



2024-25

Pine Springs

PREPARATORY VIRTUAL ACADEMY
POWERED BY K12

Parent & Student Handbook

This handbook sets forth general guidance for parents and students enrolled in Pine Springs Preparatory Virtual Academy (PSPVA). PSPVA is an approved State Board of Education public charter school and is subject to the rules and regulations established for North Carolina public charter schools. A printed copy of this handbook will be available upon request from the PSPVA Administrative Office.

Address:

300 South Main Street, Suite 212
Holly Springs, NC 27540

Website:

<https://pspva.k12.com/>

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Note: A signature contained in the Appendix of this document is legally binding and indicates that the signatory has carefully read the terms and conditions and understands its significance.

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is both a source of information for parents and students as well as a guide to Pine Spring Preparatory Virtual Academy’s (PSPVA) expectations of its families. The Handbook is written from the perspective that PSPVA is a community, indeed, a “family,” where all involved -- the students, their families, the faculty, staff, Board of Directors and stakeholders give of their time, talent or resources -- work together to create a warm, but challenging virtual learning environment.

MISSION STATEMENT

Pine Springs Preparatory Virtual Academy is dedicated to improving the lives of its students by providing authentic learning experiences in a collaborative, nurturing environment that will build a foundation for students’ success in school, career, and in life.

PSPVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PSPVA is an affiliate organization of Pine Springs Preparatory Academy which is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board of Directors provides oversight to ensure the school is achieving its mission, creates and follows board policies, oversees the strategic plan for the school, and approves and follows the annual budget.

Meeting Schedule

The board meets monthly, and the meeting schedule is posted on the Pine Springs Preparatory Academy website <https://pinespringsprep.org>. Board meetings follow NC Open Meetings Law.

Requests to Address the Board

In order that the board may fairly and adequately discharge its overall responsibility, our brick-and-mortar affiliate, Pine Springs Preparatory Academy provides the opportunity for members of the public to address the Board of Directors during their public meetings.

- Those who wish to provide public comment must sign up prior to the meeting beginning. While the board chair will establish the rules for public comment, as a general rule, for meetings held in- person, public comment sign-up will end 5 minutes before the meeting is called to order. For remote meetings, public comment sign-up will end 30 minutes before the meeting is called to order. For "Special" meetings, public comment will only be offered on topics that are specific to the special meeting agenda.

- Public comment is offered at the beginning of board meetings, and those wishing to make a public comment must be present at the time that the public comment portion of the agenda is being offered.
- The Board reserves the right to establish a time limit or halt public comment at any time.

Public comments shall not interfere with the board's duty to conduct orderly and efficient meetings. Individuals who address the board shall not use language that is obscene, vulgar, contains fighting words or otherwise disrupts the orderly conduct of business. Discussions regarding employees, litigation, student records or other potentially confidential matters may not be discussed during the public comment session.

Persons who willfully interrupt, disrupt or cause disturbances at official meetings of the Board may be directed to leave by the board chair. The board chair shall determine whether matters of discussion are inconsistent with these restrictions or other requirements for public comment, and may rule the speaker out of order, if necessary. Disruptions by any person or persons of a public meeting shall be subject to action in accordance with [G.S. 143-318.17](#).

Board of Directors 2024-2025

- Erin Fisher, Board Chair
- Jamie McDonald, Vice Chair
- Sean Coleman, Secretary
- Gregg Sindors, Treasurer
- David Machado
- Julia McCombs
- Fay Gore
- Josh Prizer

Compliance with Applicable Laws

The School shall comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to such laws and regulations governing employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records. The School shall comply with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations, whether federal, state or local. Neither the State Board of Education nor the local board of education assumes the duty to oversee the operations of the School except as may otherwise be required to monitor the charter School for compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

STUDENT AND PARENT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

To accomplish our mission, PSPVA requires the support and cooperation of the parents and guardians of our students. PSPVA has the following expectations of its students, parents, and families.

As a PSPVA student, I will

1. Follow all school rules and expectations.
2. Treat others the way I would like to be treated.
3. Complete assignments as assigned to the best of my ability.
4. Show pride of place and respect all school property.
5. Exemplify the Core Values of PSPVA “PIONEERS” becoming a great American Citizen.



“Creating Great American Citizens”

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|
| P | I | O | N | E | E | R | S |
| Prepared to lead the world | Informed on current events | On the path of excellence | Navigating our historical roots | Exploring future opportunities | Engaged in the community around us | Responsible to create a just society | Sharing goodwill with others |

On my honor, I pledge that I will abide by the terms and conditions of PSPVA’s Honor Code.

As a parent/guardian of a PSPVA student, I agree:

- To support the PSPVA Honor Code expectations.
- To exemplify the Core Values of PSPVA “PIONEERS” by modeling what it means to be a great American Citizen for my student(s).
- To supervise my child’s schoolwork habits and see to it that assignments are completed to the best of their ability, neatly, and on time.
- Take good care of all schoolbooks and materials and agree to pay for any lost or damaged books or equipment.
- To provide all Medical/Immunization Records to the office as required by North Carolina State Law. (G.S. 130-A153).
- To ensure that my student is ready to learn each day and is on time to virtual (synchronous) class sessions.
- That my child will follow the school discipline policies and school-wide expectations.
- To bring my student to our designated location on required testing days.
- Follow attendance policies.

Learning Coach and Teacher Partnership Guide

A student may be long-term suspended from the school if, in the opinion of the school administration, there has been sufficient violation of the rules of conduct as established by the School so that continued attendance would be disruptive or dangerous to other students and/or staff. Long-term suspension shall occur if a student continually violates the PSPVA Honor Code, or if a student or his/her parent(s) fail to adhere to the terms of the PSPVA Honor Code and other PSPVA policies. School administration has the discretion to enforce the honor code with all due consideration given to the age of the student and other relevant circumstances.

Student Code of Conduct

PSPVA's expectations for student behavior are based upon the following governing principles:

1. Students will act with courtesy, consideration, tolerance, and patience in all interactions with others, both in virtual school and during school-sponsored activities.
2. Students shall treat school property with care and respect.
3. Students will follow PSPVA's Honor Code and be honest in all academic and social situations.
4. Student behavior will reflect positively upon PSPVA by a display of manners, pride, and ownership of PSPVA core values.

Acceptable Use Guidelines for the Internet

- Posting anonymous messages online is not permitted unless authorized by the course's online teacher. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited.
- Students must use only their own usernames and passwords and must not share these with anyone.
- Students may not interfere with other user's ability to access PSPVA or disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. Students are responsible for all activity that are associated with their usernames and passwords.
- Students are expected to maintain their login and password for all platforms and devices.
- Students must not publicly post their personal contact information (address and phone number) or anyone else's.
- Students must not publicly post any messages that were sent to them privately.
- Students are not allowed to download, transmit, or post material intended for personal gain or profit, non-PSPVA commercial activities, non-PSPVA product advertising, or political lobbying on a PSPVA owned instructional computing resource.
- Students may not use PSPVA instructional computing resources to sell or purchase any illegal items or substances.
- Students are not allowed to upload or post any software on PSPVA instructional computing resources that are not specifically required and approved for student assignments.
- Students must have their own student login and use it when completing work.

- PSPVA does not promote any social media that is not created, maintained, and monitored by faculty and staff at PSPVA. Therefore, the use of any platform such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Discord, etc. is outside of the scope of PSPVA.
- Students should not create any social media profiles using their PSPVA email address.
- PSPVA and its staff are not responsible for any individual or group communications on any non-approved school platforms.

Inappropriate Behavior

- Insults or attacks of any kind against another person.
- Use of obscene, degrading, or profane language.
- Harassment (continually posting unwelcome messages to another person) or use of threats.
- Posting material that is obscene or defamatory or which is intended to annoy, harass, or intimidate another person. This includes distributing “spam” mail, chain email, viruses, or other intentionally destructive content.
- Bullying anyone based upon gender, race, color, national origin, or disability.

PSPVA reserves the right to review any material transmitted using PSPVA instructional computing resources or posted to an PSPVA instructional computing resource to determine the appropriateness of such material. PSPVA may review this material at any time, with or without notice. Email transmitted via PSPVA instructional computing resources is not private and may be monitored.

PSPVA assumes no responsibility for information obtained via the Internet, which may be illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive. PSPVA assumes no responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from the use of instructional computing resources. PSPVA also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement, accessible on the computer network or the Internet, is understood to be the author’s individual point of view and not that of PSPVA, its affiliates, or its employees. PSPVA assumes no responsibility for damages to the user’s computer system.

Nothing in this policy negates any obligation the student and Learning Coach must use the instructional computing resources as required in the Use of Instructional Property Agreement ("Agreement") the Learning Coach or guardian signed as part of the student's enrollment packet. If this Code conflicts with the Agreement, the terms of the Agreement shall prevail.

Discipline

Good discipline is imperative to the success of the school: it is helping a student adjust to the requirements of his/her environment rather than punishment for his/her not having adjusted, it is turning unacceptable conduct into acceptable conduct, and it is not humiliating or embarrassing. The ultimate, unique achievement of good discipline is self-discipline on the part of the student. Each teacher/team has a plan for managing student behavior that incorporates effective strategies consistent with the purpose and principles established by Board policies regarding student behavior.

Teachers are encouraged to seek positive, innovative, and constructive methods of correcting and managing student behavior to avoid repeated misbehavior and suspension.

Consequences for violating the policies in this handbook, teacher/team standards, or rules may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Correct the situation
- Parental involvement
- Loss of privileges
- Behavior improvement agreements/behavior contracts
- Individual or small group sessions with an administrator
- Exclusion from extracurricular activities/loss of privileges, and/or field trips (with administration approval)
- Expulsion (Age 14 or over)

PSPVA is not required to engage in progressive discipline. Some offenses are so serious they warrant more severe consequences including, but not limited to recommendation for longer-term consequences. This Student Code of Conduct is not to be seen as all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to amend or add to these lists as unique situations arise. The administration further reserves the right to deviate from the stated disciplinary action(s) based on unique or aggravating factors.

Failure to follow the instruction of a teacher, administrator, or other school official and any conduct in violation of any written rule, policy or procedure, or code of PSPVA will result in appropriate disciplinary measures.

Opportunities to learn from mistakes create a context for students to learn to make good choices in the future. Ultimately, the goal is for students to do the right thing, even when no one is looking.

| Student Offense | School Action Options |
|--|---|
| <p>Academic Honesty: Plagiarism, unethical use of AI, cheating on coursework and/or standardized testing (see below for more detailed explanation of consequences to offenses).</p> | <p>PSPVA students are required to attend, complete, and submit all work as their own for all schoolwork and State assessments. Teachers closely monitor academic integrity in all areas. If a student is found to have plagiarized, cheated, or falsely identified themselves, the PSPVA teacher will intervene immediately to research the possible infraction. A meeting may be scheduled by PSPVA faculty or staff, with PSPVA</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | administration, possibly leading to disciplinary consequences. |
| Assault, verbal threats, or intimidation: | Expulsion may occur. |
| Bullying of any kind (in-person or cyber) based on race, gender, color, national origin, or disability. | Expulsion may occur. |
| Inappropriate behavior or actions during Class Connect sessions: | The PSPVA teacher has full control over privileges within the online sessions. A student misbehaving may be removed from the session without warning. The student will have a follow- up conference regarding this matter and disciplinary consequences may follow. The school has the right to trace the IP address and retrieve contact information from any person signing into the online classroom. |
| Inappropriate Computer Use: Specific procedures, conditions, and legal restrictions guide the use of school-owned computers. Parents should review appropriate usage of computers with their students before using school computers. Parents are the responsible adult for logging into the computer and should maintain a confidential user password. | Depending on the misuse of the school computer, the Academic Administrator or Executive Director will determine disciplinary consequences, including loss of privileges up to expulsion. |
| Disrespectful Behavior or Inappropriate Conduct: Students and parents are expected to comply with reasonable directives of school personnel in a timely and cooperative manner. Any refusal to comply or any use of profane means of expression toward other students or school personnel will be assigned a range of consequences. | Expulsion may occur. |
| Attire: PSPVA students are to dress appropriately during Class Connect sessions, staff led sessions, outings, or other school events. Parent support is critical in the effort to maintain a productive academic atmosphere. Shirts and blouses must cover the midriff, chest, and back. Pants, skirts, and tops should be high enough and long enough, so no portion of the backside or undergarments is seen. | <p>Students may be asked to change clothing, turn it inside out, or leave the CC session or premises.</p> <p>Backpacks or handbags may be subject to search at school events, outings, or testing.</p> <p>Depending on circumstances, an administrative meeting may follow.</p> |

Expulsion: The indefinite exclusion of a student, age 14 or over, from school enrollment for disciplinary purposes.

PSPVA and its employees shall follow applicable rules concerning the discipline of students who qualify under relevant special education laws.

The school administration may recommend Expulsion, and/or participation in a Behavioral Contract. Decisions Expulsion shall be made by the school administration after appropriate notice to the parties involved and a hearing if one is requested. Student appeals against the decision of the school administration shall be heard by a panel of two Board members who shall be appointed by the Board Chair. Appeals must be made in writing to the Board Chair within ten (10) days of the decision. The hearing of the panel will occur at a discipline hearing. Decisions of the Board panel shall be final, and there will be no further appeal to the full Board of Directors.

PSPVA's disciplinary procedures will be exercised in a manner consistent with state and federal law, including the Gun-Free Schools Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

ACADEMICS & CURRICULUM

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is required by PSPVA, and any form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the school's Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating; working with another person(s) without permission, copying someone else's work, sharing your work with others, unauthorized use of notes or books on examinations, tests, or quizzes; giving or receiving information on examinations, tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, lab assignments, homework assignments or any other work without the approval of the instructor; forging a parent signature; and plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as intentionally using another person's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without proper citation. Any act of academic dishonesty could result in loss of credit for the assignment and/or other disciplinary action.

Academic Standards

The key to PSPVA's curriculum and student performance standards is rigor. PSPVA is a school that demands hard work from all students at all grade and ability levels. Students who attend PSPVA will find they are continually challenged in all subject areas and that they will have to work diligently to meet academic expectations.

The types of challenges students will face are progressive complexity and competency in all subject areas, active participation in all areas of their education, including in-class and out-of-classroom experiences, and problem-solving. Through self-assessment and teacher evaluation, along with the results from standard assessments, students will be challenged to excel beyond state standards in all academic areas.

They will be given the tools to meet the demands of PSPVA's rigorous standards, and they will be held to those standards. Students are expected to perform at their level of engagement or higher.

Award-Winning Curriculum

The Stride K12 Inc. curriculum is developed by cognitive scientists, noted leaders in the education field, math and reading specialists, Flash designers, and other subject matter experts. Stride K12 is widely regarded across the country for its passionate and rigorous approach to education focused on how students learn.

The Stride K12 curriculum works for all kinds of students to unlock their personal full academic potential and help them achieve mastery of the key concepts and skills they will need to succeed in life. From gifted children to students whose lives require an individualized schooling schedule, to those who need a gentler pace than in a traditional classroom, Stride K12 provides an adaptable but focused learning environment.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program

Career and Technical Education (CTE) teaches the college and career skills students need to be successful after high school. In addition to core courses required for graduation, students' electives allow them to explore different career fields and gain skills that can help them be successful in the workplace and in college.

Whether students intend to go to college, are working in their career field now, or plan to enlist or start their career right out of high school, the occupational programs offered can combine passion and interests with the skills needed to compete for jobs in high-demand fields.

PSPVA's Career Technical Education program includes courses taught by highly qualified professionals with industry experience. At least 1.0 credits are required for graduation. Completion of 2.0 credits in CTE courses can lead to completion of a Graduation Pathway. CTE students also have opportunities to participate in project-based learning, earn dual college credit and industry recognized technical certifications as well as seek student leadership roles in National Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO).

Students in grades 9-11 are enrolled in CTE courses to complete North Carolina Board of Education Requirements for graduation and are automatically enrolled in our CTE program. Students in grades 6, 7 & 8 are automatically enrolled in foundational computer literacy and planning courses to introduce them to college and career learning concepts.

Career and Technical Education Program Opt-Out

Students in grades 6-11 are automatically opted into PSPVA's Career and Technical Education Program due to the learning benefits for this group of students as well as supporting progress toward graduation requirements for students in grades 9-11 as outlined by the NC Board of Education. While students in grades 9-11 may not opt out of graduation requirements, all students in grades 6-11 may opt out of being identified as a Career and Technical Education Program student. To do so, Legal

Guardians, Students over the age of 18 or Legally Emancipated Students over the age of 16 may submit the CTE Opt Out Choice Form to have the program ended for their student. If you would like more information about opting out, please contact David Pervine dpervine@pinespringsprepva.org.

Student Promotion

Student promotion is based on teacher recommendations. It is the responsibility of the School Principals to make final grade level placement decisions.

For students with special needs, promotion will also depend on the fulfillment of the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The academic expectations at PSPVA will be made clear to parents. Additionally, as stated above, teachers and the administration will be diligent in their efforts to keep parents up to date on their children's performance. When a child is in danger of failing, teachers will reach out to the parent or guardian to discuss the child's circumstances and develop strategies that the child, parents, and teachers can implement to afford the child opportunities to succeed.

Retention

Parents of students being considered for retention shall be notified in writing as early as possible, we prefer no less than 45 days before the end of the school year. Parents may respond in writing to School Administration within 5 days of the written notification to appeal the retention. Retention of students will be based upon teacher input and the School Administration/Principal is responsible for final grade level placement decisions.

Administration will consider the following when deciding to retain or promote a student:

- Teacher recommendation
- Student's test scores (Diagnostic, EOG, EOC)
- Student's academic progress over time
- Student's behavior history
- Student's attendance history
- Student's special education needs
- Parent recommendation

For students transferring to PSPVA, the student will be placed in the grade level as recommended by their previous school. A retention letter/label may be required.

Testing Schedule

PSPVA will administer all required North Carolina State Tests. In addition, all PSPVA students will participate in i-Ready and/or NC Check-Ins 2, three times a year. Visit the NCDPI [2024–25 North Carolina Operational Testing Calendar](#) for testing windows. Parents and students will receive specific information for any required in-person tests.

Testing Compliance

PSPVA will conduct standardized testing as required by state and federal law and provide remediation and intervention for students not scoring at required levels. A testing coordinator will monitor

compliance with this policy and will ensure that all testing material is maintained under locked and secure conditions. All testing personnel, teachers, and school administrators are subject to a state Testing Code of Ethics regarding the statewide testing program.

Student Evaluation/Grading

All parents will be informed at regular intervals on their children’s academic progress, based on procedures approved by the School Administration. The academic year will consist of two eighteen-week grading periods. Progress reports are issued at the end of the first grading period, and official report cards will be issued at the end of the second grading period. Parents can access student information via the Parent Portal at any time, including student grades and progress within courses. A date will be sent to parents to check grades during the interim of each grading period in the Parent Portal. A paper copy progress report will not be sent home. Report cards will be a combination of numerical and narrative evaluations.

Grade marks for students in Kindergarten – 2nd Grade will be calculated as follows:

| Grade Mark | Description | Percentage |
|------------|--|------------|
| S | Satisfactory: The student does excellent work, achieves mastery of the course objectives and learning outcomes, consistently produces high quality work demonstrating skill and thoroughness, and consistently applies knowledge gained in new situations. | 80% – 100% |
| N | Needs Improvement: The student does above average or average work, achieves mastery of almost all the course objectives and learning outcomes, produces above average work demonstrating skill and awareness, and is able to apply knowledge gained to many new situations | 60% – 79% |
| U | Unsatisfactory: The student does below average work and is not making adequate progress toward mastering the course objectives and learning outcomes, struggles to produce adequate work demonstrating growth, and is only able to apply knowledge gained in limited situations | 0% – 59% |

Grade marks for students in 3rd Grade – 11th Grade will be calculated as follows:

| Grade Mark | Percentage |
|------------|------------|
| A | 90% – 100% |
| B | 80% – 89% |
| C | 70% – 79% |
| D | 60% – 69% |
| F | 0% – 59% |

Report Cards

Report cards are generated from the Student Information System. Parents have online Student Information System access to view the academic records through the parent portal.

Academic Accountability

Students at PSPVA are responsible for:

- a. Completing assignments within time limits acceptable to the teacher and administration.
- b. Participating actively in all classes and class-related activities
- c. Making academic progress by passing, in addition to iReady, EOG, and EOC assessments, all courses required for promotion to the next grade level.
- d. Maintaining, being responsible for, and producing in all classes, at all times, necessary materials such as assigned textbooks, writing materials, and class supplies, and using these materials in an appropriate manner.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the attempt to pass off the ideas, research, theories or words of others as one's own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Most students know when they are intentionally plagiarizing, for example copying an entire essay or a book or buying a paper off the Internet. However, many people are tripped up by unintentional plagiarism, that is, not giving proper credit for others' quotes, facts, ideas or data. Plagiarism demonstrates a lack of integrity and character that is inconsistent with the goals and values at PSPVA. Excellent written expression of well-formulated ideas is a fundamental skill for academic and career success. Plagiarism interferes with the assessment and feedback process that is necessary to promote academic growth. Plagiarism defrauds the instructor with a false view of a student's strengths and weaknesses. It may prevent further instruction in areas of weakness and delay the student in reaching his or her potential.

Plagiarism includes:

- Taking someone else's assignment or portion of an assignment and submitting it as your own.
- Submitting work written by someone else or rephrasing the ideas of another without citing the source.
- Presenting the work of tutors, parents, siblings, or friends as your own.
- Submitting purchased papers as your own.
- Submitting papers from the Internet written by someone else as your own (ex: utilizing artificial intelligence to complete coursework)
- Supporting plagiarism by providing your work to others, whether you believe it will be copied or not.

Learning Coach/Student Responsibilities

By signing the Signature Page found at the end of this handbook, parents confirm that they understand and agree to the contents of this page.

I Understand and Agree that:

- PSPVA is a full-time public school, and my student may not be enrolled in any other full-time public, private, or charter school. Dual enrollment will be grounds for immediate withdrawal.
- PSPVA is a public school of choice with a rigorous curriculum, high expectations, and daily attendance requirements.
- In order to fulfill enrollment requirements, the following documents must be provided: enrollment form, copy of birth certificate, physical (if Kindergarten), proof of residency (copy of utility bill, etc. stating service address), agreement to use of instructional property, current immunization record or waiver, previous standardized test scores and report cards (if available), custodial paperwork (if applicable) and a copy of current Individualized Education Program/504 plan (if applicable).
- PSPVA students are required to have **FULL-TIME adult supervision** and participation during instruction and learning to be enrolled and successful in the school. I also understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about the curriculum and the online school.
- Attendance at a parent orientation session is a requirement of the enrollment process and must be completed before my student is approved.
- My child will be required to attend and be an active participant at regularly scheduled synchronous direct instruction sessions, which are part of my child's overall grade. Failure to attend these sessions will result in a lower grade and may ultimately result in administrative withdrawal.
- Learning Coach/mentor absences are not an excused reason for a student absence, and it is my responsibility to reach out to my student's teacher(s) to help create a plan for continued study in PSPVA's curriculum in my absence.
- My student needs his/her own login and will complete all work from the student account. My student will not use the Learning Coach account, and my password will be kept private.
- District and state assessments are a requirement that must be completed within the given timeframe and manner specified by the teacher (including one-on-one or in an assigned break-out room within the school platform using your microphone and webcam).
- The cooperation and partnership of the Learning Coach, student, teacher, and other school staff is necessary for student success in our virtual environment.
- I will ensure that my student meets the state mandatory attendance requirements outlined in the handbook. Requirements include active course progress, logging into the online school platform, and marking attendance hours each day. I understand that progress must align with attendance and will schedule a minimum of six (6) hours per day to accomplish this task.
- My student will attend and participate in any mandatory teacher-led online sessions.
- I have read the withdrawal process as it relates to non-compliance, truancy, and not meeting school policies regarding attendance and engagement.
- My student's progress within the online school platform will reflect the attendance hours I enter.

- If deemed necessary by the administration, a HOME VISIT may be implemented to support my student.
- I have read the withdrawal process as it relates to non-attendance, and not meeting school policies regarding attendance and engagement.
- Providing my student with continuous high-speed internet access is required and vital to his/her success in the program and agree to find an alternative internet connection should home service be interrupted. (Libraries, coffee shops, restaurants, etc.)
- Enrollment includes full participation in all state-mandated testing on the required dates and the assigned location. I understand it is my responsibility to provide transportation for all required face-to-face testing.
- I will commit to read, listen, and respond to email and phone messages daily.
- For the school to be able to appropriately place students into classes, I must supply all relevant student records including past report cards, transcripts, testing scores, and any special education documentation (IEP or 504 Plan/Evaluation, etc.).
- I will assist my student in contacting staff or Stride K12 technical support/help desk (866-512-2273) in a timely manner whenever he/she has a problem that needs to be resolved.
- I will contact the school with any account changes (including but not limited to updated phone number, parent email, physical/ mailing/ shipping address(es), etc.) within 30 days so I will continue to receive regular communications, materials from PSPVA, and that appropriate state and student information systems reflect the correct address.
- Public school enrollment includes compliance with state health requirements. Immunization records sent during the enrollment process should include all immunizations from birth to present to ensure state requirements are met.
- I will have the guidance and support of a North Carolina state- certified teacher implementing the Stride K12 curriculum with my student.
- I will be expected to maintain accurate progress and attendance logs in the online school daily.
- My child and I are required to participate in scheduled conferences with our teacher(s) and that during these conferences I am expected to have access to all materials and the computer. Scheduled conferences are expected to occur from the primary location that instruction takes place.
- My student will be enrolled in PSPVA during the allotted timeframe indicated on the enrollment application.
- All school policies and procedures must be met for continued enrollment in the school.
- I will follow the expectations put forward in the Parent-Student Handbook.

My Teacher Will Support Me By...

- Be the first point of contact for parents and students.
- Guide and direct the student through the Stride K12 Online School platforms.
- Provide instructional support to meet NC state standards.
- Facilitate academic conferences.

- Review student-submitted work throughout each grading term.
- Maintain a school workday from Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- Respond within 24 business hours when in the office to all emails and telephone calls.
- Inform Learning Coach of school updates/information from PSPVA and/or Stride K12.
- Plan and attend regional outings/field trips.
- Provide support in all areas of successful student learning and achievement.
- Complete semester progress reports and year-end report cards.

Parent/Student Concern, Complaint, and Grievance Policy

PSPVA recognizes that despite best intentions, questions, concerns, or conflicts may arise between the school and/or school staff and PSPVA families and/or students. As problems arise, school personnel and parents should collaborate to solve them whenever possible. Complaints by high school students may be made by the students on their own behalf or by the parent or guardian. A parent or guardian may initiate the complaint process on behalf of an elementary or middle school student. Please follow these procedures for assistance in resolving a problem:

Step 1: All academic concerns and issues should first be directed to the student’s content area teacher via phone or email.

Step 2: If the PSPVA teacher cannot resolve the issue, he/she directs the parent to the Academic Administrator or other appropriate school administrator, or staff based on the exact concern.

Step 3: If a concern is not resolved at administrator level, parents are advised to contact the Executive Director via email.

Step 4: If the concern is still not resolved to the parent or student’s satisfaction, the parent and/or student may request the grievance be presented to the PSPVA Board at a designated time and date.

Guardian/Students may present a complaint or grievance regarding one or more of the following:

- Violation of the student’s constitutional rights.
- Denial, not related to the student’s individual capabilities, of an equal opportunity to participate in any program or activity for which the student qualifies not related to the student’s individual capabilities.
- Discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.
- Harassment of the student by another person.
- Intimidation by another student.
- Bullying by another student.
- Concern for the student’s personal safety.

Guardian/Students may present a complaint or grievance provided that:

- The topic is not the subject of disciplinary or other proceedings under other policies and regulations of PSPVA; and

- The procedure shall not apply to any matter for which the method of review is prescribed by law, or the PSPVA Board is without authority to act.
- The guidelines to be followed are:
 - The accusation must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of the time the student knew or should have known that there were grounds for the complaint/grievance.
 - The complaint/grievance shall be made only to the Executive Director.
 - The person receiving the complaint will gather information for the complaint form.
 - The allegation shall be reported in writing with necessary information as determined by the PSPVA Board.
- The person receiving the complaint shall preserve the confidentiality of the subject, disclosing it only to the appropriate school administrator or as otherwise required by law.
- Once received, the PSPVA Executive Director will have 10 school days to review and respond to the grievance.
- Any questions concerning whether the complaint/grievance falls within this policy shall be determined by the Administrator.

Outings/Events

PSPVA sponsors optional outings for students and families on a regular basis that enhance the Stride K12 curriculum/learning activities. While attendance is not mandatory, it is a wonderful opportunity to meet other school participants and have conversations about our children and programs and share practices that work. Outings are opportunities for both the students and parents to socialize. Parents are responsible for the cost of transportation and any entrance fees associated with optional outings. While credit for field trips is not offered in lieu of the regular curriculum for most outings, attendance at these events can be included under an applicable subject area. Parents/ Legal Guardians must complete the Liability and Photo release form for their student to fully participate and attend outings and events.

Parents/Guardians are required to remain with students at all PSPVA outings. Students may NOT be dropped off at any outing. Students who are of driving age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to attend an outing.

Students and parents are to abide by the code of conduct listed earlier in this handbook. Tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, and weapons of any kind are not permitted on school outings or events. If these circumstances arise, they will be dealt with in accordance with this handbook and all applicable state laws. PSPVA parents and students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all optional outings. Parents are responsible for supervision of their children at all times. Any other group outings are not considered “official” outings unless a PSPVA staff attends.

Students are expected to dress appropriately when attending outings. Examples of inappropriate dress include but are not limited to:

- Clothing, apparel, or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any other combinations thereof, advocates or promotes sexual activity, violence, death, suicide, or the use of alcohol or drugs,

or demeans, degrades, or intimidates another because of race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, or gang membership.

- Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back or sides of the upper body or torso and/or undergarments.
- Any clothing that is excessively tight, is of transparent material, see-through material, or that is ripped or torn, or has suggestive signs or symbols.
- Any clothing through which underwear or any type of undergarment maybe seen.
- Spandex, clothing that does not cover backs, clothing that permits viewing of cleavage, halter tops, tank tops with open sides, spaghetti strap tops, and muscle/tank shirts.
- Spikes, dog chains/chokers, ball bearing chains, wallet chains, or other jewelry that increases the risk for accidents.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

PSPVA will adhere to all federal laws relating to maintaining student files. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct their record which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows the school to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

The School may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. If a parent would prefer that the School not release directory information about his/her student, s/he must inform the Operations Manager via email by the end of the first week of school.

Right to Know Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Parents of students have the right to know the professional qualifications of the School's classroom teachers. Parents can ask for certain information about their child's classroom teachers, and the School will give this information to parents in a timely manner if they ask for it. Specifically, parents have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child's classroom teachers and the School:

- Whether the State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- Whether the State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to their child and, if they do, their qualifications
- The School Improvement Plan
- Qualifications of your child's teachers
- Professional development opportunities for teachers and assistants to ensure highly qualified personnel
- Opportunities for parent involvement and input
- The Title I Parent Involvement Plan and School Parent Involvement Plan
- School Report Card

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights concerning student privacy, parental access to information, and administration of physical examinations to minors. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey, which is funded in part or in whole by a program of the U.S. Department of Education, that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey"):
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the students or the student's family
 3. Sexual behavior or attitudes

4. Anti-social, demeaning, illegal, or self-incriminating behavior
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close familial relationships
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
 7. Religious affiliations, beliefs, or practices of the student or parent
 8. Income, other than as required by law, to determine program eligibility
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the School or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the students (except for hearing, vision, scoliosis, or any other physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law)
 3. Any activity involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information or the marketing, selling, or distributing of such information to others
 - Inspect the following, upon request and before administration or use:
 1. Surveys created by a third party before their distribution by a School to its students
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum

PSPVA has developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. PSPVA will directly notify parents of these policies at the beginning of each School year and after any substantive changes. The School will also both directly notify parents through U.S. Mail, e-mail, parent meetings, or the Parent and Students Handbook at the start of each School year of the specific or approximate dates (if such events are planned and/or scheduled) of the above activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in them. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

DRESS CODE

The purpose of the dress code is to clearly identify appropriate attire for all our students attending PSPVA. In keeping with our school mission, the board and administration of the school believe attire should be modest, not offensive to others, and not disruptive to the learning environment while on school property or at a PSPVA sponsored event or field trip. We believe it is important for all students to learn the importance of presenting themselves well and that they should begin learning those habits while at school. Failure to comply with the school's uniform policy and/or dress code are violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

SCHOOL HOURS AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Regular school attendance is essential to the learning process; therefore, we encourage every student to attend live Class Connect Sessions and to be schooled every day, health permitting. We recognize that the school day and the school year should be planned in a manner to facilitate student learning and to permit accurate assessment of student achievement.

NC Compulsory Attendance Law states students must attend school continuously for a period equal to the time which the public school is in session. The principal, or his/her designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the child's excessive absences after the child has accumulated three unexcused absences in a semester. After no more than six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he/she may be in violation of the compulsory attendance law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the state board of education.

Legal Custody

If a parent has a custody agreement or a current restraining order against a person, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the school copies of the orders immediately. According to North Carolina law, both parents have legal custody of minor children unless a court has decreed otherwise, and either can pick up the child or remove the child from school and have access to educational records.

Absences Policies and Procedures

1. Your child should be in school every day as mandated by state law.
2. When you keep your child from participating in live classes due to illness, please email schooloffice@pinespringsprepva.org
3. Per NC law, after 3 unexcused absences, the parent will be notified. After 6 unexcused absences, parents will be warned that they may be in violation of the state compulsory attendance law.
4. If a student has accumulated ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absences, he or she is subject to being withdrawn from the school roster. The student's name will be placed on the waitlist and that seat will be considered open for the admission of another student.
5. After 10 unexcused absences, additional legal steps will be followed. The school and the staff will work with parents throughout this process to find ways to facilitate better attendance.
6. A student should be attending live class connects and actively working in courses for a minimum of 4 hours of instructional time to be considered present for the day.
7. Students who are absent can complete makeup work. A timeline will be established by the classroom teacher.
8. An absence is excused when a parent or guardian sends a note offering a legitimate explanation of the absence. Reasons for an excused absence:
 - a. illness or injury of the child;
 - b. isolation ordered by the Department of Health;

- c. death in family;
- d. medical or dental appointment with documentation;
- e. court when the child is under a subpoena;
- f. religious observance;
- g. participation in a valid educational opportunity (prior approval is needed);
- h. catastrophic event or natural disaster.

Absences not classified above will be considered unexcused, even with a note from a parent.

Planned Extended Absences

Parents are urged to plan family trips during school vacations so as not to interfere with the learning process. Missing school for a family vacation is strongly discouraged. However, if an extended student absence is unavoidable, the school should be notified in writing at least one week before the first day a student is out. Make-up work will be given to students either before or after the absence based on what the teacher deems as most beneficial for the student.

Tardy Policy

Students are expected to attend all Class Connect Sessions on time. Tardiness is only excused for medical and dental appointments or to comply with court ordered attendance at a legal proceeding. In all such instances, for the tardy to be excused proper documentation is required. Students tardy due to illness require written parent communication. Excessive tardiness will be handled on a case-by-case basis. We encourage parents to make appointments for their child outside of school hours; however, if your student must leave a Class Connect Session early, please notify the teacher via email.

Make-up Work for Absences

Students are responsible for, and they are permitted to make up for all work missed during excused absences. The classroom teacher will assign the make-up timeline for the missed assignments. The student is responsible for finding out which assignments, quizzes and exams were missed and completing them within the specified time. Families are encouraged to check the instructor's website or email their teacher to obtain assignments.

Withdrawal Procedures

If a parent would like to withdraw their child from PSPVA, the School must receive the request via email to schooloffice@pinespringsprepva.org. A records request for one of our current students is considered a request for withdrawal and verification of enrollment elsewhere. If a records request is received, the records will be sent, and that student will be withdrawn from PSPVA. Final report cards and/or transcripts will not be released until all materials have been turned in or paid for.

Inclement Weather Procedures

Inclement weather announcements made by the Wake County Public School System do not apply to PSPVA.

Communication With School Personnel

Email is the simplest and most effective way to contact our staff. A staff directory can be found at the top of the PSPVA school website. In addition, teachers may be contacted during regular school hours by calling or emailing them, please refer to the Online Learning System (OLS) for contact information. Any dialogue with a teacher concerning a student is to be scheduled in advance. The hours between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. are when teachers are working.

Meetings with the school personnel, including school administration, must be scheduled in advance.

Presenting Concerns

It is expected that any parent or student with a concern or issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first point of contact is their student's teacher. If the parent or student is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then notify the school administration.

Grievance Policy for Parents and Students

Most issues that a parent or student have with the classroom, teacher or school do not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will likely be found with the teacher and/or the school administration.

A grievance is a verifiable assertion that a school employee has violated a school policy, Board policy, or a law. Parents may file a grievance as follows:

1. **Filing A Grievance.** A grievance may be filed by a parent by submitting a written explanation of the issue and the specific school policy, Board policy, or law that is being alleged to have been violated by sending an email to the Chairperson for the Board of Directors of the school (whose such email can be found at the school website. The subject of the email needs to state: "Grievance" or otherwise give reasonable notice to the Chairperson for the Board of Directors that the parent is filing a grievance pursuant to this policy. A parent may file a grievance but only after the parent has exhausted the available remedies and filed as follows:
 - a. The parent must show they attempted in good faith to resolve the issue with the appropriate teacher or principal; and
 - b. The parent must show they attempted in good faith to resolve the issue with the school administration, including the Executive Director, via an in-person meeting; and
 - c. The parent must show they were not provided an adequate remedy to rectify the grievance by the teacher, administration or the Executive Director; and
 - d. The parent must file the grievance within ten (10) days after the in-person meeting with the Executive Director.

2. Certification of a Grievance. Within ten (10) business days after receipt of a grievance, the Chairperson of the Board of Directors will determine, in his or her sole discretion, if a grievance meets the requirements set forth in Section 1 above. If the Chairperson of the Board of Directors determines in his or her sole discretion that the grievance meets the requirements set forth in Section 1 above, the grievance shall be considered “Certified”. If the Chairperson of the Board of Directors determines in his or her sole discretion that the grievance does not meet the requirements set forth in Section 1 above, the grievance shall be considered “Rejected”. The Chairperson of the Board of Directors shall notify the filing party whether or not the grievance is Certified or Rejected. If the grievance is Certified, the process as set forth below in Section 3 will be followed. If the grievance is Rejected, no further action will be taken by the school and the decision is final.

3. The Certified Grievance Process.

Step 1 Establishing Grievance Committee. Once a grievance has been Certified, the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, in his or her sole discretion, will appoint a Grievance Committee made up of at least two (2) Board Members to handle the grievance. The Grievance Committee shall be appointed within thirty (30) days after the grievance has been Certified.

Step 2a Requesting Written Position Statements. The Grievance Committee will contact both the grieving party and the school administration within ten (10) days of appointment and request written position statements setting forth each side’s position as to the grievance and the desired outcome of the grievance. The written position statements are to be submitted within ten (10) days of the request.

Step 2b Setting a Grievance Hearing Date. Contemporaneously with the request for written position statements, the Grievance Committee will work with the parties to set a hearing date as soon as practicable, but not later than thirty (30) days after the Grievance Committee has been appointed.

Step 3 Grievance Hearing. Direct confrontation or interruption while the other party is presenting to the Grievance Committee will not be tolerated. All parties are to remain civil, or the Grievance Hearing will immediately terminate. At the grievance hearing, the grieving party will have thirty (30) minutes to present any arguments to the Grievance Committee and should state the desired outcome of the grievance. The school will have thirty (30) minutes to present any arguments in rebuttal and should state its desired outcome. The grieving party will then have five (5) minutes to respond to the counterarguments by the school administration. Finally, the school will have five (5) minutes to respond to the counterarguments of the grieving party.

Step 4 Ruling. The Board Committee will rule on the grievance within ten (10) days following the Grievance Hearing. The ruling will be provided to the grieving party and the Executive Director in writing. The Grievance Committee’s ruling is final.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Weapons Ban Policy

PSPVA prohibits weapons (and replicas of weapons) to be shown on video and on School property, in School vehicles and at School- sponsored activities on or off School property, except for weapons utilized by our School Resource Officer or other law enforcement officials. Weapons and replicas of weapons constitute any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm, including but not limited to: firearms, knives, metal knuckles, chains, razors, explosives, poisonous or noxious gases or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury as determined by School administration. On-duty Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) or School Resource Officers (SRO) are the only approved individuals to carry weapons on School property or at other School-sponsored activities on or off School property.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from School for a period of one (1) year from the date the student was found guilty of the violation. The School Administration will review each alleged violation of this policy and will exercise discretion for expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

All acts of violence and possession of weapons as defined in this policy shall be reported to parents of the violator, appropriate law enforcement agency and any other government agency as required by law. In addition, the School Administration is required to report immediately to the appropriate local law enforcement agency whenever the School Administration has personal knowledge or actual notice from School personnel that any of the following acts has occurred on School property:

- assault involving the use of a weapon
- unlawful possession of a firearm
- unlawful possession of a weapon

This reporting requirement applies regardless of the age or status of the person thought to have committed the act. The report to law enforcement is only required if the act occurs on School property, which includes any public-school building, bus, campus, grounds, recreational area or athletic field

Emergency Data

Every family must provide emergency contacts upon completing the enrollment application. Please communicate any changes to the information throughout the year to your child's teacher and the PSPVA office staff schooloffice@pinespringsprepva.org. The Emergency Information requested includes the following information:

- Home address
- Home phone number
- Alternate phone numbers (work, cell)
- Names and phone numbers we are authorized to contact in case of an emergency

- Names and phone numbers of people who are authorized to pick the student(s) up from school

Student Photos

Parents who do not wish to allow PSPVA to use their child's picture or image must fill out the Photo Release form, please email schooloffice@pinespringsprepva.org for that link.

Student Health, Wellness and Safety

PSPVA's Student Health and Wellness policies are in place to ensure, to the best of our ability, the health and safety of all who come to our campus. PSPVA will also follow all requirements set forth by the NC Department of Health and/or our local health department. For more important information about our health policies and procedures, please be sure to familiarize yourself with the information found on: <https://secure.smores.com/n/v75f6/>.

Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies

Equal Education Opportunities

PSPVA provides equal education opportunities for all students and does not discriminate based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or any other legally protected classification. PSPVA adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including without limitation, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education.

Anti-Harassment Policy

PSPVA is committed to providing an environment that is conducive to learning, free from improper and illegal discrimination and harassment, particularly that which is based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or any other legally protected classification. Furthermore, PSPVA is committed to promoting the worth and dignity of all individuals, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, or disability. Discrimination involves intentionally treating anyone in an unequal or disparate manner because of that person's inherent or natural personal characteristics when such treatment causes the victim to suffer adverse educational, employment, or other school-related consequences. Harassment is any unwelcome offensive verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive as to significantly affect the conditions of one's employment or a student's learning. Harassment includes but is not limited to the following: abusive jokes, insults, slurs, name-calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcome sexual advances, or the exchange of benefits for performance of sexual or other favors.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Of the various types of harassment, sexual harassment is worthy of special considerations beyond those applicable under the School's general Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy. No employee or student shall engage in sexual harassment against any other student, employee, or

another person in the school community. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or sexually suggestive comments when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for student or employment decisions affecting such individuals.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's academic or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following: deliberate, unwelcome touching; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises or threats; pressure for sexual activity; continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used toward, or in the presence of, an individual or to describe an individual; or the display of sexually suggestive objects, signals, or pictures. A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment.

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school employees and students are always prohibited in all circumstances. School employees are prohibited from engaging in romantic or other inappropriate relationships with students and are required to report such relationships or reasonable suspicions thereof, to the School Administration or other appropriate administrator. Procedures established by the School for reporting suspected sexual harassment shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct.

Bullying

PSPVA follows the North Carolina law regarding bullying and harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that:

1. Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
2. Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. For purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are prohibited at the School and during school-related activities between students, employees, school agents, volunteers, visitors and any other person associated with or under the control of the School. Procedures established by the School for reporting suspected discrimination, harassment or bullying shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct. PSPVA prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. This policy, however, shall not be used to bring frivolous or malicious complaints. Any PSPVA employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the appropriate school official. A student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or School employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to the appropriate school official. The School Administration is authorized and expected to establish training and administrative procedures to help eliminate discrimination, harassment, and bullying and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.

Procedures for Handling Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying

1. Any student who believes s/he is the victim of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination should immediately inform a trusted teacher, advisor or school official. Students are also encouraged to inform their parents.
2. When anyone reports harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the School Administration as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
3. If the School Administration is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Directors who will conduct the investigation, working in concert with the School's Board of Directors. In all other cases, the School Administration will be immediately informed and will investigate or appoint a designee to conduct the investigation.
4. In investigating, a group may be convened to include some of all the following: the student's advisor, other teachers or administrators, the school counselor, and any other appropriate personnel. Interviews will be conducted as appropriate. At all times during the investigation, confidentiality will be balanced with the need to gather facts.
5. The School Administration, Board Chair or designated investigator will communicate, as appropriate, with the student's parents. A confidential report will be prepared and filed. Based upon the outcome of the investigation, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Rights of Children with Disabilities

Rights of Children with Disabilities This section explains the educational rights of children with disabilities to attend a charter school that has been authorized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). Both federal and state law requires that admission to a charter school be conducted without regard to or consideration of whether the child has a disability; therefore, charter schools are open to all students, whether or not they are eligible to receive special education services. Charter schools must provide special education services, as outlined in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), to all eligible students. This is a summary of your child's rights to attend and receive needed services from his or her public charter school.

Charter schools accept and serve students with disabilities. Charter schools within the NCDPI are open to all grade-eligible children on a space available basis. If more students apply than there are available spaces, a lottery is held to randomly determine who will be admitted. All students who wish to attend a charter school have an equal chance of admittance regardless of, and without any consideration of, any need for special education services.

Charter schools must ensure that your child receives special education services if the child has been determined to be an eligible student with a disability by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team. Charter schools within the NCDPI must ensure that students with disabilities receive the special education services to which they are entitled. The services consist of special education instruction and related services in the least restrictive environment. The amount and location of services (where services will be delivered) are determined by the student's IEP team and are documented in the student's IEP.

Your child must receive related services if the IEP Team determines the child needs them. Charter schools within the NCDPI must provide related services to students with disabilities if the IEP Team determines that the services are necessary for the student to benefit from special education (i.e., OT, PT, counseling, etc.).

Charter schools are required to meet the needs of qualified students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, even if the student is not eligible as a student with disabilities under federal and state special education laws. Charter schools within the NCDPI are required to provide a FAPE to students with disabilities determined eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 regulations could consist of education in general education classrooms with or without accommodations and/or supplementary services. These services will be decided upon by the child's 504 Planning Committee.

Child Find

Child Find Child Find is a process based on the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part C. The purpose is to identify, locate and evaluate individuals with disabilities who may need special education services. Anyone can initiate the process: a parent, doctor, teacher, relative or friend.

To ensure that all PSPVA students are properly identified and served, the parent or guardian will be asked at least twice if their student has ever been evaluated for possible special education services, and if the student has ever received special education services as a student in a public or private school. If so, the parent or guardian will be asked if their student has an active Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Special Needs Services

PSPVA provides education to all children. Any child who is eligible for enrollment, submits a complete application and is offered enrollment through the school's admission policy will be enrolled. The School Administration will ensure enrollment documents are completed by all families and that any records for a child with disabilities pertaining to their placement and services under IDEA are secured from the child's previous school.

PSPVA will provide a full continuum of services to students with disabilities, based on individual needs in the least restrictive environment determined appropriate for a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). Free appropriate public education or FAPE means special education and related services that-

- a. Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;
- b. Meet the standards of the state of North Carolina and requirements of IDEA;
- c. Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education; and
- d. Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirements of NC 1503-4 and NC 1503-5.1 outlined in the North Carolina Policies and Services Governing Children with Disabilities.

Section 504

PSPVA will ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, assessed, and provided with appropriate educational services. PSPVA will provide reasonable accommodations to students in accordance with the student's 504 Plan developed by a team of individuals who are knowledgeable of the student, the evaluation results, and available services.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Public law 93-112 is a comprehensive law that addresses the rights of handicapped persons and applies to all agencies receiving federal financial assistance. Eliminating barriers to education programs and services, increasing building accessibility, and establishing equitable employment practices are thoroughly and specifically addressed in Section 504 regulations.

Under this policy, a student with a disability is one who (a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, or working—examples include Tourette’s Syndrome, epilepsy, sickle-cell anemia, asthma, or a serious long-term illness or injury—if there is a resulting impact on a major life activity such as learning; (b) has a record of such impairment; or (c) is regarded as having such impairment. Students may be disabled under Section 504 even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Due process rights of students with disabilities and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced.

Multilingual Learners

Multilingual Learners who transfer in from other schools and are already identified as ML students will qualify for ML services at PSPVA. ML students who are new to the area will be identified through Home Language Surveys. These surveys are a part of the student registration packet. All students will be required to return a completed Home Language Survey before starting class. Those who list a language other than English on their Home Language Survey will be required to take the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT).

Once a student has qualified for ML services, the school LEP team will meet to discuss which services the student would benefit from. The services that will be discussed at the meeting are the:

1. Amount and level of in-class and out-of-class tutoring per week by ML instructors;
2. Amount and level of accommodations and/or modifications for class work and testing; and
3. Amount/type of assistive technology devices (such as native language dictionaries, etc.) the student will use, if any. Based on the LEP team’s recommendation, the ESL instructor will either work in-class with the student or out-of-class in small groups or one-on-one.

Vocabulary and content will be generated by the instructor. The instructor will ensure that students understand the key vocabulary being presented in each unit as well as incidental vocabulary necessary for understanding. In addition, the ESL instructor will teach English grammar patterns that are unfamiliar to the student. The ESL instructor will also be available to help with content testing during the year and during EOG based on accommodations that were determined by the LEP team.

All ML students will be tested annually during the W-APT window, typically February through mid-March. Students who receive an overall composite score of 4.7 or below on the W-APT would qualify to continue receiving ESL services. Those who test out would continue to receive ESL services only if the team deems it necessary and funding is available. Students who have become proficient in English but are struggling academically would qualify for other services offered by PSPVA, such as weekly teacher tutoring, at-risk tutoring services, and the MTSS process. ESL instructor(s) will monitor all ML students’ achievement by keeping daily records of lessons taught and the students’ accomplishments. Evaluations will take place during regular meetings between the ESL instructor and the classroom teacher.

Special Programs

At PSPVA, we are committed to building an inclusive and supportive environment where all students can thrive. We recognize the vital role that special programs play in addressing the unique needs of our students. By adhering to Federal and North Carolina state laws, we ensure equal opportunities for every student to achieve academic success and excel in their educational journey.

Our programs and services are thoughtfully designed to address the academic and developmental needs of eligible students. PSPVA collaborates with district departments, school sites, specialized programs, and external community organizations to provide robust support and resources, empowering students to reach their full potential.

Programs provided through this office are:

- Students Experiencing Homelessness (McKinney-Vento Act)
- Foster Care
- Military Affiliated Students
- Migrant Education

Students Experiencing Homelessness (McKinney-Vento Act)

The term “*homeless children and youths*” refers to individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes students living in transitional or emergency shelters, motels, campgrounds, or sharing housing with other families due to a loss of housing or financial hardship. It also applies to students staying in substandard housing, abandoned in hospitals, or living in places not typically used for sleeping. Additionally, this definition encompasses students who have run away from home or those whose parents have forced them out of the home.

Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin throughout the school year, if feasible, even if they move outside the school’s boundaries. Alternatively, they may enroll in the school district where they are currently residing.

A student may also qualify as an “*unaccompanied youth*” if they are temporarily living with someone other than their parent or legal guardian, are moving frequently, staying in a shelter, or are otherwise not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

At PSPVA, we are committed to providing a stable educational environment and comprehensive support to students who qualify under the McKinney-Vento Act.

PSPVA’s Commitments to Homeless Students and Families:

- Ensure equitable access to education.
- Connect families with essential resources and services.
- Build partnerships with community outreach organizations.
- Provide training and information to all stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding.

Federal and North Carolina Laws

- [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#): This federal law ensures that homeless students have equal access to education and the opportunity to succeed academically
- [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction: Homeless Education Program](#)

If you are experiencing homelessness, please contact the Homeless Student Liaison. Eligibility determinations of qualifying students are made on a case-by-case basis.

Foster Care

At PSPVA, we are dedicated to promoting and implementing protocols that support the educational stability and success of students in foster care and those awaiting placement. By removing barriers and fostering collaborative efforts, PSPVA creates a supportive learning environment designed to ensure academic achievement and personal growth.

Who Are Students in Foster Care?

Students in foster care are children or youth placed under the legal custody or care of a state child welfare agency or a court-appointed guardian due to circumstances such as abuse, neglect, or other factors requiring out-of-home placement.

PSPVA's Support for Students in Foster Care:

- Assistance with enrollment, even in the absence of typical documentation, such as school records or immunization records.
- Commitment to maintaining school stability, regardless of changes in placement.
- Collaboration with child welfare agencies to address educational needs and facilitate smooth transitions between schools.
- Access to essential educational resources, including tutoring, counseling, and extracurricular activities.

Additionally, PSPVA ensures that students in foster care are marked present when attending court proceedings related to their care and placement.

Federal and North Carolina Laws

- [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#): ESSA includes provisions to ensure educational stability and support for students in foster care
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction: [Foster Care Provisions](#)

Military Affiliated Students

PSPVA honors the sacrifices made by military families and is committed to supporting military-affiliated students. The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (MIC3) addresses key educational transition challenges faced by children of military families, ensuring they receive the support needed for a seamless academic experience.

Who Qualifies as Military-Affiliated Students?

Eligible military-affiliated students include children whose guardians are:

- Active-duty members of the uniformed services, including National Guard and Reserve members on active-duty orders.
- Members or veterans who have been medically discharged or retired within the past year.
- Members who died while on active duty (eligibility extends for one year after death).
- Uniformed members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) or the United States Public Health Service (USPHS).

PSPVA’s Support for Military-Affiliated Students:

1. Enrollment and Educational Records:

- Accept unofficial or “hand-carried” education records for immediate enrollment.
- Place students appropriately while waiting for validation of official records.
- Provide flexibility in enrollment and transfers to accommodate frequent relocations.

2. Immunization Records:

- Allow students 30 calendar days from the date of enrollment to provide immunization documentation.

3. Kindergarten and First-Grade Enrollment:

- Permit students to enroll at the grade level consistent with their enrollment in the sending state, including kindergarten, at the time of transition.

4. Support Systems and Course Placement:

- Honor placement decisions based on the student’s previous enrollment and/or educational assessments, while allowing for further evaluation if needed.
- Offer access to guidance counselors, military-specific school liaisons, and Family Readiness Officers (FRO) for additional support.

5. Graduation Requirements:

- Waive graduation course requirements if similar coursework has been completed in the sending state.
- If a waiver is not granted, provide an alternative means for the student to fulfill requirements and graduate on time.

Federal and North Carolina Laws

- [Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children](#): This compact ensures that the educational transition of military children is smoother across state lines.
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction: [NC Supports Military Children](#)

Migrant Students

PSPVA is dedicated to supporting migrant students and their families by fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and safe environment. Through tailored programs and initiatives, PSPVA addresses the unique needs of immigrant communities, ensuring that every student and family feels valued and empowered to succeed both academically and socially.

Who Are Migrant Students?

Migrant students are children or youth whose parents or guardians have moved within the past 36 months to obtain or seek seasonal or temporary employment in agricultural or fishing industries.

Services Available to Migrant Students:

- Immediate enrollment, even if school or medical records are unavailable.
- Access to supplemental academic and support services to address educational gaps.
- Assistance with transferring educational records between schools to ensure continuity of learning.
- Collaboration with community organizations to provide additional support, such as healthcare, housing, and other essential resources.
- Language support services to assist students and families with communication and integration.

Federal and North Carolina Laws

- Title I, Part C, of the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\)](#):
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction: [Title I, Part C: Migrant Education Program](#)

Technology Use Policy

PSPVA believes that the use of a variety of technologies are an integral and essential part of education as well as the school workplace. Accordingly, PSPVA provides students or staff with a Chromebook or laptop, School Issued Email Account, and access to other technology resources for instruction.

PSPVA expects students to use these resources responsibly as guided by the Student Code of Conduct as well as Honor Code.

The following guidelines are intended to aid students in determining what is and is not a responsible use of PSPVA technologies and network resources. Any questions about the application of these guidelines should be directed to the Executive Director. Note that email is the official communications tool of PSPVA Technology.

PSPVA and Social Media

Only digital communications that come directly from PSPVA via email or text, or information shared on PSPVA-managed social media platforms should be considered official communications from or about the school.

The official PSPVA social media platforms are:

- PSPVA Website: <https://pspva.k12.com>
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/people/Pine-Springs-Preparatory-Virtual-Academy/61561134622887/?_rdr

PSPVA does not manage nor endorse any other social media platforms that may reference our school.

PSPVA Rights and Responsibilities

PSPVA recognizes the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve state-required testing and enhance the administration and operation of its schools. To this end, PSPVA encourages the responsible use of computers; computer networks, including the Internet; and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of PSPVA.

The Internet is an unregulated, worldwide vehicle for communication, information available to students is impossible to control.

It is the policy of PSPVA to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all online network activities by students. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, or other individual to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the network. Within this general policy, PSPVA recognizes its legal and ethical obligation to protect the well-being of students in its charge. To this end, PSPVA retains the following rights and recognizes the following obligations:

- To log network use and to monitor fileserver space utilization by users and assume no responsibility or liability for files deleted due to violation of fileserver space allotments.
- To remove a user account on the network.
- To monitor testing activities. This may include real-time monitoring of network activity and/or maintaining a log of Internet activity for later review.
- To provide internal and external controls as appropriate and feasible. Such controls shall include the right to determine who will have access to PSPVA-owned or leased equipment and, specifically, to exclude those who do not abide by PSPVA's Acceptable Use Policy or other policies governing the use of school facilities, equipment, and materials in relation to testing. PSPVA reserves the right to restrict online destinations through software or other means.
- To provide guidelines and make reasonable efforts to train staff and students in acceptable use and policies governing online testing.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff members who supervise students, control electronic equipment, or otherwise have occasion to observe student use of said equipment shall make reasonable efforts to monitor the use of this equipment to assure that it conforms to test security requirements laid out by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and PSPVA. Staff will be trained on the platform being used for testing so that effective monitoring, instruction, and assistance may be achieved.

User Responsibilities

Use of the electronic testing provided by PSPVA is a privilege that offers a variety of benefits. This resource is offered at no cost. To maintain the privilege, users agree to comply with all the provisions in this policy.

Acceptable Use

- All device use will be restricted to activities directly relating to the test administration
- Students and staff are prohibited from discussing the test or specific test items or content with anyone, including on social media.
- Network and test administration accounts (including- but not limited to- NCTest Admin and PearsonAccessnext accounts) are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
- All information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
- Exhibit exemplary behavior using the equipment as a representative of your school and community. Be polite!

From time to time, PSPVA will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network and equipment are consistent with the acceptable use practice.

Unacceptable Use

- Giving out personal information about another person, including home address and phone number, is strictly prohibited.
- Any use of the network for non-test related activities is prohibited.
- Use of the network/equipment for non-testing related business shall be cause for disciplinary action.
- Any use of the network for personal business, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the equipment/network
- No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others. Hardware and/or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
- Any tampering or efforts to infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
- The unauthorized installing, copying, or deleting of any software, including shareware and freeware is prohibited.
- Downloading, copying, otherwise duplicating, and/or distributing copyrighted materials without the specific written permission of the copyright owner is prohibited.
- Use of the network for any unlawful purpose is prohibited.
- Establishing network or Internet connections to communications, including voice and/or video (relay chat), is prohibited.

Disclaimers

PSPVA cannot be held accountable for the information that is retrieved via the network. Pursuant to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (18 USC 2510 et seq.), notice is hereby given that there are no facilities provided by this system for sending or receiving private or confidential electronic communications. System administrators have access to all transmissions and will monitor messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities. PSPVA will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions.

PSPVA makes no warranties (expressed or implied) with respect to any costs, liability, or damages caused by the way the user chooses to use his or her access to the equipment and network. PSPVA reserves the right to change its policies and rules at any time.

Anyone found tampering with testing-related hardware, software, or networks may lose the ability to use PSPVA equipment.

APPENDIX A: PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE FORM

Please complete this form [Parent/ Student Handbook Acknowledgement](#)