

Parent Handbook



For New Vikings

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A WORD ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to Spring Valley High School!

This handbook was especially created for new parents to our school. This is a big moment in your family's life and we would like to offer you some additional information (and some helpful hints) to make your transition easier.

1. This is not the whole story...please read the student handbook for SVHS for complete information.
2. This information is available in print as well as on our website.
3. If you still have questions about anything after using this handbook and the student handbook, please don't hesitate to contact your student's administrator.
4. If you think we've left anything out that new parents need to know, we want to hear about it.

We hope your experience at SVHS is enjoyable and informative experience for your whole family.

SPECIAL THANKS TO Dr. CLARE PARKER FOR PUTTING TOGETHER THIS VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR NEW PARENTS.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Administrators:

Jeff Temoney, Principal
Stacey Baker, Assistant Principal
Jim Childers, Assistant Principal
Sean Glover, Assistant Principal
Dr. Linda Silvernail, Assistant Principal
Paul Dobyms, Assistant Administrator
Marion Kelly, Assistant Administrator
Joe Paschal, Assistant Administrator
Schiria Wilson, Assistant Administrator
Bernice Spain, Director of School Counseling
Dr. Michelle Wyatt, Director of Magnet Programs
Tim Hunter, Athletics Director

Guidance Counselors:

Wanda Mujica – Last names A-Co
Brandon Ross – Last names Cr-Ha
Eric Hawkins– Last names He-Ma
Angel Coleman – Last names Mc-Ri
Bernice Spain- Ro-SC
Kim Darby – Last names Sm-Z

Department Chairs:

Lori Summers, CATE
Alsenia Edwards, Career Prep
Kim Bouchey, English
Kara Luke, Fine Arts
Denise Stiffler, Math
Mitchell Moton, Phys Ed
Gregory Perry, ROTC
Chet Frye, Science
Regina Dilley, Social Studies
Steven Cross, Special Ed
Wendy Stephens, World Languages

Attendance: Melissa Cermack

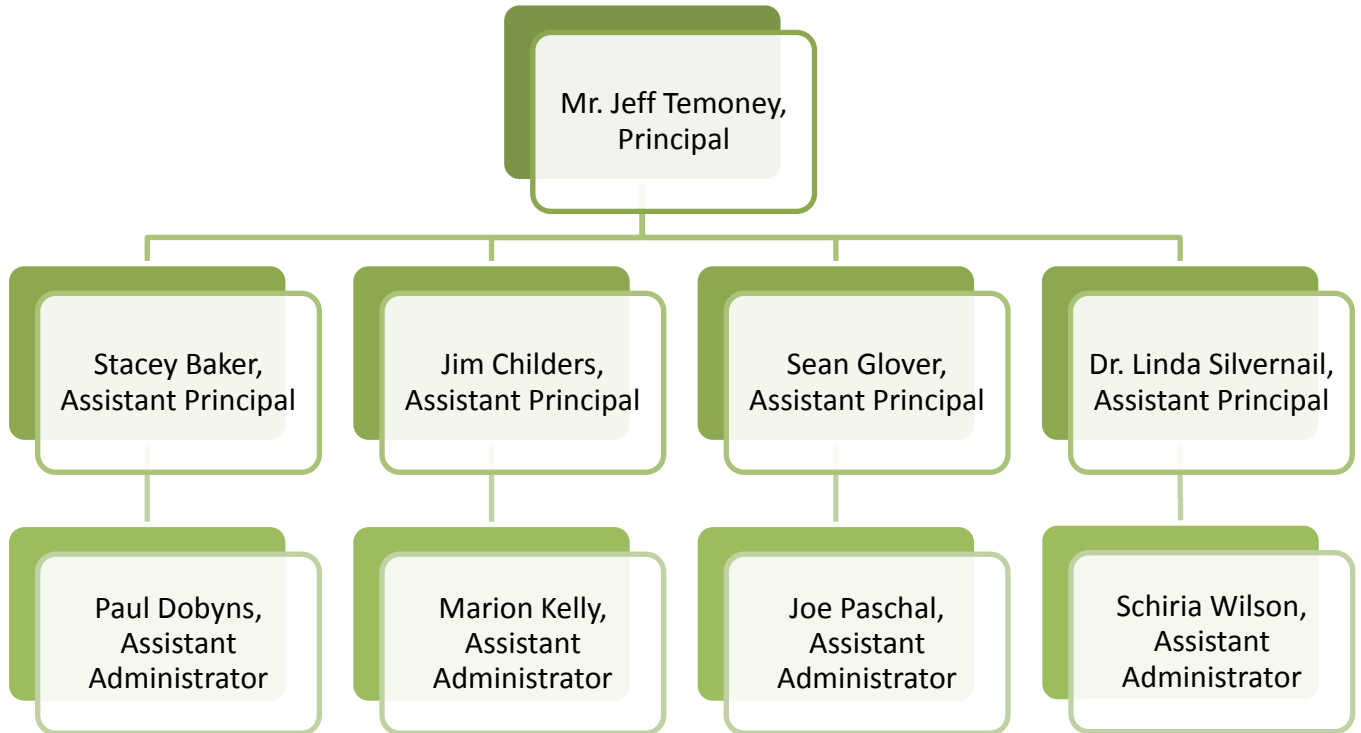
Media Center: Susan Adams, Media Specialist

Testing and Tutoring: Susan Arling

Nurse: Jennifer Hutter

Volunteer Coordinator: Evonne Carr

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

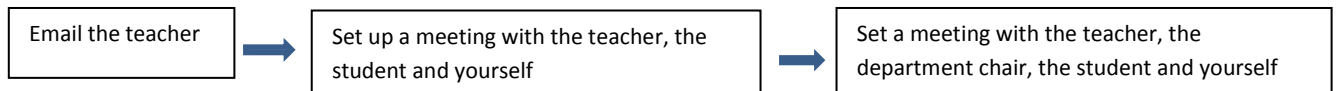


NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

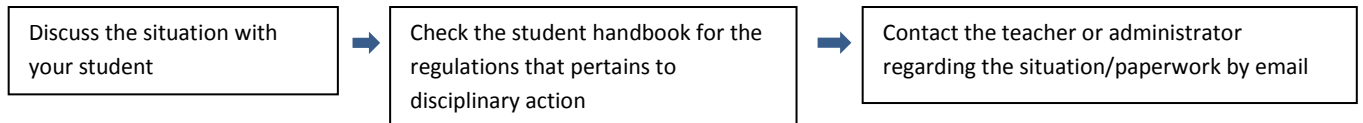
1. Stay informed: SVHS communicates with you regularly through the [Parent Portal](#), the [school website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), the [SVHS YouTube Channel](#), [Flickr](#), [The Viking Update](#), and Connect-Ed.
2. Your student's teacher is happy to communicate with you. If you send an email, expect a response within 48 hours. The [Faculty & Staff Directory](#) lists both email and phone numbers for all faculty and staff.
3. Teacher websites will keep you informed on everything from the curriculum to be covered to homework assignments and test/quiz dates. You can easily subscribe to each of your student's teacher calendars to get updates for major assignments.
4. Follow the flow chart so that you know the system to pursue to get the correct answers to questions and concerns in the most efficient manner.

FLOW CHART

Questions about academics:



Questions about disciplinary actions:



Best Ways to Communicate:

1. Be open and remember that SVHS teachers, department heads, and administrators are highly invested in the success of each student.
2. Email is the most efficient way to contact the SVHS staff. You should expect a response within 48 hours.
3. Attend the Open House opportunities at the school. You will meet the teachers and administrators. This will help you to sense the level of care and concern for your student.

VISITING SPRING VALLEY HIGH CLASSROOMS AND FACILITIES

Parents visit the school for various reasons: special events, volunteer opportunities, meetings with teachers, and to drop off necessary items. With the exception of special events, parents should enter the school by the main doors located at the atrium. You will be greeted by a receptionist who will ask you the purpose for your visit. You will be asked to provide identification and obtain a visitors pass. The receptionist will direct you to the appropriate area.

SPRING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL 2014-2015 CALENDAR

You will find the current calendar (updated daily) on the school's website. Should any unexpected changes occur in the calendar, you will be notified by email and telephone. Please be sure that the

school always has updated contact information. In the event of inclement weather that closes the school, you will also find information on school closures on your local network television channel. Please sign up for the [Viking Update](#) for important information about upcoming events that affect your student.

ADVOCATING FOR YOUR STUDENT

1. Your student's success at SVHS is truly a team effort with your student at the center. Encourage your child to put forth his or her best efforts during this high school journey.
2. Excellence in education involves a safe, stimulating, and healthy environment. The school handbook lists the regulations that have been most successful in providing that environment. Please read this handbook before school starts. You will find it on the school's website.
3. Teachers are most effective in helping your student to achieve goals when they feel that they have a strong partnership with parents. Teachers welcome meeting you at Open House and emails and phone calls when you have questions or concerns.
4. Become part of the school community. Volunteers are always needed. There is no better way to understand the school's environment than being part of it.
5. When meeting with teachers and staff, always remember the common goal: your student's success.
6. Check the teachers' websites often. You'll find class assignment calendars, lesson plans, and materials to facilitate your student's learning.
7. Encourage your student to participate in school events and activities. Extra-curricular activities are important in gaining scholarships, social skills, and a sense of belonging.
8. Subscribe to the Google calendars of your student's teachers so you'll know when tests and important projects are due.
9. Be patient with the process. SVHS is a big school; you and your student are entering into a new environment and culture. Our job as teachers, administrators, staff, and SIC parents is to help you to become comfortable with your student's journey.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

The traffic patterns for picking up and discharging students are in place to provide a SAFE and efficient flow of traffic. Safety is first and foremost with assessing the needs of the cars coming onto SVHS campus. It's important that everyone abide by the following:

1. Follow the speed limit at all times. The speed limit in front of the school is 25 mph. On campus the speed limit is 5 mph.
2. Administrators and security guards are posted to help you navigate. Please follow their instructions. They are also trying to help students who leave campus on foot.
3. Do not park across the street at the restaurants and ask your student to meet you there. This is a dangerous crosswalk for your student.
4. It's important to get your student to class on time. Plan for at least 15 minutes for drop off and pick up in the morning and afternoon; for rainy days, plan for longer. Do not stop at the side of the school to pick up your student – this will create a hazard for your child and others.
5. Do not back up while in line, students often walk between cars to go to other activities.
6. If you need to enter the school, please use visitors' parking spaces. If you park on the curb, you'll be blocking traffic.

7. The last thing on your student's mind is safety. Therefore, safety must be the first thing on your mind while driving on campus.

PARENT PORTAL

[Parent Portal](#) is your best source of information of academic progress and attendance for you student. You can access parent portal as often as you want to. To know the daily progress, just double click on the subject grade in the last column. This will access daily information on quiz, test scores, classwork, homework, and missed work. If you have any questions about the daily information, email the teacher (the name is listed under the subject name) as soon as possible. You may also set up options on your computer to receive daily or weekly updates.

You must sign up at the beginning of the school to access Parent Portal. You will need to have your student's ID number when you do so. If you have difficulty with the process, contact the guidance office for assistance. You can also sign up for daily email updates from Parent Portal.

OPEN HOUSE

These events are extremely important. They are an opportunity to meet your student's teachers, guidance counselor, and administrators in person.

When you arrive:

1. Go directly to the Commons (see the map) and the guidance counselor at the station (they are listed by the first letter of your last name). Pick up your student's schedule.
2. Teachers are sitting in the cafeteria according to the alphabet. Check your list and find the first teacher. If the line is too long, you can always go to the next teacher on your list. Check off the teachers after you see them.

While you are there:

Remember that you have a total of **3 minutes** to talk with each teacher – Open House is intended to give you a chance to actually meet each teacher and get general information about the courses your student is taking. It's also a good time to set up an appointment for a more private discussion about any concerns you may have related to your student's particular needs.

Open House also provides you with an opportunity to meet the principal and other administrators, SIC members, foundation director (buy a SVHS shirt), and coaches (check the booster table).

TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Richland 2 School District defines electronic communication devices as: cellular and wireless telephones, pagers/beepers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), Blackberries/Smartphones, Nooks, Kindles, laptops and other e-readers, Wi-Fi enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit, on either a real time or delayed basis, sound, video or still images, text, or other information.

Cell Phones and ECDs:

Students love their cell phones and every conceivable ECD on the market. They will give many reasons why they should carry their phones and ECDs at all times. Your home cell phone policy is something you

have already covered. At school, carrying and using an ECD is a privilege, not a student right. Cell phones and other electronic devices can be very disruptive in classrooms. Please remind your student to follow the school policy regarding these devices.

1. Should your student need to contact you during the school day, there are phones that are available to them at the reception desk and office.
2. Should you need to contact your student in case of an emergency, you may call the attendance office (X69088) and the office will get a message to your student. You may also go to the reception desk at the front of the school.
3. The General Rule to follow when discussing the use of ECDs at school is this: When in classrooms for instruction or any other part of the school during a school activity he or she cannot use an ECD without the express permission of the teacher. Other stipulations on use of ECDs are covered in the R2 handbook located on the school's website.
4. The Consequences for not following the regulations are set down by the district and must be implemented. They are: 1st offense- warning/confiscate the device till the end of the school day; 2nd offense- confiscate the device and return it to the parent/legal guardian; 3rd offense-confiscate the device and return it to the parent/legal guardian and suspend the privilege for the remainder of the school year; 4th offense- confiscate the device and return it at the end of the school year.

Computers and Laptops:

SVHS has computers and other devices for your student to use at school. They are located in the student's classroom and the media center. The school is not liable for any device brought from home. The rules pertaining to use of technology and electronic devices listed in the student's handbook apply to devices brought from home.

Students will be issued Chrome Books for their use at home and school. As a parent, you have options regarding those devices.

1. You will be asked to pay for insurance for these devices. The amount of insurance (usually \$50/yr.) will be determined by factors such as the number of students enrolled in school, the free or reduced lunch program or other mitigating circumstances.
2. You have an option of purchasing your own device for use at school at a local retailer. It is up to you to weigh the advantages/disadvantages of paying the insurance each year versus buying one at a local store.

These are a number of rules regarding the use of any computer at school. They are available in the District Handbook. Responsible students use computers responsibly.

ATTENDANCE

Student who are absent for more than 5 days in a semester class or more than 10 days in a yearlong class risk receiving an FA (failure due to absence) in that class.

Students may be absent from classes for the following reasons:

1. The student is ill (requires a note from the parent).
2. The student experiences a death in the family (requires a note from the parent).
3. A student is involved in an on-site or off site school sponsored activity (notifies the attendance office if the student is marked unexcused).
4. A court appearance (present court documentation to the office)
5. A recognized religious holiday (approved by the principal in advance)

6. Appointment with a medical or dental professional (professional offices will provide an excuse to be dropped off at the attendance office)
7. A hardship (to be approved by the principal)
8. Suspension

Your student is still responsible for classwork and homework for the class that is missed.

Truancy:

1. A student who is unlawfully absent for 3 consecutive days is considered truant.
2. A student who is unlawfully absent for 10 total days in the school year is considered truant.
3. A student who does not provide the proper excuse from a parent is considered to be unlawfully absent.

TARDY POLICY

Students must be in their classroom, seated and ready to work before the first bell of each class. Any student who has not adhered to the bell schedule is considered tardy. They must go to C148 for the duration of that class.

Regular Schedule	Late Start Schedule	Pep Rally Schedule
Early Bird 7:30 - 8:25	1st Period 9:30 - 10:12	Early Bird 7:30 - 8:25
1st Period 8:40 - 9:29	2nd Period 10:17 - 10:59	1st Period 8:40 - 9:22
2nd Period 9:34 - 10:23	3rd Period 11:04 - 11:51	2nd Period 9:27 - 10:09
3rd Period 10:28 - 11:22	4th Period 11:56 - 12:38	3rd Period 10:14 - 11:01
4th Period 11:27 - 12:16	Lunch 12:38 - 1:12	4th Period 11:06 - 11:48
Lunch 12:16 - 12:51	5th Period 1:17 - 1:59	Lunch 11:48 - 12:23
5th Period 12:56 - 1:45	6th Period 2:04 - 2:46	5th Period 12:28 - 1:10
6th Period 1:50 - 2:39	7th Period 2:55 - 3:33	6th Period 1:15 - 1:57
7th Period 2:44 - 3:33		7th Period 2:02 - 2:44
		Pep Rally 2:44 - 3:33

MAKE UP WORK

1. Students who are absent from a class must make up the work missed
2. If a student has not handed in an assignment at the scheduled time, the individual teacher has the discretion to decide whether make up work will be accepted.
3. If your student has missed an assignment or is handing in an assignment late for an unusual circumstance, please let the teacher know by email before the school day when the assignment is due. It is still up to the discretion of the teacher whether they will accept or reject the assignment.
4. If your student has missed a test due to an excused absence, the teacher has the discretion to permit a make-up test during lunch or the testing center located inside the media center.
5. Encourage your student to complete missed work whether or not it will be accepted. This work is designed to reinforce what they have learned in the classroom and may be used by the student as a study tool later in the semester.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is one of most important tools your student can access for academic success. It offers books and online access to information your student will need to complete course work successfully. It also offers a quiet place for your student to study and read during the school day. The Media Center is open from 7:30am till 5:00pm Monday through Thursday and till 4:00pm on Friday. At the beginning of the school year, the media specialist will conduct a class for all students to help them become acquainted with the tools available to them. The specialist is also available to help your student with class projects that require research or particular type of literature.

Book usage:

1. Books, other than special resource editions are available to be checked out during the media hours. Each book is marked with the day that it is due and a fine is levied for overdue materials.
2. Your student is required to pay for books that are lost or damaged while in his or her possession.
3. Any fees due to the media center must be paid by the end of the school year.

Computer usage:

1. All computers in the media center are subject to the rules for technology and electronic devices in the school handbooks.
2. Students who do not follow the rules for usage may be suspended or barred from usage of these devices at the discretion of the media specialist.

Office of School Counseling

Your student will be assigned a guidance counselor based on your last name. This is an extremely important part of your student's success at SVHS.

Services:

1. The counselor will help your student chose a course of study based on his or her future plans and explain requirements for certain classes and graduation. It's important to realize that students are not assigned a particular teacher but a course selection.
2. A variety of college events are scheduled during the year. These events are very informative regarding college selection and how to pay for college.
3. Counselors can help you and your student learn more about pre-college testing such as the PSAT, ACT, and SAT tests and review the test results with you and your student and help you to understand how those results affect your college selection and scholarship availability.
4. Career counselors are available in the Career Information Center by appointment.
5. Schedule changes must be done within the first five days of each semester. Course withdrawals and change of levels must be handled within the timeframe set by state regulations.
6. If needed, your student's counselor can schedule an "academic intervention" (a meeting of all your student's teachers) with you and your student.
7. Your guidance counselor is an excellent person to speak with regarding any outside intervention or assistance you may need to help your student to be successful.

TUTORING AND TESTING

The **After School Tutoring and Testing Center** is administrated by Susan Arling (x69272). .

1. Teachers and National Honor Society students are available for free tutoring throughout the school day and afterschool (Monday through Thursday 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.).
2. Your student has access to the T&T Center before school, during lunch, and after school to complete tests, quizzes, or assignments missed during an excused absence.
3. Virtual High School students use the T&T Center for tests and quizzes. Ms. Arling will help you and your student access the username and pass code needed.

HOMEWORK

1. In high school, homework may be different from any other homework your student may have experienced before. Homework policies will be outlined in each teacher's syllabus.
2. Study homework is as important as the written work to be handed in.
3. Teachers give several avenues to inform your student about homework assignment. Your student will receive verbal and written instructions about the assignment and due date. You and your student can access information on the teacher's website. This is especially important for upcoming projects. Remind your student that homework is graded and counts in their final averages.
4. Provide a large permanent area (such as a large table with a good lamp) for your student to use during the school year. Keep it out of sight of distractions (TV, iPods, cell phones, etc.).
5. Check in with your student as to the progress on each night's homework. If your student is taking longer than three hours to do homework, check on the reasons. Start with where and how they do their homework. Then check with their teacher to determine if your student might need extra help or tutoring.
6. Check in with your student regarding homework assignments that are not due the next day. It is a good policy to complete homework as soon as possible after it is assigned to avoid an "all-nighter" to catch up.
7. Homework assignments at SVHS are geared toward reinforcing what is taught in the classroom and to prepare your student for the academic challenges as students continue their educations.
8. Homework is a lot of work! Homework is work for students, teachers (they have to grade the homework), and parents (who should check in on progress). Regardless, SVHS students are bound to an honor code that states that they and only they do their homework.
9. At the end of the evening, remind your students that everything should be packed up for the next school day. A forgotten homework assignment counts the same as one that has not been completed.

LOCKERS

1. Students can be issued a locker and combination lock at the beginning of the school year through the attendance office.
2. Students are not allowed to use their own personal locks.
3. The locker number and combination are issued and students have a copy that they bring home. Keep it handy so that your student can access the information if needed.
4. Administrators and security personnel have access to lockers.

NUTRITION

1. Good nutrition for your student starts at home. Beware; it is rare the number of students who only eat healthy food at school. How much unhealthy food they ingest is a subject to be covered before they begin the semester.
2. The Cafeteria offers different choices of food each day. Breakfast is offered from 8:00 a.m. until the first bell. Lunch is offered in the cafeteria and several outposts at the school. You can pay for lunches ahead of time by putting money on their cafeteria account. Students may also bring their own lunch from home.
3. Students may not leave campus to get lunch unless they are seniors (or qualifying juniors during the second semester).
4. Vending machines are available in the Commons lobby for students to pick up food and drinks on the go.
5. Students are not permitted to take food or drink into the classrooms. If your student needs extra nutrition during the day due to health, let the school nurse know.
6. Nutrition bars are a good way for students to snack on the run between classes.
7. Encourage your student to eat every day at school. Poor nutrition will prevent him or her from attaining the information and retaining the information they access in their course work.

DETENTION

All rules have consequences. Minor infractions to the school rules such as dress code and ID badges have consequences called “hours.” When your student receives hours, it is not a personal attack (no matter what he or she says).

1. Have your student look over the student handbook before school begins so that he or she knows the rules ahead of time.
2. Students are issued slips that may be signed by the parent to earn 1 hour of detention credit towards the hours given.
3. Students must serve detention hours or be in jeopardy of suspension from school.
4. Students have 2 weeks to make up the hours assigned.

After-school detention meets in C-148 Tuesday – Thursday from 3:45-6:45 p.m. and on Saturday in the Commons Atrium from 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. Saturday detention starts promptly at 8:00 – no late sign-ins. Lunch detention meets in the Auditorium the first 15 minutes of lunch. Failure to serve all detention hours by the due date will result in suspension.

SAFETY ISSUES

Your student’s safety while on campus is important to SVHS. The school has 2 full time resource officers and additional security personnel. You will also see administrators present throughout the day to facilitate class transitions and traffic patterns on campus as well as the bus area of the school. You can help us in keeping your student safe by going over some helpful reminders with your student.

1. Students need to be mindful of any signs (such as wet floor) that are posted in the hallways or classrooms.
2. They should never loiter in the halls once the bell has rung to neither start nor leave before end of class.

3. Students who are not involved in after-school activities must leave the campus by 4:00 pm.
4. All staff and students wear an ID badge while on campus. Visitors receive a visitor's pass that is worn while on campus. Your student's ID badge tells the staff that he or she belongs on the SVHS campus. Students who forget their ID badge may purchase a temporary one for \$1 in the Media Center before school begins. Replacement ID badges cost \$5 are available in the Media Center before school. Students must have ID badges visible at all times. There are no exceptions to this policy.

HEALTH ROOM

The school nurse is available to help students with healthcare needs before school, between classes or during lunch. Students may be sent by the teacher during class for emergencies.

1. Keep your student's health forms and your contact information up to date.
2. Controlled substances require a written order from the physician.
3. Any and all medications (prescription/over the counter) must be in the health room so that your student may take them as needed/required.
4. Never give your student a controlled substance to self-administer while at school.
5. Any requests for special bathroom privileges, slow passes, etc. need a written physician order.
6. All health form information is confidential.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is essential for your student's academic success. Most parents worry about making a large commitment of time during the school year. We have opportunities to involved parents that may take as little as 30 minutes for the year.

1. Sign up for email alerts on Parent Portal and the *Viking Update*.
2. Read the announcements sent out by the school
3. Attend orientation days, information evenings, and open house events
4. The Media Center always needs volunteers for as little or as much time as you can give. Rather than sitting in line during pickup for 30 minutes, you can park in the visitor's spaces and help at the media center. If you have time in the morning after dropping off your student, please drop in to lend a hand.
5. If you have a green thumb, help for as little or as long as you can with clean up and planting around the campus or sign up to run for the School Improvement Council (1 hr. commitment per month).
6. The Education Foundation is responsible for free tutoring at the school and classroom grants for special equipment needs. Whip up a dish for the International Fair, pick up some items for the Auction on a weekend afternoon, donate a dust collector, or help with paperwork like stuffing an envelope (some you can do at home).
7. Your student will value their SVHS experience more because you show them how much you care about their school. Students do better in school when their parents are involved.
8. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Evonne Washington (X69902) and give her your information. You will be contacted shortly.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION

It is important to know which classes are required for your student to be promoted to the next grade. Remember to check with your student's guidance counselor about the courses needed for the next step in their academic or professional career in addition to the minimum requirements listed here.

1. Freshman: promotion from the 8th Grade
2. Sophomore: 5 credits including English 1 and 1 unit of math
3. Junior: 12 credits including 2 units of English and 2 units of Math
4. Senior: 18 credits including 3 units of English and 3 units of Math

In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, your student must have passed the **24** required credits.

DRESS CODE

The most concise information on the dress code is located in the student handbook; however, here are some helpful guidelines to use with your student.

1. The purpose of the SVHS dress code is to promote a safe school environment free from unnecessary distraction.
2. Oversized pants or jeans cannot be worn without a belt on campus.
3. Clothing must not be so oversized as to show undergarments.
4. Hair, makeup and piercings should not pose a distraction to teachers and students.
5. Clothes should not be revealing. No cleavage, cropped tops, or see through clothing is allowed.
6. No clothing with suggestive images, promotion of tobacco or alcohol, or gang related images are permitted.
7. No hoods or hats are permitted to be worn in the school building.
8. Clothing and accessories cannot pose a danger to the student or others.
9. The general rule is: clothing should not distract the student or others from learning.

Consequences:

- 1st Offense: students will be sent home to change into appropriate attire or parents may bring the appropriate attire to school or students will be sent to in-school detention
- Repeated violations will be considered disruptive behavior will result in disciplinary action.

Things to Think about Now for Later -- Thoughts from a Senior's Parent to Freshmen Parents

After High School: I know that you're thinking that four years is far away. I know you think that your son or daughter moving into high school is a big hurdle that can give you some breathing space. I know that I thought the same thing. I also know the panic that sets in as a guidance counselor sits down with you and your student and asks what the career path of your student will be. As the parent of a senior, I'd like to share with you some of the things I learned that will help you guide your son or daughter into the future.

Abilities and Interests: When your child was born you dreamed of his or her future. Since then your child has shown you the abilities and interests that have shaped the wide-eyed freshman you are sending off to school. What kind of learner is he or she? What motivates him or her? Are your student's goals (and yours) a realistic match for his or her abilities and interests? One of the things that your student's guidance counselor can do is help you determine how your student's goals and abilities match up to a successful future. Remember that not all students are ready for college when college is ready for them. Be patient, however, that boy or girl who can't seem to find his or her books or remember to take out the garbage is going to mature tremendously in high school.

Possibilities: Here are the possibilities that may suit your son or daughter in the future.

1. **College:** Today there are a broad range of colleges that your student can attend. Colleges range from Ivy League to colleges that offer classes and degrees for the student who does not learn in traditional ways. In your student's junior year of high school, he or she will be asked to name 5 colleges for which they would like to apply. Here's the method: 2 colleges that are very competitive, 2 colleges that are less competitive and 3 colleges that fit in the middle of that range. These are relative terms depending on their high school coursework and progress. A really helpful website is www.barronspac.com. It is the college bible for parents and students. It will tell you all the information that you will need to know about college across the U.S. The time to start using the website is before your student's second semester of freshman year. It's easier to know what course is required now, than trying to cram coursework in later.
2. **Military:** The branches of military service offer many opportunities to gain the skills and education needed for a successful future. It also lifts much of the burden of school loans since this is part of their military benefits. Each branch of the service and each career path have different challenges and requirements. Also, college in the military does not necessarily mean serving in the traditional military. Opportunities also exist in the Reserve Officers Training Corps Program. ROTC Programs allow students to attend college while receiving financial support. After graduation from this program, students enter one of the branches of military service as an officer. Then students are expected to serve from four to ten years of service to a particular branch of the service. An important website is www.todaysmilitary.com. The military is not just for the college bound. It is primarily an opportunity to serve the country. If your student has interests in following this career path (whether college or not) it is important to enroll them in Spring Valley's ROTC Program now.

3. Technology and Professional Schools: Some students want to focus on entering the workforce earlier than four years from graduation from high school. This is often a consideration for students that show interests and abilities in professions that do not require four year degrees. This does not mean that students can skip basic courses in high school that are required for a successful career, but there are courses that will meet your student's career path goals. Talk to your guidance counselor during freshman year to determine if your student fits this path. Remember that today's computer programmer did not have to master AP English, but they have the foundation they need to meet the requirements of their career.
4. Work Force Learning: If your student is eager to join the work force upon graduation. 30 to 40% of high school graduates nation-wide will not go into college directly from high school. William Larsen conducted a study in 2006 that found that high school students who are not planning to attend college should combine vocational and academic course work to maximize their success in the labor market. They also found that
 - a) Taking additional vocation courses is associate with only a small reduction in the number of academic courses taken;
 - b) Taking additional vocational courses is strongly associated with success in the labor market immediately after high school;
 - c) Taking additional academic courses is not associated with high earnings immediately after high school;
 - d) Taking a combination of 16 or more academic and vocational courses during the last three years of school enabled students to have greater labor market success than taking fewer than 10 such courses; and
 - e) Good grade point averages and standardized test scores generally had mixed effects on labor market outcomes.

My Head is Spinning:

The great news is that you have chosen one of the best schools in the country to meet the challenges of helping your son or daughter meet the needs of his or her career path. I know from experience that you are not doing this alone. Parents are the essential part of the team that will determine your student's future success. The team is made up of you, your student, your student's guidance counselor, and your student's teachers. **Remember that you have the right, privilege, and responsibility of selecting and approving the course work of your student. Their future rests in your hands.** Follow the links provided here and ask your guidance counselor for additional links. Make an appointment with your student's guidance counselor during each school year to assess your student's progress toward his or her career goals. Together, we can think and plan now for the future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Claire Parker