



July 1, 2025

Dear SPARK Families,

Summer is winding down, and with a few more weeks left to soak up sunshine and make memories, we're already buzzing with excitement for the year ahead. We can't wait to welcome you back for another year of discovery and growth!

The first day of school is Monday, August 4th, 2025. We are thrilled to begin the year together and can't wait to see our Dragons back in the classroom or joining us for the first time!

This year's theme—"High Expectations, Heartfelt Connections"—reflects our dual commitment to academic excellence and the close-knit, supportive community that makes SPARK so special. We hold ourselves to the highest academic standards while centering students' social and emotional well-being.

We're proud to continue our hands-on, STEAM-based approach to learning: from coding in Pre-K to 3D printing in 5th grade, every student engages in thoughtfully integrated lessons across science, technology, engineering, art, and math—building deep connections to real-world challenges and opportunities.

In alignment with our mission to serve both students and the broader community, we're continuing our school-wide effort to combat food insecurity through the Helping Hands Ending Hunger pantry and our on-site sustainable agriculture work. This kind of service learning helps build empathy while connecting classroom learning to meaningful action.

Our commitment to the arts also remains strong: all students participate in dedicated and integrated visual and performing arts instruction, including robust music education. Beginning in 4th grade, students may choose band or orchestra as an elective—a powerful opportunity to experience the joy of playing an instrument and develop a love of music that we hope will carry into middle school, high school, and beyond. As we prepare for the new school year, we invite you to be an active part of the SPARK community. Our PTO is the heart of parent engagement, and we encourage you to join today and commit to supporting SPARK throughout the year. Whether you take the lead on an event like International Night or volunteer to read in your child's classroom, every act of involvement strengthens our school. We'll provide information at Open House on how to complete your Level 3 Volunteer Clearance so you're ready to jump in right away.

As we prepare to launch the year, we want to share a few important reminders about arrival, attendance, and dismissal. The building opens to students at 7:15 AM each school day. We encourage all students to arrive by 7:30 AM, so they are ready to begin learning promptly at 7:45 AM. Students arriving at 7:45 AM or later are considered tardy and will be entering classrooms that have already started instruction, which can make for a stressful start to their day.

Our cafeteria serves breakfast until 7:40 AM, ensuring students can start the day fueled and focused. Regular, on-time attendance not only supports your child's learning but also contributes to SPARK's overall state rating—a reflection of the excellence we strive for as one of Georgia's top elementary schools. Of course, if your child is sick, please keep them home to protect the wellness of all. When your child is absent, kindly notify both their teacher and our Front Desk Clerk, Mrs. Odette Taylor, so we can maintain accurate records and appropriately code excused absences.

Dismissal at SPARK begins at 2:15pm daily. At Open House, Friday, August 1st from 9-11am, you'll also be asked to provide your child's daily dismissal plan for the year. Teachers will use this to ensure each student is placed on the correct mode of transportation every day. You can help us by keeping your child's dismissal method consistent from day to day and week to week. If a change becomes necessary, please email both your child's teacher(s) and Mrs. Taylor no later than 12:00 PM that day. This gives us time to update records and make sure your child is aware of the change.

For families who need care beyond the school day, SPAS, our on-site after-school program, is available daily until 6:00 PM. This is a great option for working families or those who need a later pickup than our regular 2:15 PM dismissal. In addition, several enrichment programs pick up students directly from SPARK each afternoon, including Horizons Kids, Contact Point L5P, Community School of Music, and Jewish Kids Group. If your child is registered for one or more of these programs, please notify their teacher which days they will attend.

As a reminder, student's phones should remain off and away during the school day. Starting this year, students will have to put away all devices for the day, including SMART watches. This means you will not be able to contact your child directly to communicate last-minute transportation changes, so early communication with the teacher and Mrs. Taylor is essential.

To help us celebrate the beautiful diversity and unity of our community, we ask that each family bring in a photo during the first week of school. We'll proudly display these in our hallways as a reminder that every child at SPARK is supported by a village—and that village includes YOU. Let's make this year one of high expectations, deep connections, and lasting memories. We are honored to walk beside you in your child's journey and look forward to making SPARK a home for your family's growth for years to come.

With appreciation,
Dr. Jennifer Toney
Principal



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