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcome conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the School District
- c) The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

3.4.2 Definition of Sexual Harassment (Note 1)

Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Verbal harassment or abuse
- b) Pressure for sexual activity
- c) Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
- d) Unwelcome touching
- e) Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.
- f) Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance or public duties.

3.4.3 Definition of Sexually Inappropriate Behavior (Note 1)

Inappropriate sexual behaviors include but are not limited to:

- a) spreading sexual rumors;
- b) inappropriate or suggestive sexual gestures;
- c) touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way;
- d) cornering or blocking of normal movements;
- e) displaying sexually suggestive objects in an educational environment; or
- f) displaying or engaging in sexually explicit behavior

3.4.4 Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students

The Sparta Board of Education believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events.

"Bullying" is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. Internet, social media, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) 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 impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic

"Bullying" is defined as a person willfully and repeatedly exercising power or control over another with hostile or malicious intent (i.e., repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful individual by a more powerful individual or group). Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying should immediately report the situation to the building principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal

disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated, and documented. If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. The complainant will be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

Parents may request a complete copy of School Board policy 5517.01 in the main office or may visit our website (<https://go.boarddocs.com/MI/Sparta/Board.nsf/Public#>) to view the policy in its entirety. Sparta Area Schools will adhere to State law and update this policy if/when changes are made at the State level.

3.4.5 Definition of Hazing^{Note2}

Any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- a) Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs
- b) Physical punishment or infliction of pain
- c) Intentional humiliation or embarrassment
- d) Dangerous activity
- e) Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress
- f) Forced detention or kidnapping
- g) Undressing or otherwise exposing initiates

Note1: Any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State Law M.C. L. A. 722.621 et. seq.

Note2: If the school club organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

3.4.6 Reports of Harassment (harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and hazing)

The District encourages any student who believes he or she has been victim of harassment to report his/her concerns directly to any building principal or guidance counselor. Complaints or reports of harassment shall be handled as confidentially as possible. However, in certain circumstances, the District may be required by the Child Protection Law to report child sexual abuse to the Department of Social Services or other designated law enforcement agency. All reports or complaints will be promptly investigated by appropriate District representatives. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to corrective action, including suspension or expulsion. The District prohibits retaliation against students who file or make such complaints. Filing of a complaint will not reflect upon an individual's status nor will it affect a student's grades or work assignments. However, the District will take appropriate action if it finds that a student has deliberately filed a false complaint.

3.5 Code of Conduct for Students

We at Sparta High School are mandated by law to provide an equal education for all students. Any violation of state statute, Board of Education policy, expected code of conduct, or social norms will result in possible disciplinary action.

The rules and policies of Sparta High School apply to any student who is on school property or school-affiliated transportation, who is in attendance at school or any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any place or time creates a substantial disruption to the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school, regardless of location, date, or time. This includes athletes, spectators, speakers, and performers. Violations of those expectations could result in school consequences and losing the opportunity to attend such events, including homecoming, prom, graduation, etc. The School District will also consider restorative practices as an addition or alternative to discipline

Introduction to Disciplinary Actions and Prohibited Acts

Introduction: The student code of conduct balances the District's obligation to maintain safety and a conducive educational environment with the District's obligation to teach appropriate behavior to students who engage in misconduct and inappropriate behavior.

The student code of conduct establishes the rules governing the most serious and obvious types of student misconduct. The prohibited acts listed in this student code of conduct are not to be considered as an all-inclusive list or as a limitation upon the authority of school officials to deal appropriately with violations of a school building's individual rules and regulations, or other types of conduct which interfere with the good order of the school system, the proper functioning of the educational process, or the health and safety of students.

Range of Discipline: Each prohibited act listed in the student code of conduct references the discipline which may be imposed for a violation. The District will also consider restorative practices as an addition or alternative to discipline. The discipline for violating

some prohibited acts ranges from administrative intervention to expulsion. For other prohibited acts, the penalty ranges from suspension to expulsion. For violation of the most serious prohibited acts, the penalty is expulsion. In cases where the stated penalty is not expulsion but is set forth in terms of a range, the actual penalty imposed will depend upon the nature and severity of the offense, the particular facts involved, the age of the student, the student's prior behavioral record, the persistent and/or chronic nature of the misconduct, the recommendation of school personnel, and all other circumstances deemed relevant.

A student violating any of the prohibited acts listed in this student code of conduct will be disciplined in accordance with the code of conduct. Additionally, a student who engages in a prohibited act which violates law may be referred to the appropriate police authority.

The prohibited acts and penalties listed below are applicable when a student;

- Engages in a prohibited act on school property;
- Engages in a prohibited act in a motor vehicle, including on being used for a school-related purpose;
- Engages in a prohibited act at a school-related activity, function, or event;
- Engages in a prohibited act en route to or from school;
- Engages in a prohibited act involving another student who is en route to or from school;
- Engages in a prohibited act off school premises, which act is either prohibited by law or, in the judgment of the building administrator, is of such seriousness that the student's continued attendance in school would present a danger to the health and safety of students or employees, and/or would substantially interfere with the proper functioning of the educational process; or
- Engages in a prohibited act when the student was not enrolled in the District or was enrolled in another school district, if the act of misconduct would constitute a sufficient basis for suspension or expulsion had it occurred while the student was attending school in the District.

3.5.1 Controlled Substances and Medication, Self-Medication Policy

Zero Tolerance for Drugs and Drug References: The staff at Sparta High School believes that the exposure to illegal substances/activities or the promotion of those activities, however they are communicated (verbally, electronically, written, visually depicted, etc.), is detrimental to the establishment of the school as a safe environment for our students. As such, these activities will not be tolerated and the students involved in this disruptive behavior will have the appropriate consequences applied.

Self-Medication Policy: At the Middle and High School level, inhalers and Epipens can be self-carried with physician approval and the completion of the Self Carry/Self-Administration Medication Authorization Form. Students who are using prescription or over-the-counter medication must have a Medication Authorization Form on file in the Health Office. Medication must be in the prescription/original bottle. All medication must be kept in the Health Office and will be dispensed according to their doctor's instructions.

Please note: State law requires physician signature for ALL prescription and over-the-counter medications administered at school. Failure to comply with this policy could result in a violation of the code of conduct. Students who are using prescription medication must have a statement from their doctor on file in the office. Medication must be in the prescription bottle. Students who take non-prescription medication must have a statement from the parent/guardian on file in the office. All medication must be kept in the office and will be dispensed according to their doctor's and/or parent's instruction. Failure to comply with this policy could result in a violation of the code of conduct.

Violations:

- a) Sale, Furnishing, Purchasing, or Exchange of Narcotics, Illegal Drugs, Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication, or Alcohol: Students shall not exchange/furnish/sell narcotics, illegal drugs, medication, or alcohol. This includes all "look-alikes".
- b) Possession with Intent to Distribute
- c) Possession or use of Drugs and/or Alcohol: Students shall not possess or use narcotics, illegal drugs, prescription and non-prescription medication, alcohol, "look-a-likes" or any other related paraphernalia (i.e. rolling papers such as zig zags, pipes, etc.) on school grounds or at school activities. Students attending school activities under the influence of narcotics, illegal drugs, or alcohol will be suspended from the activity and shall forfeit the right to attend like activities for the balance of the school year in addition to disciplinary action.
- d) Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
- e) Possession of Non-Prescription Medication: including but not limited to over the counter medication, **CBD/THC products** of any type, or similar products.

- f) Possession and/or use of Tobacco Products: Students are not permitted to use or possess any type of tobacco on school property to include but are not limited to e-cigs, hookah pens, battery powered vapor pens, etc....
- g) Possession and/or use of lighters & matches
- h) Possession of Look Alikes or Synthetics: (include but are not limited to K-12, 616, NA alcohol products, etc.)

3.5.2 Abusive/Threatening Actions

- a) Extortion: To obtain by coercion or intimidation.
- b) Fighting/Assault
- c) Aggressive Behavior
- d) Instigating: the verbal or physical act of urging, inciting, or encouraging another person to behave in such a way that violates Sparta High School's Student Code of Conduct.
- e) Threats to Students
- f) Racism/Racial Insensitivity (or inappropriate items): any student item that advertises or promotes alcohol, drugs or violence or that is offensive because of sexual, racial, or ethnic references will be considered offensive and not allowed. **Including but not limited to clothing, computer screens, cars, decals, etc.**
- g) Aggression, Assault or Threat toward Staff Member

3.5.3 Property and Facilities

- a) Destruction of Property/Vandalism: Including both public and private property on school grounds or at school activities.
- b) Theft, Attempted Theft, and/or Possession of Stolen Property: This includes stolen property brought to Sparta High School. ***Student Valuables: Sparta High School strongly recommends that students leave all valuables (including unnecessary amounts of cash, cell phones, media players, phones, jewelry, headphones/earbuds, etc.) at home. Sparta High School is not responsible if these types of items are lost or stolen.***
- c) Unauthorized Access to the Building/Pranks: See Appendix B

3.5.4 Inappropriate Practices and Behaviors

- a) Insubordination: Refusal to follow reasonable requests made by school personnel, or showing disrespect to school personnel. Students are expected to cooperate with and give respect to staff at all times. Students are not permitted in the hallways during school time without a pass. This includes all returning tech center students and students on their lunch period.
- b) Gross Insubordination: Any example of insubordination deemed excessive by administrative discretion.
- c) Disruptive Behavior: Any behavior that disrupts the learning environment or the normal functioning of the safe school environment.
- d) Major Disruptive Behavior: Any example of disruptive behavior deemed excessive by administrative discretion.
- e) Cheating/Plagiarism: To plagiarize is to represent as your own: words, ideas, or information that are not your own without acknowledging the source. This includes written and online sources, misattributing artificial intelligence generated content as their own, and the copying and/or paraphrasing another's work. Any student knowingly participating in either giving or receiving aid on school work will be held accountable for their choice.
- f) Profanity/Inappropriate Language: Verbal or written (including electronically).
- g) Dishonest Student Behavior: Sparta High School students are expected to be truthful with staff members. Lying, forgery, phone fraud and similar behaviors will not be tolerated.
- h) Missed Detention
- i) Public Display of Affection (PDA): Students at Sparta High School are allowed to hold on to hands. Any physical contact that goes beyond holding hands (hugging, kissing, etc.) violates Sparta High School's expectations.
- j) Possession of Pornographic Material/Computer Pornography
- k) Computer Use Violation
- l) False Fire Alarm
- m) Possession and/or Use of Firecrackers, Smoke Bombs, Annoying or Dangerous Items
- n) Personal Protection Devices A student shall not possess, handle, or transmit a personal protection device (e.g. pepper gas, mace, stun gun, electric shock device, etc.) capable of inflicting bodily injury or causing physical discomfort to another person
- o) Unauthorized Use of Elevator
- p) Out-of-Assigned Area: Students are expected to be with their assigned classes, in the cafeteria during their assigned lunch only, or at/in direct route to the specific destination of a specified pass granted by a staff member.
- q) Leaving Without Permission: Students are allowed to leave school only with previous permission from the school and must sign out at the main office when exiting. This can be arranged by a parent or guardian through the office. Leaving without permission or through any door other than the main entrance doors violates Sparta High School's expectations.

- r) Off-Campus: Sparta High School is a closed campus. Students are not allowed to be dismissed for lunch.
- s) Cell Phone Usage Statement: Sparta High School has a no cell phones in the classroom policy.
 - a. **Cell phones will not be allowed during classroom instruction (including FOCUS)**, except when explicitly approved by teachers for academic purposes. This includes the pod areas, restrooms, and hallways.
 - b. **Students are allowed to use their phones** between classes, during lunch, before and after school, and during other designated times.
- t) Unauthorized Photography, Filming or Video Recording: The use of cameras, video recording devices or filming on school property, including with a cell phone, is not permitted without approval by staff. Taking pictures or recording video in certain situations can lead to major disruptions to the educational process and violate individuals' right to privacy, including the filming of student fights.
- u) Dress Code Violation: See section 4.6.
- v) Restroom Access: Schools must allow students to use the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity. Any student who requests greater privacy for any reason will be given access to an alternative restroom, such as a staff restroom or office restroom. Any student desiring greater privacy should meet with the building administration to discuss available options.

3.5.5 Attendance

- a) Truancy: A student is considered Truant if any absence is determined to be unexcused. Excessive truancy will be considered insubordination, as it is contrary to the reasonable expectation that students attend school. The student will lose credit for work missed with the understanding that the student will have the opportunity to complete missed work to gain content knowledge and comprehension of that material.
- b) Tardiness: It is our expectation that students must be in their assigned rooms and ready for class to begin when the bell rings. **A student will be marked tardy if they enter the classroom within the first five minutes of the class period.** Any student who arrives to class after the first five minutes will be marked absent and treated as out of assigned area unless they are detained by a teacher, principal, assistant principal or the guidance office and have a pass.

3.6 Consequence Tables – Removed from handbook starting in 2024. See building administration for more information.

3.7 Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Students may NOT use AI, including AI image, voice, or video generator technology to imitate others, violate school rules, or school district policies.

3.8 Definitions of Consequences

3.8.1 Detention

Detention periods are held on school grounds and are supervised. Detention can be assigned after school for a ½-hour or an hour. Students are required to attend an assigned detention by the specified deadline. Students who misbehave in detention or do not attend the assigned period will receive further consequences. Transportation is the responsibility of the student

3.8.2 In-School Suspension (ISS)

Students will be assigned an alternative setting during school hours, including KCTC/KTC, unless approved by administration. Students will be expected to complete assigned school work and comply with established in-school suspension rules. Failure to comply will result in further consequences.

3.8.3 Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

This is removal from school, including off site programs like KCTC, for a designated period of time due to a violation of school rules and regulations. Included are all violations that occur at off-site programs. Students are prohibited from participating in

after school activities, and are not allowed to be on school grounds for the duration of the suspension. Students found on school grounds or at school functions during a suspension will be subject to further consequences. The expectation is that work missed during suspension will be made up in a timely manner.

3.8.4 Long-Term Suspension & Expulsion

Disciplinary actions taken by the Board of Education, based on administrative recommendation, to exclude a student from public education in the State of Michigan for a period of time in excess of 10 days.

Consistent with Michigan law, Sparta High School adopts a rebuttable presumption that students should not be disciplined by the imposition of long-term suspension (i.e., more than 10 school days) or expelled (i.e., 60 or more school days) unless Sparta Area Schools has determined in its sole discretion, the presumption has been rebutted by considering each of the following seven factors:

- The student's age;
- The student's disciplinary history;
- Whether the student is disabled within the meaning of IDEA or ADA/Section 504;
- The seriousness of the student's misconduct or behavior;
- Whether the student's misconduct or behavior threatened the safety of any pupil or staff member;
- Whether restorative practices will be used to address the student's misconduct or behavior; and
- Whether less severe discipline would properly address the student's misconduct or behavior.

The rebuttable presumption does not apply to short-term suspensions (i.e., 10 school days or fewer) or to a student who possesses a firearm in a weapons free school zone. However, with respect to tall long-term suspensions and expulsions, the Sparta Area Schools administrator implementing the discipline will consider and document consideration of the seven factors listed above.

3.8.5 Law Enforcement Contact

State law mandates schools report to local law enforcement any criminal incidents involving or occurring at the school or during school events. As such, when a student makes a choice to break the law, police contact may be one of the consequences for that choice.

3.8.6 Search and Seizure

Guidelines and procedures for Search and Seizure are outlined in section 4.18.

3.9 Procedure for Registering Complaints or Appeals

3.9.1 Step 1: Contact Staff Member

Students, parents and community members are asked to contact the staff member directly with whom they have a concern or complaint. **School counselors and social workers are available to mediate.**

3.9.2 Step 2: Contact Principal

If satisfaction is not attained, notify the building principal of the concern or complaint. The building principal will meet with the parties involved or refer the complaint to the appropriate person.

3.9.3 Step3: Contact Superintendent

If satisfaction is not attained, the Superintendent of schools should be contacted and a meeting with the concerned party or parties will be held.

3.9.4 Step 4: Request the Attention of the Board of Education

After the conference with the Superintendent, the party or parties may request that the Superintendent place the concern on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting.

3.10 Student Rights of Expression

SHS recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, non-commercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- 1. A material cannot be displayed if it:
 - I. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively or vulgar,
 - II. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
 - III. intends to be insulting or harassing,
 - IV. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event
 - V. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its contents or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations or the commission of an unlawful act.
 - 2. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted by the building principal for display or distribution during lunch periods or after school in designated locations as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.
- Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the building administration twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

3.11 Services Available to Students and their Parents

In an effort to meet the varied needs of all students, Sparta High School offers the following services available to eligible students; counselors in the guidance department, a social worker, a psychologist, student mentors, student tutors and a school nurse. Please check in the main office for more information.

4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1 2025-2026 Sparta High School Daily Schedule

Daily Scheduled 2025-2026

Schedule	A Day	B Day
1 st Block 7:50-9:40 (EDPs)	1 st Period	2 nd Period
2 nd Block 9:45-11:15 KCTC Lunch 11 - 11:15	3 rd Period	4 th Period
3 rd Block 11:20-1:40 (Spartan News)	5 th Period	6 th Period
1 ST Lunch 11:20 - 11:50 2 nd Lunch 1:10 – 1:40		
Focus 1:45-2:30	Focus Period	Focus Period
DOORS OPEN DAILY AT 7:20AM BREAKFAST IS SERVED DAILY FROM 7:20-7:50AM) DOORS LOCK DAILY AT 3:00PM		

4.1.1 Lunch Period

All students will be scheduled for a lunch period. A hot lunch program is provided for the students at a nominal cost during the school day. No students are permitted in the halls, classrooms, pod areas, parking lot, or outside of the building during the lunch

period. It is our expectation that all students remain in their assigned classroom until their assigned time to get their lunch. All lunches must be consumed within the cafeteria or media center. Lunch time protocols are:

- a) Bus your own dishes and dispose of any throwaway materials. Pick up after yourself.
- b) No cutting in line
- c) No running
- d) Disruptive noise or disrespect toward staff workers will not be tolerated
- e) Horse play will not be tolerated. Students will be held responsible for inappropriate behavior. Throwing of food and/or other material may result in cleaning portions of the school and/or administrative consequences.

4.2 National Honor Society Selection Procedure

4.2.1 Eligibility

All juniors and seniors with a grade point average of 3.5 or better are eligible, who are attending Sparta High School full time. Students who are eligible will be notified by letter.

4.2.2 Responsibilities for Students Applying for Membership

- a) Attend an informational meeting. Meeting dates will be stated in the notification letter.
- b) Complete a student activity form and obtain necessary signatures.
- c) Ask five teachers to complete a teacher recommendation form. Record the names of the teachers you have chosen to complete the form.
- d) Write an essay stating why you would like to become a member of the Honor Society and how you plan to contribute.
- e) Attach a recent picture to the completed activity form, a list of the teachers you gave a recommendation form to, and your essay. Return to the advisor by the stated time.

4.2.3 Selection

Students receiving a majority vote by the faculty council will be inducted into the National Honor Society. A point system will be used to evaluate candidates. This point system will not be an absolute determinate for membership. A cut-off point will be established prior to reviewing candidates. This cut-off point will not be an absolute determinate for membership. The faculty council will individually review each candidate who falls below the cut-off point.

4.2.4 Notification

Students who are selected will be notified by mail. Students must inform the advisor if they wish to accept the invitation to become a member of the Honor Society. Students who are not selected will also be notified by mail. They may schedule an appointment with the advisor if they wish to know the areas in which they were weak and how they might improve.

4.3 Driving to School

Parking in the student parking lot is a privilege not a right. All students who drive to school must park in the student parking lot during the school day. Parking permits will be granted by the high school administrative staff. Failure to obtain a parking permit may result in the car being towed at the owner's expense. The parking lot is a restricted area so no student can return to his/her vehicle during the school day without a pass from the office, this includes the lunch hour. All cars must be parked properly. Non-compliance with the parking regulations will result in disciplinary action that can include loss of the privilege of parking at school. Driving to school is considered a privilege and infractions will follow progressive discipline procedures.

4.4 Computer Usage

4.4.1 Computer Use Policy

Students and parents must sign a contract to use the computers at Sparta High School. Violations of the computer acceptable use policy will result in consequences.

4.4.2 Internet Registration Contract

Sparta Area Schools complies with all CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) requirements by purchasing and using iBoss, a highly respected Internet filtering software. Recognizing that no filtering software is foolproof, students are required to monitor their own activities and comply with the follow:

1. The use of the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection is a privilege for educational purposes only that may be revoked by the administrators of the system at any time for abusive conduct. Such conduct would include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Download and/or install any program on a hard drive or network drive
 - View, download, e-mail any pornographic, objectionable or questionable material
 - Send inappropriate e-mail messages or use email other than that provided by Sparta
 - Use any chat or instant messaging software or use email for messaging each other without permission
 - Use social media for non-classroom purposes
 - Create and/or post any web pages except for class requirements
 - Play computer-based games
 - Any conduct that embarrasses, harms, or in any way distracts from the good reputation of Sparta Area Schools
2. Sparta Area Schools have the right to view all material stored in files on the network and reserve the right to edit or delete all materials that it finds objectionable.
3. In consideration for the privilege of using the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection and in consideration for having access to the information contained on it, I hereby release the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection and its operators and sponsors, Sparta Area Schools and its faculty and staff, and all organizations, groups and institutions with which the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection is affiliated for any and all claims of any nature arising from my use, or inability to use, the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection.
4. My access to and use of the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection is subject to such limitations as may be established by the administrators of the system, and may be changed from time to time.
5. The staff of the Sparta Area Schools will be the sole arbiter of what constitutes unacceptable use or behavior as listed above.
6. I will not provide my full name, address, phone number, picture or any other personal information anywhere on the Internet.
The Internet connection is to be used for educational purposes only.

4.4.3 Computer Lab Acceptable Use Policy

The use of the Sparta Area Schools computers is a privilege for educational purposes only that may be revoked by the administrators of the system at any time for abusive conduct. Such conduct would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Disclose your password
- Physically abuse any hardware (case, keyboard, mouse, monitor, etc.) or lab furniture/equipment
- Login as anyone else for any reason
- Use another login with or without permission
- Access programs, files or any other information without permission
- Interfere with someone else's computer
- Install/remove any software
- Make illegal copies of any software owned by Sparta Area Schools
- Delete any files but your own
- Make any hardware changes (move mice, keyboards, cords, disconnect network connections, etc.) or alter any settings (desktop, screensaver, etc.)

4.5 Lockers

Lockers are the property of the school. They are assigned to students for their physical wellbeing and for the purpose of storing supplies, outdoor wear, and other items essential for the formal educational process. Periodic locker checks are designed for the purpose of ensuring school and pupil safety. **Do not keep money or valuables in your locker.** The school is not responsible for anything stolen from a locker. Do not give your locker combination to anyone. Keep your locker locked at all times. Students are not to change lockers without permission from the office. If your locker does not work properly, you should contact the office. Keep your locker clean and locked at all times.

4.6 Student Dress Code

It is the right of the school administration to interpret the stated dress code.

4.6.1 Philosophy

The Sparta Area School District recognizes and expects the major responsibility for the dress and grooming of all students shall rest with the parents and/or guardians. Dress regulations governing the attire of students shall be based upon the health, safety, education and general welfare of the students. The dress and grooming of students shall be neat, clean and moral.

4.6.2 Dress Code

The following, while not all-inclusive, are to be followed:

1. Appropriate footwear (slippers are not allowed) must be worn (State Law).
2. Clothing that is threatening and/or advertises or promotes alcohol, drugs or violence and clothing that is offensive because of sexual, racial, or ethnic references is considered offensive and not allowed. **Examples might include (but are not limited to) swastikas, confederate flags, images or brands of alcohol/tobacco/cannabis, etc.**
3. Shirt with fabric in the front, back, on the sides under the arms, and over the shoulder.
 - i. Must NOT be see-through.
 - ii. Must cover the midriff when arms are at the student's side.
4. Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses must be of an appropriate length and worn at the waist.
5. Underwear should not be visible at any time.
6. Some examples of inappropriate attire for school include swimwear, pajamas or nightwear, see-through or revealing garments, sunglasses, large baggy pants, etc.
7. All clothing must be free of rips, tears and holes that could be revealing of underwear (from the shoulders to the knees).
8. Hats and other headwear must allow the face and ears to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible to school staff.

4.7 Auditorium/Gym Usage

These areas are not available for use by students before or after school without teacher or coach supervision.

4.8 Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) Programs: Kent Career Technical Center (KCTC), Kent Transition Center (KTC), and Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP)

These programs are available to a limited number of students. Students wishing to attend one of these programs will be interviewed and the selections will be made by the counseling department. A student's grade point average, attendance and behavior are all a part of the criteria for admission. The school district provides transportation to and from the KISD. Busing is available on days that Sparta High School does not have school. Students are expected to attend classes at the ISD except on snow days. Students must ride the school buses to and from the KISD unless receiving prior permission. Riders must also obtain permission. Grades earned at KISD are entered at Sparta High School and are used to determine credit and GPA.

4.9 Dance Policy

Any school-sponsored group may put on a dance. The sponsoring group must fill out a dance form indicating that plans are complete for a successful party. Dances will only be scheduled for building use with written administrative approval. This slip must be in the office 10 days prior to the dance. Dance rules call for strict adherence to school policies. **Students must be in school all day to attend Friday dances. NO ONE SHALL BE PERMITTED TO RE-ENTER THE DANCE AFTER LEAVING IT.** The doors will be locked one hour after the start of the dance. Students wishing to bring guests from another high school **MUST** have a pre-approved guest pass or they will not be admitted. All guests must be 9th grade or above. Pre-arranged passes are available for students coming late due to work or school activities. **All dances end no later than 11:00 p.m.** Semi-Formal dances may be from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

4.10 Library Media Center

All students must have a pass and sign in and out at the front desk. The working environment should be a quiet one allowing research, school work and/or reading. There will be a \$5.00 fine for any student who removes or damages a bar code on a library book. There is a daily fine for overdue books. Student IDs will be required to check out any materials. Students having outstanding overdue items or fines will lose their Media Center privileges. An outstanding fine is defined as one that is more than 1 month old. Losing privileges means that the student may only come to the Media Center with a class and they may not check out any materials. Students demonstrating economic hardship will be allowed to work off the fine.

4.12 Student Announcements

Student announcements are published each day as a video by [Spartan News](#). Notices intended for the announcements should be emailed to the Spartan News email address by the sponsor by 7:30 a.m. on the day the notice is to be published. The purpose of the daily announcements is to inform the students of activities for the ensuing week and provide advance information for effective planning of such activities.

4.13 Bulletin Boards

All signs, announcements, posters, etc. put on the hall bulletin boards must first be approved by the administration.

4.14 Work Permits

Work permits are issued at the high school office between the hours of 8:00 and 3:00 p.m. Work permits can also be accessed via the [State of Michigan Labor and Economic Opportunities](#) website.

4.15 Student Deliveries Policy

Deliveries for students are strongly discouraged. If essential, deliveries should be brought outside of the main office. As time permits, students will be informed that a delivery has been made. Food deliveries must be cleared by administration in advance. The office will make every attempt to inform a student that some item has been delivered to the main office. Students may pick up deliveries after school.

4.16 Gambling

Gambling is not permitted on school grounds and is considered a disruptive behavior (see Student Code of Conduct).

4.17 Electronic Communication Devices and Filming/Shooting Video

Electronic communications devices (cell phones) may be used in the classroom only at the discretion of each classroom teacher. Outside of the classroom, use is permitted during a student's lunch, in the lunchroom, or passing time until the end of the school day. Video recording devices, including cellular and smart phones, are not to be used in bathrooms or locker rooms. The use of video recording devices or filming on school property is not permitted without approval by staff. Unauthorized filming of students without their consent is also not allowed. Cell phones, cameras, or recording devices should never be out during any type of assessment while in the classroom. If these rules are not adhered to, progressive discipline will follow the SHS Student Handbook. If necessary, SHS reserves the right to search students' phones in accordance with the search guidelines identified in section 4.18.

4.18 Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers and student cars under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Student lockers and desks are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school district; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic general inspections of lockers and desks may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, athletic bag, electronic devices) may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials or content. If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials such findings shall be turned over to proper legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

Sparta Area Schools makes parking available to students who are licensed drivers. This privilege is conditioned on students' consent, in advance, to the search of their vehicles by Sparta Area Schools personnel at any time, for any reason, with or without notice to the student.

4.18.1 Canine Detection

During the school year, canines will be used to search the campus to determine if there are any illegal or unauthorized items on campus. This may include all areas of campus and items on the campus, inside and outside the building. Student possessions may be inspected by the canines. A positive detection by a canine constitutes a reasonable suspicion that there is an illegal or unauthorized material present.

4.19 Testing for Drugs and Alcohol

The use of tests to determine the presence of Alcohol or drugs in a student's system is in accordance with Board policy. If a student refuses to submit to the test, disrupts the test, or attempts to falsify the test, they may be held accountable as if the test was positive.

4.20 Lost and Found

Items turned in will be kept in the office or in the designated 'lost and found' area at school. Items not claimed by the end of the school year will be disposed of or donated to charity.

4.21 Pets and Animals

Pets and animals should not be brought to school without prior arrangement with administration and only for school purposes. Assistance animals are an exception to this policy.

4.22 Student Fines

Student fines will be looked at twice a year and should be paid in a timely manner. If students owe money for fines, loss of privilege to attend the Homecoming dance or Prom or other school events may occur.

4.23 Academic Honesty Pledge

As a Sparta High School Spartan, I recognize that academic honesty applies to online school work, as well as in person. I will do my own work on class assignments and assessments. To avoid the consequences of cheating or plagiarism, I will follow the guidelines each teacher provides for what resources I can use on class assignments and assessments. When in doubt, I will contact my teacher with questions.

4.24 School Sponsored Clubs and Activities

SHS provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. A curricular-related activity may be for credit, required for a particular course, and/or contain school subject matter. A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's extracurricular participation. The Board authorizes many student groups that are sponsored by a staff member. Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the School curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

4.25 Non School-Sponsored Clubs and Activities

Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The applicant for permission can be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as prescribed by law is not permitted. All groups must comply with School rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

No non-district-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

4.26 Transportation to and from School

4.26.1 - Bus Transportation to School

The school provides transportation for all students who live farther than one mile from the school. Transportation schedules and routes are available by contacting Nicole Surprenant at 616-887-0136 x5206. Students may only ride assigned school buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the principal. The building principal may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the principal's approval of a note from the parent stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

4.26.2 Bus Conduct

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation. The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain that transportation safety. Students must comply with the following basic safety rules in accordance with Board Policy 5500 which [can be found on the District website](#)

- a) Previous to loading (on the road and at school) - each student shall:
 - i) be on time at the designated loading zone. (five (5) minutes prior to scheduled stop);
 - ii) stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the bus;
 - iii) line up single file off the roadway to enter;
 - iv) wait until the bus is completely stopped before moving forward to enter;
 - v) refrain from crossing a highway until the bus driver signals it is safe;
 - vi) go immediately to a seat and be seated.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the bus driver when their child will not be boarding the bus.

- a) During the trip each student shall:
 - i) remain seated while the bus is in motion;
 - ii) keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the bus at all times;
 - iii) not litter in the bus or throw anything from the bus;
 - iv) keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle;
 - v) be courteous to the driver and to other bus riders;
 - vi) not eat or play games, cards, etc.;
 - vii) not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.

The driver is in complete charge and must be obeyed

- a) Leaving the bus each student shall:
 - i) remain seated until the bus has stopped;
 - ii) cross the road, when necessary, at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus, but only after the driver signals that it is safe;
 - iii) be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver.
 - iv) The driver is not to discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless they have proper authorization from school officials.

4.26.3 Penalties for Infractions

A student who becomes a discipline problem on the bus shall be deprived of the privilege of riding on the bus. All parents are to be notified of this ruling. If a student is suspended from the bus, their parent(s) shall be required to furnish transportation to and from the school during the entire period of suspension.

5.0 SPARTAN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

5.1 Letter to Parents

Participation in sports is a privilege that provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in their personal development. A student who elects to participate in athletics is choosing to better themselves through self-discipline and commitment, and we are proud of every student-athlete who represents our school. Because we value the benefits of participation so greatly, we place conditions on athletic participation to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of athletes remains our first priority. This Athletic Code of Conduct exists to protect the values and benefits of participation for all participants, while ensuring that our parents, fans and community have teams they are proud to support.

It is the role of the Athletic Department to establish and maintain rules that govern the participation for the school district. Clear and consistent boundaries and rules need a broad basis of community support and is achieved only through communication to parents, coaches, and student-athletes. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic code.

When your son/daughter participates in athletics at Sparta Area Schools our staff will strive to provide your son/daughter with:

- Adequate equipment and facilities
- The best available, well-trained coaches
- Equalized contests with skilled officials
- Adequate supervised transportation
- A clear understanding of the rules and practices that govern athletic participation

Enjoy the experience of watching your child compete as a Spartan. Win, lose or draw, be proud of them for the effort and energy they have expended to become the greatest athlete, teammate and Spartan that they can be.

5.2 STUDENT-ATHLETE DEFINED

A student-athlete is considered to be a member of any interscholastic sports team. This includes, but is not limited to, participating athletes, team managers and student trainers.

5.3 Message to the Student-Athlete

As a student-athlete you are subject to the Athletic Code, the rules and regulations of the RCA Conference and the rules and regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). MHSAA guidelines can be found in the athletic director and principal's office or online at www.mhsaa.com. Your commitment to follow the rules as a student-athlete is essential for a successful athletic program.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and a responsibility—not a right. Being a member of a Sparta athletic team is a fulfillment of a childhood dream for many students. Your participation demands certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. As a member of an interscholastic team of Sparta High School, you will participate in the tradition, which requires a commitment from you to follow established rules. By participating in athletics to the greatest extent of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of our school. We base our success on the two areas below and we wish for all teams to thrive in both.

1. The process - what you can learn through athletics that can be used throughout life.
2. The product - the win/loss records of our teams. We field teams to compete and our goal is to achieve and to compete at our best possible level, in every contest.

5.4 RESPONSIBILITY

5.4.1 Responsibility to Yourself

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to derive the greatest benefit from your high school experiences, to live a healthy lifestyle, and to respect your health both physically and mentally at all times.

5.4.2 Responsibility to your Academic Studies

Your academic studies must remain your top priority. You are a student first and foremost.

5.4.3 Responsibility to Your School

Sparta Area Schools cannot maintain its position as an outstanding school district unless you do your best in the activity in which you engage and represent us well at all times.

5.4.4 Responsibility to your Community

The student body and citizens of our school district support your athletic experience. Other communities will judge our schools by your conduct and attitude both on and off the field. Represent the values of Sparta Area School by consistently demonstrating representing yourself and our school well.

5.4.5 Responsibility to Others

When you know in your heart that you have followed the Athletic Code, that you have practiced to the best of your ability every day, and that you have played the game "all out", you can be justly proud, win or lose, that you have gave your all to those who have provided you the opportunity to compete.

5.4.6 Responsibility to Younger Athletes

The younger students in the Sparta Area Schools are watching you. They know who you are and what you do. Make them proud. Be an example worth following by setting good examples for them.

5.5 Purpose of the Athletic Code

Through the establishment and enforcement of this Athletic Code, it is expected that all student-athletes will strive for and attain high standards of self-discipline in all areas of their life allowing them to reach their full potential as students and athletes. This Athletic Code is meant to be a useful, dynamic document to guide the athletic and educational process.

5.6 SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS PROGRAM

Sparta High School offers the following interscholastic sports to all students in grades 9-12:

5.6.1 High School GIRLS' SPORTS

Fall: Cheerleading, Cross Country, Volleyball, Football, Golf, Equestrian (club)
Winter: Bowling, Basketball, Competitive Cheer, Gymnastics (Co-op), Wrestling,
Spring: Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field, Rugby (club)

5.6.2 High School BOYS' SPORTS

Fall: Cheerleading, Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Tennis, Equestrian (club)
Winter: Basketball, Bowling, Wrestling, Hockey (Co-op)
Spring: Baseball, Track & Field, Golf, Rugby, (club), Volleyball (club)

5.6.3 Middle School Boys Sports

Fall: Cross Country, Football
Winter: Basketball, Wrestling
Spring: Track & Field, Tennis

5.6.4 Middle School Girls Sports

Fall: Volleyball, Cross Country, Football
Winter: Basketball, Wrestling, Cheerleading
Spring: Track & Field, Tennis

5.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Sparta High School is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex or handicap in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

5.8 PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Athletics are an integral part of the educational process of Sparta Area Schools. Therefore, it shall be referred to as a 'co-curricular'. Successful Athletic Programs encourage individual physical fitness, develop a knowledge and appreciation of sports, teach athletic skills and cultivate a competitive nature and good sportsmanship. To this end, the athletic program is designed to stress that:

- A. The student-athlete learns the value of teamwork, self-discipline, hard work and personal sacrifice, all of which are necessary attributes which prepare the student-athlete for future success. Great athletes learn that their contribution to the team is more important than their personal athletic goals or desires.
- B. The student-athlete learns in a positive manner to cope with the competitive nature of our society. The student-athlete learns the value of success by realizing that s/he will not always win but can succeed when they continually strive to improve.
- C. The student-athlete learns to be a good sport. Through participation in athletics, the student-athlete must develop emotional control, honesty and cooperativeness and learn to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- D. The student-athlete learns the importance of having a sound body. To better enjoy life, and to be a better citizen, one must develop good health habits and must maintain their physical fitness.
- E. The student-athlete will operate within the rules of their sport, the MHSAA's regulations (a copy of the MHSAA handbook is available in the Principal and Athletic Director's office and online at www.mhsaa.com), RCA Conference Rules and the SHS Athletic Handbook.
 - It is better to be safe than ineligible, therefore if you have any questions concerning eligibility, read these rules very carefully and be sure you understand them. If you have any questions, ask them of your Coach, Athletic Administrators or Principal before you endanger your high school eligibility rather than after!

5.9 OVERALL ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS

Research tells us that the most important reasons why students participate in athletics are:

1. Enjoyment (FUN!)
2. Participation (in practice and contests)

3. Personal improvement (skills of the sport and in performance)

Therefore, the primary goals of the Sparta High School Athletic Program are to:

- a. Offer students an enjoyable co-curricular experience;
- b. Provide the greatest opportunity possible for athletes to participate
- c. Promote personal improvement in skills, physical condition, performance and knowledge of the sport;
- d. Promote programs of excellence, which will accomplish the above, and lead to individual successes on and off the playing field.
- e. Promote competitive teams that value winning.

5.10 THE FOUR C'S

The 4 C's were developed to help develop character through sport. Beyond the basic skills taught in sports, it is our goal to develop the character of our youth through our athletic program. We know that less than 7% of high school athletes go on to play team sports at the collegiate level. Therefore, we understand that high school athletics provide a unique opportunity for the development of not only physical conditioning and athletic skill, but also the character traits essential for success in life. To that end we challenge every athlete to strive for the following:

5.10.1 Competence

The necessary level of knowledge and skill to sufficiently train and compete

- To develop the skills necessary to participate competently in the game.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the rules and conventions of the game.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the strategies of the game.
- To demonstrate a level of physical conditioning and fitness sufficient to participate competently in the game.
- To demonstrate knowledge of healthy behaviors including nutritional issues.
- To understand the necessity of abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in order to achieve the positive benefits of interscholastic athletics

5.10.2 Character

The pattern of beliefs, attitudes and therefore behavior that relates to moral strength, constitution and essential qualities that embrace the positive values of Sparta High School and the Community

- To be dependable in fulfilling obligations and commitments.
- To accept responsibility for consequences of actions and not to make excuses or blame others.
- To strive to excel.
- To be committed.
- To persevere, give 100% effort and not give up in the face of setbacks.
- To demonstrate truthfulness.
- To play by the rules of the game and not cheat.
- To control anger and frustration and refrain from displays of temper and bad language.
- To accept losing and winning graciously; to congratulate opponents, not sulk, or display other negative behaviors.

5.10.3 Civility

To demonstrate behavior that exemplifies appropriate respect and concern for others.

- To practice good manners on and off the field.
- To refrain from trash talk and other put-downs of opponents and teammates
- To treat all persons respectfully regardless of individual differences to show respect for legitimate authority (e.g. Coaches, Officials, Captains).
- To be fair and treat others as one wishes to be treated.
- To listen to and try to understand others.
- To be compassionate and sensitive to others.
- To actively support teammates and others.

5.10.4 Citizenship

Social responsibility as part of a 'community'

- To be faithful to the ideals of the game including sportsmanship.
- To keep commitments to the team.

- To show team spirit, encourage others and contribute to good morale.
- To put the good of the team ahead of personal gain.
- To work well with teammates to achieve team goals.
- To accept responsibility to set a good example for teammates, younger athletes, fans and school community.

5.11 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS

5.11.1 Forms

A student-athlete is not permitted to participate in interscholastic competition until the following items have been completed and are on file in the Athletic Office:

- A physical examination by a physician.
 - The physician and parent or guardian must sign the physical form. The physical form is available in the Athletic Office. The physical must be dated on or after April 15, in order to be valid for the upcoming school year.
- A Final Forms account must be created for each participant grades 6-12 and must be signed by both parent and student.
- Pay the activity fee by the appropriate date. The current high school fees are:
 - \$220 Family Cap
 - \$60 Family Cap (Reduced Lunch)
 - \$75 Individual
 - \$30 Individual (Reduced Lunch)
- The fee does not guarantee a player “playing time,” participating means being a member of the team.
- Signatures on all forms that acknowledge the athletic code has been received and read.

5.11.2 Injuries

- A certified athletic trainer, physician and/or qualified health care provider can prohibit any student-athlete who sustains an injury from returning to participation until evaluated and released.
- Any student-athlete that sustains an injury and has not been cleared to return to play by their PCP or other provider is prohibited from returning to participation until our athletic trainer has received either written or verbal communication from their care provider.
- Any student-athlete who has been attended to by a physician and has been denied participation must have written release from the physician in order to return to participation.
- A parental medical release or waiver is not acceptable for a return to participation following an injury.
- If any healthcare provider involved in the care of the student-athlete feels the student-athlete is unfit to participate, the certified athletic trainer will not allow the student/athlete to participate.
- If a student-athlete is restricted in any physical education class, that student-athlete may not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletic activities. The certified athletic trainer reserves the right to make exceptions to this rule.

5.11.3 Age

A student-athlete who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student-athlete whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year.

5.11.4 Semesters of Competition:

A student-athlete may not have more than four (4) first and four (4) second semester seasons of competition in a sport in four (4) years of high school.

5.11.5 Semester of Enrollment:

A student-athlete shall not compete in any branch of athletics who has been enrolled in grades 9th through 12th, inclusive, for more than eight semesters. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in

school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first semester) or the fourth Friday of February (second semester), or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contest, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule.

5.11.6 Undergraduate standing:

A student-athlete who is a graduate of a regular four-year high school or who is a graduate of a secondary school, which has the same requirements for graduation as a regular four-year high school, shall not be eligible for interscholastic athletics. However, a student-athlete who satisfactorily completes the required number of credits for graduation in less than eight semesters shall not be barred from interscholastic athletic competition, while passing at least twenty credit hours of undergraduate work, until the end of the eighth semester.

5.11.7 Amateur practices:

After representing Sparta Area Schools in competition in any sport, a student-athlete shall not be eligible to participate if that student-athlete receives money or other valuable consideration from any source for participating in athletics, sports or games or signs a professional contract.

5.11.8 Awards:

- A student-athlete may accept, for participation in athletics, a symbolic or merchandise award, which does not have a value or cost in excess of \$40.
- Awards for athletic participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates or any other type of negotiable documents are never allowed.
- Banquets, luncheons, dinners, non-competitive trips, and fees or admissions to be a spectator at events, if accepted in kind, are permitted.
- A student-athlete shall be ineligible under this regulation if she/he accepts awards in violation of its provision only in the following activities: baseball, basketball, competitive cheer, cross country, football, golf, ice hockey, soccer, girl's softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, girl's volleyball or wrestling.
- A student-athlete violating this regulation shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition for a period of not less than one full semester from the date of the student-athlete's last violation.

5.11.9 Limited team membership:

A student-athlete who, after practicing with or participating in an athletic contest or scrimmage as member of a Sparta Area School athletic team, participates in any athletic competition not sponsored by our school in the same sport during the same season, shall become ineligible for a minimum of the next three days of competition and a maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year.

A student-athlete shall not compete at any time in any MHSAA Tournament sport in any of the following events:

- a. Any event which is or purports to be an "All Star" contest, regardless of the method of selection;
 - b. "All Star" fundraising events or similar exhibitions if they involve contestants other than the student/athletes and faculty of our school
 - c. Any event that purports to be a national high school championship or the qualification thereto. Participation in such a contest by a student-athlete shall cause that student-athlete to become ineligible for all interscholastic athletics for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.
- A student-athlete may participate as an individual at any time without losing eligibility as a member of a National Team or Olympic Development Team.

5.11.10 Undue Influence:

The schools of the River Cities Alliance (RCA) have agreed to follow the rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) which apply equally to all public, charter, and nonpublic schools in the State of Michigan.

A recruiting/undue influence violation can occur if a person "directly or indirectly" associated with a student, parent, or the school encourages or secures the attendance of a student because of athletics. Recruiting is a

violation, whether to a middle school student entering 9th grade or a high school student transferring between schools.

To ensure that our schools follow these rules we resolve to educate our staff, coaches, student-athletes, parents, booster club representatives and anyone else “directly or indirectly” associated with our schools and athletic programs about these rules and our expectations at the beginning of each athletic season.

We will discourage any perception of involvement in the undue influence of a parent or student to attend our schools for athletic purposes. We will encourage anyone that is presented or confronted with a potential transfer situation to notify the person that they need to contact the administration in the high school and then notify the administration ourselves of this inquiry.

We strongly urge all those who support our schools to follow the spirit and letter of the rules when it comes to athletic recruiting and undue influence.

5.11.11 College Recruitment:

In the event a college recruiter contacts a student-athlete personally, the student-athlete has an obligation to notify his/her coach, counselor and athletic director of any such contact as soon as possible. The coach, counselor or athletic director will work with the student-athlete and his/her parents to make sure all recruiting rules are followed.

- NCAA Clearinghouse: Students who feel that they have the potential to compete at an NCAA Division I or Division II school must have both your academic and amateurism status certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. Registration should take place at the end of sophomore year or beginning of the junior year. More information can be found at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or in the high school guidance office.

5.12 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

At Sparta High School, there is a two-part eligibility requirement. Student-athletes must meet both to be eligible to compete. The first part is semester eligibility and the second is weekly eligibility. These eligibility regulations are above the minimum requirements of the MHSAA because we believe that student-athletes should be held to a high standard. Eligibility checks happen weekly to ensure our students are meeting academic requirements..

5.12.1 Weekly Eligibility

- Low-grade reports will be run every Monday by 10:00 am.
 - Eligibility checks will be completed on a weekly basis for all student-athletes starting on the first week of competition in each season.
 - If a Student-Athlete has below a 70% in two or more classes that student will be placed on an “Academic Warning” list. Students with an “Academic Warning” clearance in Final Forms are eligible to practice and compete. That student, as well as their parents and coaches, will be notified via Final Forms.
 - The first week a Student-Athlete has below a 60% in two or more classes they will be placed on “Academic Probation” for a one week period–Monday through Sunday. During that week, student-athletes failing more than two classes will be eligible to practice and compete. Students are only allowed one Academic Probation period per season. That student, as well as their parents and coaches will be notified via Final Forms.
 - If a student-athlete is below a 60% in two or more classes AND has already used their one-week probation period in that sport that season, that student will become immediately ineligible for competition and placed on Academic Suspension each week they are below a 60% in two or more classes. That student, as well as their parents and coaches will be notified via Final Forms.
- If a student feels there has been a mistake, s/he will be responsible for taking care of it with the teacher. If there is a change, then the teacher should contact the athletic office. Parents will also be notified once the list is complete.
 - Academic Warning | [Sport] | [Term] [Year]
Following academic eligibility checks on [Date] [student-athlete] is below 70% in two or more classes. Student-athletes below a 70% in two or more classes are eligible to practice and compete,

but should take immediate action to improve their grades in those classes to ensure they remain eligible this season.

- Academic Probation | [Sport] | [Term] [Year]
Following academic eligibility checks on [Date] [student-athlete] is below 60% in two or more classes. Student-Athletes below a 60% in two or more classes are allowed a one-week probationary period once per season to improve their grades while remaining eligible to compete. If [Student-Athlete] is still below a 60% in two or more classes on the next grade check on [date], they will be immediately ineligible for competition effective that date for one week. [Student-Athlete] should take immediate action to improve their grades in those classes to remain eligible this season.

- Academic Suspension | [Sport] | [Term] [Year]
Following academic eligibility checks on [Date] [student-athlete] is below 60% in two or more classes and has already used their one-week probationary period to improve their grades this season. Effective [Date] [Student-Athlete] is ineligible to compete for one-week [Date to Date]. [Student-Athlete] can regain their eligibility on [Date] if their grades improve and they are no longer below a 60% in two or more classes. [Student-Athlete] should take immediate action to improve their grades in those classes to regain their eligibility this season.

5.12.2 Semester Eligibility

For a student-athlete to be eligible for the semester, s/he must have 60% or better in four (4) of six (6) semester classes the preceding semester and pass FOCUS. If a student does not have 60% or better for a final grade in 4 out of 6 classes, the student-athlete will be ineligible for the following semester. If a student fails KCTC, they will be ineligible for the following semester.

5.13 ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

- a) A student-athlete must be present the full school day on the day of interscholastic competition in order to compete in that day's activities (i.e. practice, games, etc.) Only the principal, deans of students, athletic director or athletic director's secretary may grant exceptions (i.e. doctor appointment, funerals, family emergencies, etc.). Parents are responsible for alerting the attendance office of a scheduled absence ahead of the absence. A note from a health care provider is required for those athletes missing school for health reasons.
- b) If a student-athlete goes home sick, she/he will not be allowed to participate in practice or competition for that day.
- c) An athlete who is suspended from regular classroom attendance for four (4) class periods or longer (out-of-school suspensions) may not practice or take part in interscholastic competition during said suspension.
- d) Athletes must have excellent attendance in school. If absenteeism from class becomes a problem, the athletic director can deny the athlete the privilege of attending practice or games.
- e) Coaches may impose their own consequences for players missing practice or games.
- f) If the absence is inadvertently overlooked and the student-athlete participates in a contest, s/he must miss the next scheduled practice or contest.

5.14 EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

1. A student-athlete is financially responsible for all issued equipment.
2. Destroyed, lost, or stolen equipment must be paid for, or the student-athlete will:
 - Not be allowed to participate in the next sport he/she goes out for in high school.
 - Not receive their athletic award.
 - Seniors may not participate in graduation.
3. School issued warm-ups and/or jackets are to be worn for games and practices only. They are not to be worn as general clothing items to school. Game uniforms are to be worn for games only.
4. School issued uniform shirts; sweaters or traveling outfits may be worn to school on game days only or as directed by the coach. Only shirts that are appropriate school attire will be allowed.

5.15 TRANSPORTATION

1. It is required that all student-athletes travel (when applicable) with the team on school provided transportation. Exceptions may be granted by the principal, athletic director or his/her designee and will follow the Board of Education transportation policies and with written approval from parents/guardians.

2. If a student-athlete will not be returning with the team, the following steps must be taken:
 - a. Written approval of the coach or athletic director is obtained before or at the away contest.
 - b. Signed permission statement by a parent/guardian and returned to the coach.

5.16 DROPPING A SPORT

Once an athlete has become a member of a team, but wishes to drop the sport, the athlete must have a conference with the coach. A student-athlete cannot drop one sport and go out for another sport in the same season without both coaches' written approval. All changes must have the written approval of the athletic director. An athlete who has not followed these steps may not participate in another sport (practice, conditioning or open gyms) until the team's season is complete. Student-athletes who quit a sport in one season may be required to sit a portion of their next season of competition.

5.17 SUMMER DEAD PERIOD

The summer dead period is a period of seven consecutive calendar days after school is out in June and after a school's participation in MHSAA tournaments is completed. The week of the fourth of July will be the dead period for Sparta Area Schools. During the dead period, there is no involvement or contact by the school or coach with students in grades 7-12 in any sport. It is a zero coach-player period; at school or elsewhere. There are to be no school or coach conducted open gyms, conditioning or weight lifting programs on school premises or sponsored by the school or coach at other facilities. The Representative Council adopted the following to further clarify the intent of the summer dead period:

- The Summer Dead Period is intended to provide at least seven consecutive days when school coaches will have no contact with students in grades 7-12 of the school district in any manner related to any sport sponsored by that school. Unplanned, casual, normal community contact is permitted.
- It is intended that no sport-related involvement, including attendance at school sport-related fundraisers and functions, take place during the Summer Dead Period.
- It is intended that no sport activities occur on school premises during the Summer Dead Period that involve school coaches or are sponsored by the school or supported by the school.
- Because school personnel are prohibited from holding such activities, it is intended that no school facilities be planned for use by non-school groups or individuals for athletic purposes (including student-led practices or conditioning) during the Summer Dead Period.
- Following the intention and spirit of this regulation will involve the shutting down of athletics for these 7 days and not allowing non-school individuals or groups to do that which the school is prohibited from doing

5.18 PRE-SEASON DOWN TIME

The preseason down time is also a "pause in the action" that the MHSAA Representative Council adopted which prohibits open gyms (which in some schools has evolved into out-of-season practices) for a period of 6 to 14 days prior to the start of each season: From Aug. 1 to the start of fall sports practices, 14 calendar days before winter sports and from March 1 until the start of spring sports.

5.19 Space for future addition

5.20 PLAYING DUAL SPORTS IN THE SAME SEASON

In some instances, a student-athlete may play two sports in the same season. For this to happen, the following criteria must be met:

- Both coaches must agree
- A permission form must be filled out by the student, coaches and parents and signed by the athletic director prior to the start of the season.
- One of the two sports must be a varsity sport, and the varsity sport must be primary.
- The student-athlete must designate one sport as a primary sport if both are varsity sports.
- Sports must be compatible in some way as determined by the coaches and administration.

5.20.1 ACTIVITIES CONFLICT GUIDE

It is our belief that students can become well-rounded individuals through their participation in a variety of activities and events. It is understandable that students who participate in more than one activity or event may encounter conflicts. Administrators, teachers, coaches and activity sponsors will work together to help avoid conflicts when possible and resolve conflicts when and if they do occur. These guidelines are intended to address school related conflicts and are not intended to be applied to family or personal related conflicts. These guidelines have been formulated to:

- Reduce the possibility of these types of conflicts through calendar planning and scheduling;
- Increase communication between students, parents, teachers, coaches, and administrators so that conflicts can be avoided or resolved in amicable fashion;
- Employ common sense resolution strategies if unavoidable conflicts occur

5.20.2 Guidelines

In order to reduce the potential for conflicts to occur, and resolve conflicts as they occur, the following expectations and guidelines have been established:

- **Communication:** Coaches, teachers and activity sponsors will review the dates involving students for their activity so that conflicts will be identified at the earliest possible date. Coaches, teachers and activity sponsors are responsible for reviewing their schedules and dates with their students. Students are responsible for making their coaches, sponsors or teachers aware that a conflict exists.
- **Notification & Resolution:** When conflicts are identified, students will make the involved coaches, sponsors or teachers aware of each conflict at the earliest possible date, no later than two weeks (ten school days) prior the date in conflict. Coaches, sponsors and teachers will first attempt to assist the student in resolving the conflict without consequence to the student by employing one of the following solutions:

5.20.3 Performance/Competition vs. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act:

A performance or athletic contest always takes precedence over a practice, rehearsal or optional activity. The student will attend the performance/athletic contest. When possible, students will be allowed to leave the performance/athletic contest to attend the practice/rehearsal/optional activity once their responsibility to the performance/athletic contest has been completed.

5.20.4 Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act vs. Practice/Rehearsal/ Optional Act

Every attempt will be made by staff members involved to devise a schedule where the student can participate in both events if realistically possible. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Activities may also be restructured to permit dual participation. Scheduled Activity vs. Rescheduled/New Activity is an activity that has been entered on the activities calendar in the spring takes precedence over activities that have been rescheduled or added at a later date except in the case where an activity has been rescheduled (due to a conflict) to a date where no conflicts exist and another activity causing a conflict is added to that date. In this case, the first rescheduled activity takes precedence.

5.20.5 Performance/Athletic Contest vs. Performance/Athletic Contest

In the event that a performance or athletic contest conflicts with another performance or athletic contest and the conflict is unavoidable due to calendar, league schedules, tournament scheduling or "draws" or other restrictions out of our control, the teachers, coaches and/or sponsors will work with parent involvement to amicably resolve the conflict. If an amicable resolution cannot be found, the conflict will be mediated and resolved by the high school principal or his/her designee.

5.20.6 District/Regional/State/National Activity vs. "Regular" Activity

District, regional, state, and national performance/athletic activities take precedence over a regular school practice, rehearsal, performance or athletic contest. These types of conflicts are sometimes unavoidable due to tournament scheduling, draws and/or continued success (winning) by a team or activity. To ensure the best chances for continued success by a team or activity, the district, regional, state or national performance/athletic activity shall take precedence over other school related activities even though the other activity may have been scheduled first.

In the event that a student fails to make the involved coach, sponsor or teacher aware of a conflict at the earliest possible date, no later than two weeks (ten school days) prior to the date in conflict, the student will be subject to consequences as deemed appropriate by the involved coach, sponsor or teacher for the event that is missed.

5.21 ATHLETIC AWARDS

5.21.1 Varsity Letter

- a) One (1) varsity letter (8" block Blue "S") will be awarded to a student-athlete during his/her high school career.
- b) Insert pins will be awarded for any other letters earned.

- i. The first year a letter is earned, an insert pin symbolizing that sport will be given.
- ii. Each year afterwards that a letter is earned, an insert “bar” pin will be given.
- c) A student-athlete who has earned more than one (1) letter and desires a second letter will be allowed to purchase the same.
- d) Each head coach will determine the criteria for awarding a letter in their sport. These criteria must be explained to all student athletes at the beginning of each sports season. An athlete must complete the season as a member of the team in good standing in order to receive his/her award. An athlete under discipline at the end of the season who continues to practice as a faithful member of the team will be eligible for awards.

5.21.2 Freshmen Teams

All Freshmen will receive a certificate of participation and their graduation year numerals.

5.21.3 Sophomore (JV) Teams

All sophomores will receive a certificate of participation and their graduation year numerals (if they did not receive them as a freshman)

5.21.4 Senior Year

- An athlete who has not met the coach's criteria but has finished his/her senior season in good standing will receive his/her letter.
- An athlete who earns 4 Varsity letters in the same sport will receive the “Four-year letter-winner” plaque.
- Each sport will be allowed to present, at the expense of the school, three (3) awards to individual student-athletes. The individual awards given to the student-athletes will be a plaque.

5.21.5 MHSAA Guidelines

All awards must be given within the guidelines of the MHSAA.

5.21.6 Championship Awards

If a state championship is won, special consideration for awards will be given. White “S” will be given to members of Conference Championship teams.

5.22 CONDUCT AND VALUES OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE

The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The health, safety and welfare of the student, is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All athletes shall abide by a code of conduct, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law, tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the program and will not be tolerated.

The conduct of a student-athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that the student-athlete's behavior be above reproach in the following areas at all times:

- A. In the classroom, the student-athlete should work hard and have good study habits and good behavior. Detentions must be taken care of promptly. A student-athlete must notify each coach of a detention or other disciplinary consequence, which always takes precedence over practice or games.
- B. During competition, a student-athlete must always exhibit good sportsmanship. Use of profanity or illegal tactics is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Student-athletes are not to argue with or show disrespect toward officials, coaches, teammates, opponents or any adult personnel. Disciplinary actions may be left up to the discretion of the coach.
- C. On trips, student-athletes directly represent the community, school and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all athletes will dress in an acceptable manner when traveling and conduct themselves on the bus in a respectful manner.
- D. A student-athlete must respect school property and equipment at all times. If the student-athlete destroys, loses or steals equipment, s/he is taking from themselves, teammates and the school, entity or person that owns the equipment. Each student-athlete is financially responsible for destruction of equipment or loss of property. Student-athletes and parents will be notified by the coach within two-weeks upon the completion of the season, of any item

that is missing or that needs to be replaced due to loss or destruction. Student-athletes, who intentionally destroy or damage school property or equipment, are subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including loss of the privilege of participating in athletics, suspension or expulsion from school and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

- E. There will be occasions when there are conflicts of responsibilities. We will not excuse athletes from practice for routine conflicts, which, with prior planning, can be scheduled around practice sessions and contests. Academics are most important; however, every attempt must be made to arrange obligations so that conflicts do not exist.

5.23 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

All current student-athletes and potential student-athletes shall be considered under the jurisdiction of the athletic code, upon enrollment in the Sparta Area Schools. It is understood that the principal, designee or other administrator may suspend from athletics a student-athlete at any time when the student-athlete's conduct may have a detrimental effect upon the image of Sparta Area Schools.

- A. These regulations are in effect throughout the entire calendar year.
- B. When serving a team suspension, a student-athlete must attend all practice sessions and (unless excused) must be present (not in uniform) at all contests. The only exception to this rule would be if a student-athlete were suspended for the full season in one sport. The student-athlete would not be allowed to participate with the team.
- C. If a second consequence is imposed while a previous consequence is being served, the consequence for the second offense will not begin until the consequence for the first offense has been served.
- D. If a consequence is not completed during a given sports season, the portion not served will be carried over to the next sport that the student-athlete previously participated in. (This would apply to student-athletes who are sophomores, juniors or seniors).
- E. These offenses will accumulate throughout the athlete's high school career. Beginning with the third violation in any category, consequences may be applied under Category III consequences guidelines regardless of offense.
- F. If a student-athlete transfers into Sparta Area Schools while having a suspension from the school s/he is transferring from, that suspension will be upheld.
- G. If a student is suspended from athletics the following conditions may need to be completed to return to program:
 - i. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct
 - ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure as well as apologize to any offended party.
 - iii. The student-athlete must meet with a school counselor or administrator to determine if there are deeper issues, which need to be supported.
 - iv. Other conditions, as determined, after consultation with the administration based on the offense.

5.23.1 SELF-DISCLOSURE

An athlete who, by him/herself or together with his/her parent or legal guardian, voluntarily discloses his/her violation of the substance abuse policy under this Code prior to any reports, charges, or complaints shall be referred to a counselor, and will be required to complete or program as recommended by the counselor. However, loss of eligibility can be modified as hereinafter provided in this section. The specific provisions for self-disclosure, as stated above, are as follows:

- a. Self-disclosure, whether by the student alone, or together with a parent or legal guardian, may be made to a coach, or to the athletic director or principal of the school, which the athlete attends.
- b. Self-disclosure, where appropriate in accordance with this Code, shall affect only the appropriate penalty for the violation and shall not affect the status of the violation itself. Self-disclosure, which meets the requirements of this section, shall apply only to an athlete's first offense. Upon a first violation, where there is appropriate self-disclosure as defined above, the athlete or participant may be referred to a counselor and the counselor will recommend programs.
- c. Self-disclosure shall not modify the penalties or sanctions for second or subsequent violations. In a first violation situation where an athlete has, as a result of self-disclosure, received the reduced penalty under the provisions of this section, any failure by the athlete to comply with the required program arranged by the counselor or with any other recommendation of the counselor shall result in immediate termination of the reduced penalty status. The penalty for the original violation shall be the same as though there had been no self-disclosure.

In an effort to aid the athletic department in determining and applying appropriate and fair consequences for violations, the following three distinct categories have been created:

Category I – Conduct Unbecoming An Athlete (Minor Infractions)

Category II – Conduct Unbecoming An Athlete (Major Infractions)

Category III – Controlled Substances and Medication / Abusive/Threatening Actions

5.23.2 CATEGORY I - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE (Minor Infractions)

Conduct in and out of school shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, school or team. Some examples of misconduct in this area are, disrespect for authority, petty theft, aggressive behavior, profanity and abusing school property. This is not an all-inclusive list and the athletic director has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

5.23.3 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY I VIOLATIONS

A. First violation: May bring up to one contest date suspension.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct
- ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure as well as apologize to any offended party.

B. Second violation: May bring up to a maximum of 50% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

C. Third violation: May bring up to a maximum of one full season of competition. If the consequence imposed is 100% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

D. Fourth violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for 1 calendar year or any part thereof. This includes practice and competition.

5.23.4 CATEGORY II - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE (Major Infractions)

Conduct in and out of school shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, school or team. Any activity that is unlawful in nature other than substance abuse will fall into this category. Some examples in this category would be: theft, destruction of property, fighting causing injury to others, vandalism, inappropriate use of the internet, hazing and harassment. This is not an all-inclusive list and the athletic director has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

Sparta Area Schools' policy prohibits harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and hazing of students. This behavior disrupts the educational process and interferes with this District's commitment to provide a stable environment to its students. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others. The Sparta Area Schools, because of its desire to prevent and prohibit this behavior, adopts this policy and gives notice that it is wrong and will not be tolerated by this District.

a) Definition of Harassment:

- i. Submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District
- ii. Submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcome conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the School District
- iii. The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates and intimidating hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

b) Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- i. Verbal harassment or abuse
- ii. Pressure for sexual activity
- iii. Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
- iv. Unwelcome touching
- v. Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.
- vi. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance or public duties.

c) Examples of Bullying (please refer to page 13, 3.4.3 and/or SAS Board Policy 5517.01)

Intimidation of others by acts, such as but not limited to:

- i. Threatened or actual physical harm
- ii. Unwelcome physical contact
- iii. Threatening or taunting verbal, written, or electronic communications

- iv. Taking or extorting money or property
- v. Blocking or impeding student movement
- d) Definition of Hazing

Any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

 - i. Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs
 - ii. Physical punishment or infliction of pain
 - iii. Intentional humiliation or embarrassment
 - iv. Dangerous activity
 - v. Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress
 - vi. Forced detention or kidnapping
 - vii. Undressing or otherwise exposing initiates

Any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State Law M.C. L. A. 722.621 et. seq. If the school club organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.
- e) Reports of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing

The District encourages any student who believes he or she has been victim of harassment to report his/her concerns directly to any building principal or guidance counselor. Complaints or reports of harassment shall be handled as confidentially as possible. However, in certain circumstances, the District may be required by the Child Protection Law to report child sexual abuse to the Department of Social Services or other designated law enforcement agency. All reports or complaints will be promptly investigated by appropriate District representatives. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to corrective action, including suspension or expulsion. The District prohibits retaliation against students who file or make such complaints. Filing of a complaint will not reflect upon an individual's status nor will it affect a student's grades or work assignments. However, the District will take appropriate action if it finds that a student has deliberately filed a false complaint.
- f) Abusive/Threatening Actions
 - i. Extortion: To obtain from by coercion or intimidation.
 - ii. Fighting/Assault: Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.
 - iii. Aggressive Behavior
 - iv. Instigating: the verbal or physical act of urging, inciting, or encouraging another person to behave in such a way that violates Sparta High School's Student Code of Conduct.
 - v. Threats to Students
 - vi. Racism/Racial Insensitivity
 - vii. Physical Attacks or Threats to Staff Member
- g) Property and Facilities
 - i. Destruction of Property: Including both public and private property on school grounds or at school activities.
 - ii. Theft, Attempted Theft, and/or Possession of Stolen Property: This includes stolen property brought to Sparta High School.

Student Valuables: Sparta High School strongly recommends that students leave all valuables (including unnecessary amounts of cash, cell phones, iPods/mp3 players, phones, jewelry, etc.) at home. Sparta High School is not responsible if these types of items are lost or stolen.
- h) Inappropriate Practices and Behaviors
 - i. Insubordination: Refusal to follow reasonable requests made by school personnel, or showing disrespect to school personnel. Students are expected to cooperate with and give respect to staff at all times.
 - ii. Gross Insubordination: Any example of insubordination deemed excessive by administrative discretion.
 - iii. Disruptive Behavior: Any behavior that disrupts the learning environment or the normal functioning of the school.
 - iv. Major Disruptive Behavior: Any example of disruptive behavior deemed excessive by administrative discretion.
 - v. Disrespect to Staff: Behavior displaying or promoting disrespect to staff members.
 - vi. Possession and/or use of Tobacco Products: Students are not permitted to use or possess any type of tobacco on school property.
 - vii. Possession and/or use of lighters & matches.

5.23.5 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY II VIOLATIONS

- A. First violation: May bring up to a maximum of 25% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 25% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

- B. Second violation: May bring up to a maximum of 50% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.
- C. Third violation: May be all athletics or up to 1 calendar year or any part thereof. This includes practice and competition. a. It is recommended that the student be referred for assessment by a community agency or a professional individual outside the school.
- D. Fourth violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

5.23.6 CATEGORY III – Controlled Substances and Medication / Abusive / Threatening Actions

DRUG-FREE STATUS REQUIREMENT:

These and other demands placed upon you as a student athlete by the school and community make it essential that you exist in a drug-free environment. This status must be maintained year-round, in and out of season and on and off the fields of competition. We in no way concede that such rules end at the confines of our property or outside of our supervision or authority, nor shall we expect athletes to follow these standards during the competitive season and then give them any green light to partake in such behaviors out of season or during the summer. We are entrusted to educate and teach our youth and to maintain clear and consistent boundaries for them. Remember that the intent of this program regarding substance abuse is not punitive; it is preventive. It is designed to ensure that you remain drug-free and, in so doing, continue as a student athlete in your chosen sport at Sparta High School, continuing to benefit in the mental, social and physical health associated with the participation in organized athletics. We, as coaches, educators and administrators, recognize all the positive aspects of participation in athletics. But these benefits can truly only be realized in a drug-free environment. The many benefits of athletic participation would soon be diminished if we accepted the inclusion of drugs, alcohol and tobacco into our athletic programs. We cannot permit the use of these substances by a small minority of athletes to lessen the values of our athletic programs for the majority of athletes who are remaining drug-free and enjoying the full benefits of their participation. To reemphasize, a student-athlete shall not be in possession of, use, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of illicit controlled substances. The possession, use, sale, or distribution of substance abuse paraphernalia is also prohibited. Our message to student-athletes is loud and clear and should be understood by all ---NO USE!

Possession is defined as: The student becomes part of a situation where alcohol or drugs are illegally present or being used.

The use or possession of these types of drugs is strictly prohibited for our student athletes at all times. The associated nature of consequences for such violations shall be more severe than other violations as they constitute a greater degree of danger and legal and criminal action. – Simply stated, drug abuse is the consumption of any chemical substance or the smoking of some plant derivatives for the purpose of mood modification. The use or misuse of drugs is a social problem. Students with a strong sense of purpose have no need for mood modifiers. The rule against substance abuse is in effect all year, on and off of school property.

a) Controlled Substances and Medication

Self-Medication Policy: Students who are using prescription medication must have a statement from their doctor on file in the office. Medication must be in the prescription bottle. Students who take non-prescription medication must have a statement from the parent/guardian on file in the office. All medication must be kept in the office and will be dispensed according to their doctor's and or parent's instruction. Failure to comply with this policy could result in possession of a controlled substance.

Violations:

- i. Sale, Furnishing, Purchasing, or Exchange of Narcotics, Illegal Drugs, Prescription Drugs and/or Alcohol: Students shall not furnish/sell narcotics, illegal drugs, or alcohol. This includes all "look-alikes."
 - ii. Possession with Intent to Distribute
 - iii. Possession or use of Drugs and/or Alcohol: Students shall not possess or use narcotics, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, "look-a-likes" or any other related paraphernalia (i.e. rolling papers such as zig zags, pipes, etc.) on school grounds or at school activities. Students attending school activities under the influence of narcotics, illegal drugs, or alcohol will be suspended from the activity and shall forfeit the right to attend like activities for the balance of the school year in addition to disciplinary action.
 - iv. Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
 - v. Possession of Non-Prescription Medication
- ##### b) Abusive/Threatening Actions
- i. Extortion: To obtain from by coercion or intimidation.
 - ii. Fighting/Assault: Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.
 - iii. Aggressive Behavior

- iv. Instigating: the verbal or physical act of urging, inciting, or encouraging another person to behave in such a way that violates Sparta High School's Student Code of Conduct.
- v. Threats to Students
- vi. Racism/Racial Insensitivity
- vii. Physical Attacks or Threats to Staff Member

5.23.7 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY III VIOLATIONS

To provide for the safety and health of our student athletes, the following procedures, remedies and consequences are applied to any violation of your drug-free status with regard to the use of any ILLEGAL and PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS/SUPPLEMENTS violation.

- A. First violation: May bring up to a one calendar year suspension from all interscholastic sports.
- B. Second violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career. This includes practice and competition.
- C. Third violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career. This includes practice and competition.

5.23.8 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS AND RULE ENFORCEMENT

1. A report from a credible source of the alleged violation must be made to the athletic director, principal, dean of students or coach. (Anonymous sources will not be considered credible). Online content may be used as a source of information.
2. The appropriate personnel will convene a meeting with the student-athlete to determine whether a violation occurred.
3. Appropriate personnel will provide verbal notification to the student-athlete of the reported violation.
4. Further investigation through interviews with those who may be aware of violations first-hand, those who may have limited knowledge of the violations, or those who may be involved with such violations will be conducted.
5. Any and all allegations of violations of the student-athlete's drug-free status will be seriously addressed and investigated.
6. The approved and appropriate remedies and consequences for the type of violation will be applied and enforced.
7. The athletic director or his designee will attempt to notify parents verbally and in writing of the reported charge of the student-athlete's violation and possible consequences.
8. At the conclusion of the hearing, the student-athlete will be notified verbally and the parents in writing within five (5) days of the ruling.
9. The athletic director will notify the school's counseling department to assist the student with follow-up substance abuse counseling, if the situation warrants such action.

5.23.9 COOPERATION DURING INVESTIGATION

It is important for all student-athletes to understand that involvement in our athletic programs is a privilege. With the responsibility of being an athlete, come commitments, which are the conditions of this code of conduct. In the event that a student athlete comes under investigation for possible violations to the provisions of this code, it is expected that:

1. That the student-athlete be truthful.
2. That the student-athlete be forthcoming with information.
3. That the student-athlete not be deceptive or untruthful.
4. That the student-athlete be cooperative during the investigation of any student-athlete violation. The student-athlete must be truthful and forthcoming with information or the athletic director has within his/her power to impose a greater level of consequence if it is determined that the student-athlete has lied, been deceptive or untruthful prior to or after the determination of guilt and or consequences. Great weight must be placed on the privilege of representing our community outside the confines of our community and any student-athlete that would fail to be truthful and/or cooperative would jeopardize the perceived character of our programs. Failure to comply with the above conditions may result in full expulsion from the athletic program for the duration of the student-athlete's future career.

5.23.10 APPEALS PROCESS

- A. Declaration of Appeal

If the parents or legal guardian feel that equity has not been granted to their child, they may appeal the decision to the athletic director within 3 school days of verbal or written notification. Failure to comply with the time limit will result in automatic denial of the appeal.

B. Informal Discussion

After the written request has been submitted to the athletic director, there shall be an informal discussion by the person appealing a decision and the person who made the decision that is being appealed in an attempt to resolve the problem.

C. Informal Meeting

If the appeal is between a student-athlete and member of the coaching and administrative/professional staff other than the athletic director, the parties involved shall meet informally with the athletic director in an attempt to reach an agreement.

D. Formal Appeal

If a settlement cannot be reached informally, the appeal shall be filed with the chairperson of the Athletic Appeals Board. The Appeals Board will be made up of one:

- Female coach
- Male coach
- An administrator not involved in the earlier decision

E. Formal Hearing

- When possible, a hearing shall be conducted within 7 days of the receipt of the request. If the 7-day schedule cannot be met, the hearing shall be held at the earliest possible date thereafter.
- Both individuals involved in the appeal shall be present at the hearing to present their cases and to refute invalid information, which might be presented by the other party.
- After each party involved in the appeal has presented her/his case, members of the Appeals Board shall meet in private to render a decision.
- The parties involved shall receive, in writing, the decision of the Appeals Board within three (3) days of the completion of the review.

Note:

- The student-athlete may not participate in any interscholastic competition while the appeal is pending.
- If the appeal concerns a post-season tourney, it must be submitted within 1 day before the competition starts. All levels of appeal will be heard before the competition begins.

5.23.11 ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Each coach has the authority and responsibility, with the approval of the athletic director, to establish his/her own rules and regulations as they pertain to his/her sport. No team rule however, may have as a consequence, one that will be in greater degree than what is allowed in these rules and regulations. All team rules must be in writing and clearly communicated to each team member and his/her parent(s) at the beginning of the season. Coaches have the right to dismiss participants for conduct considered detrimental to the team. To assure that such decisions by individual coaches are reasonably just and fair, any decision can be appealed.

5.23.12 UPDATES AND CHANGES

The most up to date version of the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct can be found at <https://www.spartaschools.org/about/departments/administration/handbooks/> for both high school and middle school students. Student-Athletes are held accountable to the most recent version of their school's Student Handbook and Athletic Code of Conduct.

6.0 Sparta Internet/Technology Responsible Use

6.1 Technology Responsible Use Policy

The use of the Sparta Area Schools technology is a privilege for educational purposes only that may be revoked by the administrators of the system at any time for abusive conduct. Such conduct would include but not be limited to the following:

- Disclose your password

- Abuse or misuse of hardware
- Change any computer settings without permission, i.e., wallpaper, desktop
- Login as anyone else for any reason
- Use another login with or without permission
- Install/remove any software
- Make illegal copies of any software owned by Sparta Area Schools
- Delete any files but your own
- Altering hardware settings
- Unauthorized use
- Violation of Board Policies 5500 (Student Conduct), 5513 (Care of District Property), 5517 (Harassment of students) and 5517.01 (Bullying and other aggressive behavior toward students)
- USE OF PERSONAL HOTSPOTS IN SCHOOL ARE PROHIBITED.

6.2 Internet Registration Policy

Sparta Area Schools complies with all CIPA (Children’s Internet Protection Act) requirements. Recognizing that no filtering software is foolproof, students are required to monitor their own activities and comply with the following:

1. The use of the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection is a privilege for educational purposes only that may be revoked by the administrators of the system at any time for abusive conduct. Such conduct would include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Download/install any program or file onto a hard drive or network drive without permission
 - View, download, e-mail any pornographic, objectionable or questionable material
 - Send inappropriate electronic messages
 - Create and/or post any web pages except for class requirements
 - Unauthorized use of software
 - Violation of Board Policies 5500 (Student Conduct), 5513 (Care of District Property), 5517 (Harassment of students) and 5517.01 (Bullying and other aggressive behavior toward students)
 - Any conduct that embarrasses, harms, or in any way distracts from the good reputation of Sparta Area Schools
2. Sparta Area Schools have the right to view all material stored in files on the network and reserve the right to edit or delete all materials that it finds objectionable.

3. In consideration for the privilege of using the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection and in consideration for having access to the information contained on it, I hereby release the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection and its operators and sponsors, Sparta Area Schools and its faculty and staff, and all organizations, groups and institutions with which the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection

is affiliated for any and all claims of any nature arising from my use, or inability to use, the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection.

4. My access to and use of the Sparta Area Schools Internet connection is subject to such limitations as may be established by the administrators of the system, and may be changed from time to time. Students may not use a full name at any time in website material.
5. See Appendix F at the end of the handbook for AUP for students who are Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).

7.0 Overview and Purpose of School Safety Webpage

The safety and welfare of the members of our school community is and always will be a priority of Sparta Area Schools. In general terms, to feel **safe** is a basic need of humans. If the basic needs of a person are not met, the evidence is clear; they will likely not perform optimally.

In recent years there have been several tragic and horrific acts of violence involving school communities. These random and senseless acts have received tremendous amounts of media coverage. As the awareness and need for school safety increase, so does the value of communicating what districts are doing to address school safety in their local educational community. The information presented in this web-page is designed to provide the members of the Sparta School Community an overview of key components in the District's comprehensive School Emergency and Safety Plans.

Sparta Area Schools Emergency Drill Reports

Michigan's PA12 of 2014 *requires each school district to report its annual emergency drill schedule no later than September 15th to the Kent County Sheriff's Department Emergency Management Division, which is required to notify local police/fire agencies within the boundaries of the district. Districts are required to document the completion of scheduled drills within 30 days and post notification of completed drills on the school's website. The reports are to be maintained on the district site for three years.*

Prior to the start of the school year, Sparta Area Schools submits their annual schedule of safety drills to the Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator and the local Police and Fire agencies, as required. This has been common practice for many years. Documentation of Sparta Area School's emergency drill reports are posted on a website specifically developed by Kent Intermediate School District for schools in Kent County. Administrative personnel in each building are designated to update the reports after completion of each emergency drill.

Open the hyperlink [all schools](#) to view a complete listing of emergency drills conducted at each building in Sparta Area Schools during the **2025-2026** school year. Each building's completed scheduled drills are represented on separate pages, and buildings are listed in alphabetical order within the report. Viewers must use the scroll bar to view individual building reports. If you have any questions about the reports, please contact Joel Stoner, Superintendent, at joel.stoner@spartaschools.org

Required Information for Annual School Emergency Drill Schedule Reports

(School Emergency Drill Reporting Citation: PA207, PA 337, PA 12 of 2014 and MCL 29.19)

1. School
2. School Year
3. Type of Drill:
 - a. Fire: 5 required
 - b. Tornado: 2 required
 - c. Lockdown: 3 required

4. Date and time(s) of drill (note WECC and BAC conduct multiple drills in one day)
5. Acknowledgement of principal, program director or designee conducting the drill

SAS District Safety Teams

The District's Emergency and School Safety Plan include several building and district-level teams. Each team is strategically organized based upon recommended practices from national, state and local school safety authorities. Each group plays a significant role in the district's approach to safety preparedness including activities associated with: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery, or simply put, school safety activities before, during, and after an incident. Below is a partial list of School Safety Teams in Sparta Area Schools with a brief description of their roles and memberships.

Core Crisis Response Team

The Core Crisis Team is the primary school safety organizational team in the district. The team develops plans, and establishes protocols and procedures, organizes programs and services, provides information and support, receives ongoing training and updates and generally oversees the school safety activities in the district. The Core Crisis Team has scheduled monthly meetings, yet may be called upon to meet as necessary. Membership Include:

- District and Building Administrators
- District Program Coordinators and Directors
- Counselors and Social Workers
- Designated Maintenance Staff
- School Nurse
- Local Police and Fire Personnel

MERT (Medical Emergency Response Team)

The Medical Emergency Response Teams provide support for medically related issues and emergencies which occur in the school community. MERT members are often called upon to assist with medical incidents in the school setting. They act as *first responders* for medical support until the school nurse, local EMT or licensed medical provider arrive at the scene. The team members are certified in CPR, AED, Basic First Aid (including Asthma Inhaler Administration, EpiPen Administration, Monitoring and Managing Diabetes and Seizure Management), Crisis Prevention Institute (a nationally recognized training in de-escalation, seclusion and restraint practices) and receive training in general school safety practices annually. Each building has a designated Medical Emergency Response Team. Membership Include:

- Designated Building Office Staff
- School Nurse
- Administrators
- Designated Teachers
- Designated Support Staff
- Supervisors and Coordinators
- Itinerant Staff

Core Response Team

The membership of the Core Response Team is primarily school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists. The function of the team is to provide social and emotional support during and after the occurrence of a crisis incident in the school community. The Response Team members are trained professionals who help members of the school community with coping, managing and effectively navigating personal or group crisis events. Team members are often made available to students, families, staff and sometimes other schools after a loss or tragedy. They are also called upon to help instruct and guide appropriate interactions among students, teachers and colleagues experiencing a personal loss or a tragic event. Depending upon the magnitude of the event, one or more Core Response Team members may be requested to provide support services. Members Include:

- Counselors
- Social Workers
- School Psychologists
- Assistant Superintendent

Core Response Leadership Team

The function of the Core Response Leadership Team is to provide district-level leadership for all emergency and safety incidents in the Sparta Educational Community. The team provides orchestration, collaboration and communication in and between local,

county, and state law enforcement & health officials, the members of our school community and media outlets as warranted by incident.

Membership Includes:

- Chief Administrative Officials in District
- Designated Technology and Operations Personnel
- Local, County and State Law Enforcement and Emergency Management Agencies
- Local, County and State Community Health Agencies Health

Sparta Area Schools Emergency and Safety Plans, Protocols and Procedures

Each day our school district is entrusted to provide a safe, caring and orderly learning environment for over 2,600 students. The welfare and safety of our students and staff is top priority in Sparta Area Schools. We recognize schools play a significant role in taking proactive measures to prevent school safety incidents, and/ or reducing the impact of emergencies within our educational community. Therefore, we believe it is valuable for all members of our school community to know that our school system has well-crafted emergency and safety management plans which are specifically designed to keep students and staff safe from threats and hazards.

Our district plans are based on current principles of emergency management for schools. Our emergency and safety response protocols and procedures are continually refined and updated in collaboration with local, state and federal school emergency management authorities. The responsibility for emergency and safety planning primarily comes from District Administration and the District Core Crisis Team under the direction and governance of State, Federal and County agencies, related laws, and the local Board of Education Policies and Administrative Guidelines. Below are highlights of Sparta Area Schools Emergency and Safety Response Plans.

School Safety Response Guides: *a flipbook located in every classroom that contains recommended safety protocols during school emergency situations in a school setting.*

Classroom Safety Folders: *a designated folder in every classroom that contains general and individual classroom information, and basic materials and resources used in school safety and emergency incidents.*

Evacuation Maps: *individualized evacuation maps which are located in every classroom.*

School Safety / Welfare pages on the District website:

- a) Nurse's Corner: *contains guidance and useful information regarding individual health and wellness, state immunization requirements, and an overview of the district's Reproductive Health program.*
- b) District School Safety: *contains information about our district's emergency and safety management plans, and helpful safety and wellness resources for parents and families.*

Off-Site School Safety Portal: *allows designated personnel off-site access to current student and school information/records.*

School Site Surveys: A series of documents on file with the Kent County Office of Emergency Management that provide local, county and state law and health official's access to important contact and school site information for emergency management.

Cardiac Emergency Response Plan: written protocols for cardiac emergencies located in the Nurse Offices and AED Cabinets in each building.

District-wide Professional Development: initial and/or annual school safety and emergency professional training for all SAS personnel. Examples include Blood borne Pathogens, Bullying, Concussions, Confidentiality (HIPAA/FERPA), and MIOSHA Hazardous Material Management.

Resources and Information for Members of the School Community

Overview of Purpose

The purpose is to provide parents and guardians of students in Sparta Area Schools access to resources and information regarding safety and health in a school community. Information contained in this section is organized in a series of digital documents which can be accessed by opening the files under the Resources and Information heading on the left side of the screen. The resources and information will likely change over time. Updates will be based upon information and resources provided by state and county health and school safety officials, and the needs within our local school community. Additional health information is located in the Nurse's Information section of the district's website: <http://www.spartaschools.org/departments/nurseinformation/>
For additional information regarding school Health and School Safety, please contact:

*School Nurse, Ally Kopkau: ally.kopkau@spartaschools.org

*District Chair of the Core Crisis Team, Brad Wood, brad.wood@spartaschools.org

Appendix A: General Procedures

Tardy/Absence Procedure

Attendance is vital to the success of your son or daughter. Students shall be present for 90% of scheduled classes in each course to earn credit, if all other course objectives are met. Please use the following procedures to make sure their attendance is in order.

1. If your student will be absent from school, please do one of the following:
 - a. Call the attendance line (24/7) at 887-1741 and leave a message excusing them
 - b. Have them bring in a note excusing them signed by the parent
 - c. Call the attendance secretary at 887-8213 and speak with her to excuse them
 - d. Email veronica.rollston@spartaschools.org with the excused absence information
2. If the absence is resulting from an appointment with the dentist, orthodontist, doctor, etc. please bring a slip to mark the absence as medical. This makes it so the absence does not count against your student's absence allotment.
3. When arriving late you must:
 - a. Sign in at the attendance desk
 - b. Receive a pass from the office
 - c. Report to class promptly once the pass has been given to you
4. Students absent from school may not be able to participate in athletic events that day. Please see the student handbook section 5.13 or call the athletic office at 887-2098.
5. Any unexcused absences may result in administrative accountability.
6. More than four tardies in a class will result in a half hour detention and progressive accountability with repeated offenses.

Student Pick Up Procedure

From time to time, you will need to pick up your student from school. Please follow the procedure below to ensure their safety at all times.

1. If students are leaving for an appointment, please have them pick up a pass to leave class at the prearranged time in the morning from the attendance secretary.
2. Before the student leaves the building, the parent must call the school from the parking lot in order to remotely sign the student out with the attendance secretary.
3. Students may not leave the school for any reason with a person not on that student's emergency contact list.

Prearranged Absence Procedure

If your student knows in advance that they will be missing school for a vacation, college visit, or other acceptable reasons, please follow the procedure below:

1. Pick up a prearranged absence slip in the office
2. Have your teachers sign the slip if you will be missing their class.
3. Return the slip to the attendance secretary in the main office
4. Please see the student handbook section 2.6 for more information.

Time Makeup Procedure

If your student owes time from excessive absences, unexcused absences, or detentions, their time owed can be made up in the following manner:

1. Students owing time will be notified in writing by the office. The student will need to meet with the Attendance Review Committee to determine appropriate accountability.

Appendix B: Unauthorized Access to the Building/Pranks

Students are reminded that any unauthorized access to the building can be considered trespassing. Any unauthorized use or trespassing shall be subject to disciplinary action including detention, suspension or expulsion with the possible notification of authorities. Any students involved in pranks, destruction of school property, vandalism, or behavior detrimental to facilities or grounds are subject to suspension or expulsion with notification of authorities. Seniors planning, communicating about, or participating in behavior detrimental to school facilities or environment may also jeopardize participation in Prom and/or commencement and/or other graduation activities. Students are also reminded that

pulling on locked doors for the purpose of gaining access to facilities is considered unauthorized access and will be subject to detention or suspension. If damage occurs students will be held accountable for the cost of repairs.

Appendix C: Promotion, Placement, AND Retention

The Board of Education recognizes that the personal, social, physical, and educational growth of children will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

A student will be promoted to the succeeding grade level when s/he has in the opinion of the professional staff, achieved the instructional objectives set for the present grade, and demonstrated the degree of social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade. The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines for promotion, placement, and retention of students which ensure students who are falling seriously behind their peers or who may not be promoted receive the special assistance they may need to achieve the academic outcomes of the District's core curriculum.

M.C.L.A. 380.132(4)(d), 380.248(d) Optimal school achievement is obtained when students experience success in their daily activities and build upon successful experiences as they encounter new learning situations. All aspects of the student must be considered as grade placements are made.

DEFINITIONS

- **Promotion:** Occurs when a student is doing the caliber of work (grade level) that indicates the student has met the criteria established in Policy [5410](#).
- **Placement:** Occurs when a student is not doing the caliber of work that indicates the student should be promoted to the next grade. However, the teacher recommends and the building administrator concurs, that it is in the student's best interest to move to the next grade.
- **Retention:** Occurs when a student is not doing the caliber of work that indicates the student should be promoted to the next grade, based on the recommendation of the teacher with the concurrence of the building administrator.

At the high school level, students may be placed into five programs to help them best achieve their educational outcomes.

1. Sparta High School
2. Career Academy A.M. (CAD AM)
3. Career Academy P.M. (CAD PM)
4. MySchools (KISD)
5. SuccessLink (KISD)

The principal at Sparta High School has the final right of placement for all students. We want to work with parents and students to find the correct program to meet their needs, but in the end, it is the right of the building principal to make the final decisions on student promotion, placement and/or retention.

Appendix D: Weapons and Criminal Acts

As of December 1995, the Schools Legislative Requirements were revised to read that school districts are required to expel students who possess a dangerous weapon in a weapon free school zone or commit arson or criminal sexual misconduct in a building or on school grounds. The State Law also requires the school districts to expel students who bring a weapon to school for not less than one year. (See Policy 5772 for more details). Amendments to the state law require districts to consider seven factors before expelling or suspending a student for more than 10 days for any of the following behaviors:

- Student in grade 6 or above who commits physical assault against another pupil.
- Any student who brings a dangerous weapon on school property, commits arson or criminal sexual conduct.
- Student in grade 6 or above who commits physical or verbal assault against an employee, volunteer, or contractor or makes a bomb threat

Except for possession of a firearm, the following seven factors will be considered prior to expelling or suspending a student for more than 10 days:

- Student's age
- Disciplinary history
- Disability
- Seriousness of behavior
- Whether behavior posed safety risk
- Restorative practices
- Whether lesser interventions would address behavior

Restorative practices may be considered in addressing student behaviors at the high school. These are practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by a pupil's misconduct. Restorative practices may include:

- Victim-Offender conference
- Apology
- Community service
- Counseling
- Restitution

Appendix E: Expectations of Student Conduct

Board Policy 5500 describes Sparta Area Schools' expectations for student conduct as follows:

"Respect for law and for those persons in authority shall be expected of all students. This includes conformity to school rules as well as general provisions of law regarding minors. Respect for the rights of others, consideration of their privileges, and cooperative citizenship shall also be expected of all members of the school community.

Respect for real and personal property; pride in one's work; achievement within the range of one's ability; and exemplary personal standards of courtesy, decency, and honesty should be maintained in the schools of this District."

Board Policy 5600 describes Student Discipline as follows:

"...the best discipline is self-imposed and that students should learn to assume responsibility for their own behavior and the consequences of their actions." This policy further states that students are required to follow rules and submit to disciplinary measures assigned for infraction of those rules.

Policy 5600 states school rules shall require that students:

- Conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior
- Respect the person and property of others
- Preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged
- Respect the rights of others
- Obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority

Appendix F: BYOD Acceptable Use Policy

SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS BRING YOUR OWN TECHNOLOGY (BYOT) AUP

The district recognizes the importance of technology and the educational benefits available with technology. The use of portable electronic devices in the classroom can add educational value when such devices deliver content and extend, enhance or reinforce the student learning process. Classroom teachers determine the appropriateness of in-class use of electronic devices, consistent with district instructional objectives, and with approval of the building principal.

All personal electronic devices must be used in a responsible and legal manner. Students using their own devices are subject to the District Acceptable Use Policy and guidelines, all other Board policies and procedures, including but not limited to the student code of conduct. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in the revocation of the privilege to use personal electronic devices in the classroom and/or disciplinary action as appropriate.

The following personal electronic devices are approved:

1. Laptop computers
2. Tablet PCs
3. iPads
4. E-readers

Students at the high school level are permitted to use approved personal electronic devices for educational purposes under the direction of a classroom teacher.

Violations of any board policies, regulations, or school rules involving a student's personal electronic device may result in the loss of use of the device in school and/or disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to inspect a student's personal electronic device if there is reason to believe that the student has violated board policies, regulations, school rules or has engaged in other misconduct while using their personal electronic device. Any search will be conducted in compliance with board policies.

The use of an approved personal electronic device is a privilege, and students may be denied access at any time. Students wishing to participate in the Bring your Own Technology program must comply with the following guidelines and procedures. Students:

1. Must abide by the District Acceptable Use Policy and Regulations, and are subject to all student code of conduct restrictions and disciplinary consequences relating to use or misuse of technology.
2. Are responsible for ensuring the safety of their own personal devices. The District is not responsible for the loss or theft of a device, nor are they responsible for any damage done to the device while at school.
3. Will use approved devices only for an educational purpose, and only when directed by a classroom teacher or administrator.
4. Must keep devices turned off or closed and away when not directed to use them.
5. May not use the camera feature to capture, record, or transmit audio, video or still photos of other students, faculty, or staff without explicit permission given by the subject of the photo or video.
6. Are not to use the device in a manner that is disruptive to the educational environment.
7. Exhibiting harassing, intimidating behavior or found bullying with a personal electronic device are subject to discipline under the District Hazing and Bullying policy and procedures.
8. Are responsible for servicing their personal electronic devices. The District will not service, repair or maintain any non-district owned technology brought to, and used at school by students.

Student Signature _____ Parent Signature _____

Appendix G: Control of Communicable Disease and Pests

[Board Policy 8450](#) describes Sparta Area Schools' procedure for controlling communicable, non-communicable diseases and pets. Board Policies can be found on the District website.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PARENTS FROM THE KENT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Kent County Health Department is working directly with Sparta Area Schools to make Kent County a healthier place to live. The State of Michigan requires schools to report the possible occurrence of any communicable disease to the local public health department on a weekly basis (Public Act 368 of 1978). To assist the school in reporting possible communicable diseases to the Health Department and prevent the spread of illness, please be as specific as possible when reporting your child's absence. When calling in for a child, please include a description of the symptoms of the illness (vomiting, diarrhea, fever, rash, etc.) and report the type of disease (if known) and who diagnosed the illness. Please inform the school if any suspected illness is later confirmed by a physician. Your cooperation with Sparta Area Schools and Kent County Health Department is greatly appreciated.

Appendix H: Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard

The Board of Education is concerned for the safety of the students and staff members and will attempt to comply with all Federal and State statutes and regulations to protect them from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. The Board's full preparedness policy, [Board Policy 8431](#), can be found on the District website.

Appendix I: Annual Notices

All annual notices for Sparta Area Schools can be found on the District's webpage at www.spartaschools.org