

Family Handbook 2017-2018

Reawaken Your Love of Learning



Mission Statement

September School is an intimate and supportive community that fosters individual development and reawakens the love of learning. We empower ourselves to become critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens.

Dear September School Families,

I am thrilled to return this year as Head of School, learning and growing along with all of you! Our returning students and staff are ready to carry on the traditions of excellence in education and community building that we value so highly, and we're excited to welcome and embrace all newcomers. The 2017-2018 academic year is full of engaging academics, community service learning, creative projects in the arts, and transformative school-wide excursions.

In the pages of the Family Handbook, you'll find overviews of our history and philosophy along with information that will help you stay informed about and involved in our program. Please read the following material carefully, and discuss it with your students. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, please contact the school, and we'll happily go over the information with you.

On behalf of our teachers and administration, please accept my enthusiastic welcome to another year at September School. We remain committed to collaboration and shared governance in our community, and the involvement of students and their families is a vital part of what makes our school a unique and powerful place in which to work and learn. The relationships our teachers build with students provide a safe and stimulating environment for students to learn, take risks, make friends, and grow into vibrant young adults prepared to go out and make their mark on the world.

Here's to a great year at September School,

Kelly Molinet
Head of School

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About September School

Contact and Communication Information

Office Hours and Appointments

The main building is open **Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm** through the school year. Families must account for their students by 4:00 pm. Families must contact the office to schedule appointments with the administration; teachers can be contacted via email for questions and appointments.

Phone: (303) 443-9933

Faculty and Staff Contacts

Kelly Molinet, Head of School kelly@septemberschool.org
Sarah Lerversee, Finance and HR Manager sarah@septemberschool.org
Dan Beliveau, Academic Dean and Math dan@septemberschool.org
David Cumming, Master of Administration david@septemberschool.org
Angela Beloian, Art angela@septemberschool.org
Art Atkison, English art@septemberschool.org
Eitan Fire, History and Social Studies eitan@septemberschool.org
Eve Halpern, Counselor eve@septemberschool.org
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Snow Days

For weather-related school delays or cancellations, September School follows Boulder Valley School District weather decisions for Boulder High School, which can be accessed at bvsd.org. The school will also notify families via email.

Communication with Staff

As Head of School, my door (and my phone and email...) is always open for parents and students to share concerns, ask questions or make suggestions. To ensure a swift and confidential response to particular concerns/questions, please contact the following staff:

For questions/notifications concerning	Contact
Attendance (tardies and absences)	Main office via phone or [EMAIL ADDRESS]
Counseling/emotional wellness concerns	Leslie Gustason and/or Eve Halpern
Tuition, FACTS, and billing	Sarah Leverage
Financial Aid	Kelly Molinet
Academics (credits, transcripts, graduation path, etc.)	Dan Beliveau
Classwork/standing grades/class curriculum	Individual teachers
School events	Main office via phone or [EMAIL ADDRESS]

Anything that requires immediate attention should go through administration. I expect teachers to be teaching during school hours and not attending to parent communication until end of day. Please allow teachers a 24 hour response window. Individual teachers may provide personal contact information and guidelines. Please do not unnecessarily carbon copy other members of staff on emails; staff will consult with each other as needed.

We are working on making the website more functional for parents and students to access information and updates. I appreciate your help in streamlining staff communication so that we can meet your needs in a timely and compassionate manner.

-Kelly

School History

In the fall of 1973, September School was one of 5000 independent schools across the nation that opened its doors to students for the first time. Each school had its own set of dedicated families and teachers, and its own vision for independent education. Despite the heartfelt efforts put forth by many people, most of these schools were unable to sustain themselves over time. In fact, by 2001, all but 2% of these schools had to close. September School has thrived for 44 years because it has been carried forward on the shoulders of an energetic, committed faculty that has inspired hundreds of students. Our community of families, students, staff, and alumni has supported the school's growth into the robust educational center that it is today.

Though the words of the mission have evolved over time, our underlying intention has remained the same. Over the years we have transformed the lives of hundreds of teens in this community, and we believe it is the mutually powerful relationship with our community that has sustained us so well over time. We put everything we can into what we do, and it works. Students from September School graduate with well-rounded academic skills, in-depth exposure to the arts, and the experience of belonging to a community. This combination prepares the student well for challenges beyond high school. Over eighty percent of September School graduates continue their education at the college or university level. When they leave us, they leave prepared not only for college, but prepared for life.

Educational Philosophy

September School's commitment to a small staff to student ratio allows us to be the intimate and supportive community that our mission statement proclaims. Many new students come to us disenchanted with their former experiences, which is why we focus on reawakening their love of learning. At September School, staff and students develop close personal relationships based on trust and acceptance. We celebrate individuality, and encourage students to pursue their interests in becoming who they want to be. We welcome all students with patience and nurturing, so that they may feel comfortable sharing their whole selves with the community. We honor the differences between students' abilities and experiences by creating instruction that meets each student wherever he or she is academically, developmentally, and emotionally.

In the classroom, students are encouraged to share the responsibility of finding solutions to their personal and academic problems. Our students navigate challenges by becoming critical thinkers, which is a process we facilitate by posing open-ended and compelling questions both in and out of the classroom. When given the space and resources to discover and develop passions, students are inspired to pursue their own lifelong learning paths. Each student is empowered to find his or her own truth as he or she learns the values of and means to self-advocacy. September School graduates leave our classrooms believing that challenges are opportunities to learn and grow, and they go into the world seeking experience and knowledge. Because they have developed their personalities and talents, September School graduates become effective leaders in and contributors to community. (See related information in *Academics*.)

Behavior Management Philosophy

We believe it is our role to help teens develop internal controls over time rather than training them to rely on external controls and boundaries to regulate their behavior. We acknowledge the importance for adolescents to internalize a personal set of values, to develop a voice, to think independently, and to make the best choices for themselves.

The school's primary tool for effective behavior management comes from our ability to create a safe environment and, as a staff, to create a sense of belonging for our students. It is the quality of our relationships that provide a foundation for any behavioral intervention. The connections we foster with teens are second to none, and these types of relationships decrease the frequency and intensity of behavioral problems while providing a greater path to success.

When behavioral management becomes elevated, the school increases the level of contact and support the student is receiving. We will frequently involve the student in a community mediation circle, a highly effective intervention that utilizes the strength of the community to help the student get back on track. When problems persist, or are severe at the onset, we work with the families to find an appropriate solution.

Behavioral Policies

Although September School avoids the restrictions that unilateral policies impose, it is important to understand that **violence and substance abuse have no place within our community.**

Community Safety

September School is a safe environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Because of our commitment to community, we rarely see incidents of violent or abusive behavior. Nonetheless, to ensure the continued safety of all parties at September School, we must make some things clear: Violence and abuse can be physical or emotional, and September School will not condone any behaviors that violate another community member's feelings of personal safety and security. If any person experiences or observes a violation of personal safety, he or she is encouraged to report the incident to a staff member.

When violations of community safety occur, members of the staff will approach all parties involved and decide upon a course of action. Examples of possible disciplinary actions include: notification of parents, a mediated conversation, restriction of open-campus privileges, extra-curricular involvement, community service, suspension, and in extreme cases, expulsion. These violations are exceedingly rare.

Substance Abuse Policy

September School is a drug and alcohol free campus and we require the commitment from all community members to maintain our sober campus. The school reserves the right to enforce consequences as the administration sees fit in an effort to enforce this policy.

We take a comprehensive approach to preventing substance use that includes educating our students about the risks of substance use, supporting our student to make healthy choices and develop good coping skills, and enforcing clear boundaries as outlined in our policy. We will work with each teen and family to develop a specific strategy for intervention and positive growth.

All community members must remain free of the influence of drugs or alcohol during school hours, or during any community activity, including school trips and special events. Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia or engaging in any dealings involving drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited.

When a student is suspected of being in violation of the Substance Abuse Policy, one or more faculty will approach them to determine the truth and degree of any violation. Faculty reserve the right to question and search the student's person and possessions, including vehicles.

If it is determined that a student is in violation of the Substance Abuse Policy, or a student refuses to be questioned or searched, the student's parents will be immediately contacted and the student will be sent home. Prior to returning to a normal school schedule, the student and parent(s) will meet with the Head of School and related faculty to discuss the occurrence, the consequences, and create a plan of action that may include any of the following:

- Participation in an approved after school intensive outpatient programming
- Weekly or biweekly meetings with the school counselor and/or an outside therapist
- Substance prevention classes outside the school
- Documented results from randomly scheduled drug screens
- Restriction from leaving campus during school hours
- Probationary status at the school, meaning no second chance if boundaries are violated.

Any violation of the Substance Abuse Policy could result in immediate and permanent expulsion.

Smoking/Vaping Policy

Consistent with Colorado law, smoking is prohibited at September School. The school believes that smoking/vaping and the use of any tobacco product is detrimental to the health and well being of the school staff and student body. As with all illegally-used and addictive substances, we strive to holistically support students in making better life choices. The school is also concerned that allowing smoking/vaping on or near campus increases the risks for non-smokers and encourages students to smoke who may otherwise not make this choice. Furthermore, as an educational institution, allowing smoking/vaping on our campuses and in our buildings illustrates practices which conflict with our beliefs and expectations. The school believes that the development of a total wellness concept for staff and students is basic to sound education and overall health and well being.

Smoking and the use of tobacco products, including vaping, on and within sight of school grounds is not permitted at any time. These restrictions apply to school buildings, school grounds, school-owned vehicles, and school-sponsored events. **Students and staff shall not use tobacco and/or vaping products within sight of the September School campus nor any school sponsored events. These restrictions on the use of tobacco products also extend to all citizens and patrons attending school-sponsored events and meetings held in school buildings and to any group or organization contracting for public or private use of school facilities.**

Parents may request that we inform them if we notice their student is using tobacco or vaping. If a parent believes that tobacco and vaping products may be an issue for their student, they may contact the school to assist in the prevention process. September School is committed to supporting students with educational information and programs that will assist them in making healthy life choices around tobacco use.

Per Colorado Tobacco Use and Prevention Act – C.R.S. 18-13-121, C.R.S. 25-14-301, C.R.S. 25-14-103.5

Attire Policy

- We welcome students' self-expression in freely choosing what to wear.
- We expect students' attire to be in accordance with the Community Member Agreement, especially the Two Boundaries:
 - No Abuse
 - A substance-free school

Internet Use & Personal Technology

Usage of any personal technology device must be approved teachers. Related permissions may be revoked or modified, at each instructor's discretion. At their discretion, school staff is also authorized to confiscate and keep a cell phone or other personal technology device for the duration of one class period or a full school day.

Wi-Fi Connection Log-In

Students may use the student login to access the school's Wi-Fi connection. Students can contact the office for the login information. Students should be mindful of the shared bandwidth and refrain from downloading/accessing media that would limit access and speed for others.

Cell Phones

Cell phones should be either off or on silent while in class, and their usage is explicitly not allowed. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the teacher.

Laptop Computers

With permission from the instructor, laptops may be used in classrooms. Students are welcome to bring their laptops to school for work outside of class time, unless allowed by the instructor.

iPods/mp3 Players

The use of Personal Music Devices (iPods, mp3 players, music-enabled cell phones) is generally not allowed in the classroom. However, some students may request use of these devices during individual study time.

Students who bring personal devices to school do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, stolen, or "borrowed but not returned" personal technology.

Campus Resources & Policies

Bus Stop, Parking, and Bicycle Racks

The nearest bus stop is where Pearl St. and Canyon St. intersect (in front of the parking lot at Settler's Park). Seniors in good academic standing may apply for a parking permit on a first-come, first-served basis. Students and families should coordinate with the office to utilize the shuttle system or use mass transit for commuting.

Outdoor bicycle racks are available for student use. Students are encouraged to use u-locks for theft resistance. The school is not responsible for bicycle theft or damage.

Pets Policy

Students are not permitted to bring pets on campus at any time, unless previously authorized by the Head of School. Families may need to provide proof of immunization at the school's discretion. Trained service animals are welcome per ADA guidelines. Emotional support animals are not trained assistance animals and are not allowed on campus.

Student Responsibility for Personal Belongings

Assumption Of Responsibility

September School is a safe, caring community. Nevertheless, the reality of theft is a part of any high school. The School assumes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property. The School is not responsible for mediating loans of property or money between

students. Students are discouraged from bringing valuables to campus and from making transactions with other students. Students are solely responsible for their own possessions.

Coat Racks and Cubbies

Coat racks and cubbies are available for students in the student kitchen area. Although we work hard to maintain trust with students and do not wish to be invasive, the school reserves the right to search all student possessions (backpacks, bags, jackets, etc.) at the discretion of the administration.

Classrooms & Classroom Property

A key component of the Community Member Agreement (see Appendices) is the concept of respect. This respect extends to the physical spaces at September School as well as the property within and the property of other members of the community. Willful disrespect or damage of school property, buildings, or grounds will be addressed and may require reimbursement from the student for cleaning or replacement costs.

Students are issued most textbooks and study materials at no charge. Please maintain all materials in good condition; charges are assessed for lost or damaged books and materials.

Technology Use Agreement

September School has laptops available for student use for educational purposes. Each student has an account assigned by the school and is provided orientation for proper use and storage.

In order to use the school computers, students must sign the Technology Use Agreement. This agreement specifies allowable uses and prohibits all food and beverage from the room or area. Violations may result in the revocation of technology privileges. The school reserves the right to charge families for broken or damaged technology caused by their student.

Community Kitchen & Kitchen Use

There is a kitchen that is available for student lunch use provided that they clean up after themselves and respect one another's property. The refrigerator will be emptied of all unmarked items on a regular basis. At the Head of School's discretion, the kitchen may be closed to student use or utensils and dishware removed if it is determined that the space is not being properly respected.

Student advisory groups will be assigned rotating responsibilities for maintaining the kitchen.

Teachers' Workroom

The teachers' workroom is located in Academic Building. **Students are not allowed to enter without accompaniment by a faculty member.**

Visitor Policies

Guests Of Students

Visitors are always welcome, but their visit requires advance notice and permission. All guests are required to check in when they first arrive, no matter how long they are planning to stay.

Prior permission is required. Guests under 18 must provide emergency contact information and have parent or guardian written or verbal consent to be present on our campus during school hours.

Shadow Students

Shadow students are prospective students from outside the community who pair up with one of our students to sit in on classes for the day. This is a great way for prospective students to experience the school. Current students may apply to pair up with a shadow student.

Visiting Teachers, Professionals & Other Guests

The school welcomes those who have an interest in teen education, and it is proud of the program and the amount of interest it generates from the community. Those interested in learning more about the school are encouraged to visit. Guests must make an appointment and check in with the office when they arrive.

Attendance Policies

Families must contact the office as soon as possible when a student will be late or absent. Absences for illnesses, travel, weather hazards, and education-related work excused. Students are responsible for missed class work and must talk with teachers for missed work. Makeup work for unexcused absences is at teacher discretion.

Excessive absences, excused or unexcused, affect the number of credits that a student earns for a class. Reduced credits are at the discretion of faculty and the Head of School. Attendance policies are outlined in class syllabuses.

Absences And Tardies

A student who is not in class receives an Absent for that class period. Students who miss a significant portion of class (typically more than 10 more minutes late) or exhibit poor classroom behavior may also receive an Absent for that period. At the teacher's discretion, students may lose credit from a course due to absences, especially for participation-based classes. Refer to class syllabuses for teacher policies on absences and tardies.

Open Campus

September School is an open campus. Students may leave campus during breaks and lunch. This is a privilege, and as such may be revoked at the discretion of the office for school violations and misuse.

Extended Absences

When students are absent for an extended period of time, the family and instructors create a plan for how the student will make up for the missing time. An alternative solution may include earning credits based on the portion of time that they attended school. Please contact the office as early as possible to inform the school of an extended absence.

Academics

Academic Honesty Policy

The Academic Honesty Policy fosters integrity and individual responsibility. Academic honesty creates an educational community based on trust in which individuals are treated fairly and recognized for their individual achievement.

Students are expected to turn in honest, timely, and individual work; **plagiarism will not be tolerated**. In cooperative learning activities, students are expected to complete individual assignments on time and fully share information with a partner or small group. Participation in group discussion and completion of assignments are expected. Allowing others to take credit for work they did not do, not fulfilling responsibilities, and being distracting to the group will not be tolerated.

Students must give credit for all ideas and information taken from sources and to ask for help when needed to meet this expectation. Presenting work or ideas of someone else without giving credit is considered plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Teachers instruct students on sourcing expectations and requirements for classroom projects.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Policy

When a teacher suspects violations of the Academic Honesty Policy, they will discuss the situation privately with the student(s) involved. The student(s) will be given the opportunity to explain the situation, and the teacher will make a determination if a violation has occurred.

If the teacher determines that there was a violation, the office will notify families and the student(s) will receive no credit for the assignment. Incidents of such violations will be reported to the Head of School, even if the consequence is handled entirely by the teacher. Second offenses may result in an instant F for the course. Third offenses would warrant full academic reviews, which may result in academic probation or expulsion from the school.

Academic Probation

A probation contract will designate what specific steps need to be taken, how they will be measured, and what the consequences will be if the expectations are not met. Students on academic probation are ineligible to re-register until the contract provisions are met and the academic probation is formally lifted.

Graduation Requirements

General Requirements

September School requires 240 credits for graduation, including core curriculum requirements. A minimum of 260 credits is strongly recommended for college applicants. Refer to the 2017-2018 Graduation Requirements appendix for details.

Transfer Credit

Students transferring from a previous educational program are required to provide an official transcript detailing credit earned and any additional information necessary to interpret the transcript. September School faculty and staff evaluate and approve incoming transfer credit, including credit earned through online programs. Failure to provide complete information about a student's educational history and all previous institutions attended may result in loss or omission of credit.

Petition for Early Graduation

High school is typically a four-year journey. Early graduation is not encouraged due to the benefit of completing the academic, personal, and community opportunities provided during the September School experience.

Simply completing the minimum number of credits required is not justification for early graduation. Most students should accumulate more credits to have a well-rounded academic experience and be more fully prepared for college. However, students may petition for early graduation if it is determined to be in their interest. Students who are interested in graduating early should discuss this with their academic advisors, families, and the Head of School.

Independent Track Option

Students interested in specific course content or taking honors coursework are encouraged to meet with the academic dean and content area teacher to discuss options that allow for limited reorganization and specialization of some credit requirements.

Examples of this independent track towards graduation include:

- Establishing a comprehensive portfolio for attending an art institute
- Developing intensive foreign language skills while studying abroad
- Participating in an internship or apprentice program
- Taking Honors courses or preparing for Advanced Placement testing
- Enrolling in college courses concurrent with high school enrollment

Graduation Ceremonies & Receipt Of Diploma

Candidates for graduation cannot be deficient more than 10 credits to be recommended for matriculation. If a student has earned at least 230 of the 240 credits required for graduation and has a documented plan in place to earn the remaining credit, he or she can request to participate

in graduation ceremonies. Refer to the 2017-2018 Graduation Requirements appendix for details.

Graduating senior students must be current with all tuition bills and fees in order to participate in graduation ceremonies. Diplomas will only be issued upon successful completion of the credit deficiencies and full payment of any outstanding tuition statements.

Release of Transcripts

Students can request transcripts in person or by contacting the office. Requests are handled free of charge and will be processed within two weeks. Students must provide pre-stamped envelopes for mailing if postal service is required (transcripts are often emailed or faxed). Rushed transcript requests are available for a \$20 fee. Transcripts (official or unofficial) will not be available for release until all outstanding debts are resolved and any September School property is returned.

Seniors requesting transcripts for college applications must not have outstanding tuition payments and be approved by the office for release of records. **Final transcripts must be requested in writing by graduating seniors prior to the end of the school year to ensure receipt by your college or program in a timely manner for fall semester.**

Class Registration

Pre-Registration

Records and transcripts are updated and reviewed each semester to determine enrollment for core curriculum classes and used for determining course demand. Students will be pre-registered for core classes required for graduation and will be advised per their post-graduation plans. Recommendations are given for summer courses or alternative credit opportunities. Contact the office with questions about credits, graduation, or registration.

Drop/Add Process

Students have **two weeks** after the start of the semester to request a schedule change. Students must meet with their advisor to discuss any schedule changes and obtain a Drop/Add Form from the office. This form requires authorization signatures from 1) the instructor of the class being dropped, and 2) the instructor of the added course. Schedule changes are finalized upon receipt of form and confirmation by the Head of School. Family notification and authorization may be necessary for some schedules.

Classes dropped after two weeks into the new semester will appear as withdrawn (W) on transcripts.

Alternative Credit Options

Students who desire to go above and beyond core requirements, and those who need to earn credit outside of September School have options to do so. Below are listed some of the possibilities. Students should ask their teacher or the academic dean for more information on

any of these options.

Honors Credit

30 hours of additional work outside of the classroom. Courses taken for Honors credit earn students an extra grade point. An A received through honors credit is a 5.0 on a 4.0 GPA scale. Teachers work with students individually on creating a contract for honors credit.

Independent Study

A student in good academic standing may earn up to five credits (at 15 hours per credit) per semester through independent study. Students should first discuss independent study options with the Academic Dean before working with a teacher on their course. Students, advisers, parents, and the administration must all sign off on the course of study with a form available at the office. Families are charged \$500 for every independent study course up to 5 credits that is outside of a student's class schedule.

Concurrent Credit Courses

Local universities and colleges offer programs to enroll high school students in college level courses, allowing credit to be earned concurrently for both. Please note that tuition for these programs is billed independently of September School and students should carefully weigh their ability to balance the rigorous demands of college courses when committing to enroll. Students can talk to the Academic Dean to determine if concurrent college credit is a good fit for their schedule and ability.

Online Coursework

There are many online programs available to help students recover lost credit or to work more in depth with content in which they are interested. The Academic Dean must approve online coursework for it to count towards September School credit.

Directed Study Hall

A student can elect to work silently and alone for a period. This option is a useful study strategy for many students. Students are expected to sign in, discuss plans for the period, report to the assigned room, and sign out upon conclusion of the period. Students in good academic standing can receive permission to do so from the Academic Dean.

Accommodations & Academic Support

Students with learning disabilities may need to learn material differently than other students in their classes. Accommodations are designed to give students ways to learn and demonstrate knowledge according to their individual learning profile. An accommodation is not intended to change the standard of learning nor lower the expectations for performance that have been set for all students; accommodations "level the playing field" by allowing students to bypass or partially bypass the effects of a disability in order to learn and perform at the levels expected of students without disabilities.

Students and families should share information about any diagnosed conditions, as well as information on the types of supports and services that have been helpful in providing the best academic and social environment for the student. The school strives to accommodate all students with learning disabilities and find strategies and solutions that best fit a student's needs and goals. Some solutions may involve referral to resources outside of the school program while other support solutions may be found within the regular school day.

Withdrawal

Families who wish to withdraw their students from the school must provide the administration with a 30-day written notice, deliverable by email or post to the administration office. Withdrawal dates are formalized on student transcripts. Credits are calculated based on final grades and withdrawal dates. Please see the Tuition Policies appendix for details regarding tuition refunds. Families must contact the office and discuss transfer arrangements.

Assessment & Evaluations

Grading Scale And Policy

A student's performance in a class is measured by a letter grade or pass/fail, as well as by the number of credits received, which reflects the amount of work completed and the amount of effort put into the course. Courses that meet 5 times a week typically are worth 5 credits, while split courses may be worth 2 or 3 credits. 1 credit is 15 hours of contact time.

Mid-Quarter Reports

Parents will be notified at mid-quarter if the student is in danger of losing credit in a course (usually due to excessive absences/tardies) or receiving a grade of D or lower. While staff will communicate with students regularly to try to keep this situation from happening, we use this as an opportunity to work both parents and students to get back on track.

Evaluation Conferences (Evals)

Students and families meet with teachers at the end of each quarter in a unique forum to discuss the student's life at September School. Referred to as Evals, these conferences last 30 minutes

and is a great opportunity for celebrating successes over the semester and sharing strategies for overcoming obstacles. Academics and social/behavioral well being are discussed.

Evals are a critical component of the high quality of contact we maintain with students and families. **Students are required to attend their own Eval. At least one parent or guardian is expected to attend each evaluation conference.** Emails are sent out before Evals to sign up for a conference time.

Semester Report Cards

Final grades are assessed at the end of each semester, provided to families at Evals, and are recorded on student transcripts. Written reports are available at mid-semester evaluations.

Other Options

Contacting Teachers Directly

Families can contact instructors via email about assignments or progress. Please see the faculty contact list at the beginning of this handbook for email addresses. **Email is the best way to contact teachers.**

Post-Graduation Preparation

Students prepare for adulthood by preparing for their lives after high school. Preparation takes many forms— researching colleges and taking placement exams, exploring gap year programs, securing an apprenticeship or internship, or directly training for work.

The process formally begins in the 11th grade, when students are provided structured support to start the necessary steps towards their goals. Families are encouraged to contact their student's adviser as needed.

Students can check in with the school counselor and their academic dean during the process of researching and applying for post-graduation programs. The work itself, however, is the student's responsibility. The school encourages families to have frequent conversations about goals and interests, and to attend information sessions and college fairs for resources. Questions about placement exams (ACT, SAT), testing resources, and testing preparation can be directed to the office or to academic advisors.

Testing

The school does not administer state or district standardized testing. College preparatory exams such as the ACT or SAT can be taken at other locations around Boulder.

Students who wish to take the ACT/PLAN and/or PSAT/SAT register with the ACT and College Board respectively. The PLAN and PSAT typically taken during sophomore year, while the ACT and SAT is typically first taken during junior year. Students who take the PSAT during their junior year will have their scores count toward the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Families should contact the administration for official accommodation requests; accommodations typically require 1-2 months' turnaround for the ACT and SAT, please start this process early to ensure that your student gets their accommodations accepted before their test date. Formal accommodations at the school does not guarantee that your student will receive same or similar accommodations by the ACT and College Board.

Special September School Programs

Community Class

Community is our opportunity three times per week to meet as an entire community. Community class is an opportunity to build and strengthen our school culture through open dialogue about important issues, exercise leadership, and deepen our relationships with one another. We do many fun activities through this class, talk about issues important to the school community, share announcements and experiences together. Every student is required to attend Community Class during second period, and credit is based on both attendance and participation.

Many students talk about the family atmosphere or feeling of home that is a part of our community. This is a place where they learn how to become concerned citizens, strong team members, responsible friends, and tomorrow's leaders. Community is an important component of the school program that facilitates this positive school culture.

Gladys Programming

Gladys is our unique name for our all-school programs. We bring guest speakers and outside performances, or use the time for community programs, discussions, or field trips. Gladys is also utilized for advisee groups and goal setting activities throughout the year.

Group Class

Led by counselors, Group is an opportunity for students to talk about school concerns, teen issues, or their own personal issues in a confidential group space. Students sign up for Group like a regular class and receive health or elective credit for their participation. Group can be an especially helpful way for new students to socialize and learn how to function with other people.

Students are encouraged to challenge themselves personally and emotionally, in addition to developing identities and forming trusting relationships. The counselor helps them identify and communicate their feelings about relevant life issues. Students develop strategies for problem solving, stress management, and healthy lifestyle choices.

Senior Mysteries

Senior Mysteries is a special program for graduating seniors, consisting of several surprise activities throughout the year. It supports students emotionally through group meetings and rites-of-passage activities as they prepare for adulthood. This program is a mix of group and individual activities, and it is a critical component of senior-year development. All graduating seniors are required to participate. Details will be provided during the first quarter.

Advisories

Advisory groups are themed teacher-led, student-managed groups of 5-7 students where students learn to work together through a variety of group-building activities that contribute to group learning and to the larger school community. Students are placed in their advisories at the beginning of the year and remain a part of that advisory group for the school year. Advisories meet on Thursdays during the extended lunch.

Off-Campus Programs & Special Activities

All September School policies are in effect during off-campus and after school programming, including class or all school field trips, college visit days, prom, follies, all-school trips and any other official school programs. If your student needs to be removed from off-campus programming for any violation of SHS policies, you will be contacted to make arrangements to provide transportation for your student.

Transportation To Off-Site Programs

In general, the school will provide transportation to off-site programs. Students should never drive their vehicles to off-site programs without permission from the office. Students are not allowed to drive other students without permission from all families involved and the office.

Extracurricular Sports And Activities

In many cases, students in independent schools are allowed to participate in extracurricular sports and activities offered by the Boulder Valley School District. September School encourages our students to take advantage of this opportunity. Families who are interested in this option should communicate directly with the school district in which they live. Students who participate in extracurricular sports may be eligible for physical education credit from September School.

Community Service Projects

Community service projects are scheduled several times each semester. **Students are required to participate in one service day per semester.** This participation will be part of their grade for Community credit. Refer to the 2017-2018 Graduation Requirements appendix for details.

Visiting Artists

September School invites several professional artists, who work as professionals in different creative media, to our campus each year. The artists spend time teaching our students about artistic processes and the business practices that support their work. Visiting Artists may be on campus for many days, or for many hours on a single day. Students who are interested in learning from a Visiting Artist can join the sessions as long as they receive instructor approval for any regularly scheduled classes that they may miss.

School Community

Community Member Agreement

At the beginning of each year, all students sign the Community Member Agreement, which has been included in the back of this handbook for reference. This is an important agreement for our community, and it establishes the expectations of how we respect others, the school, and ourselves.

The Community Member Agreement is referred to throughout the year. It represents the guidelines in place to ensure that September School continues to be a special place where students thrive. We take time on trips and during Community to meet in small groups and reflect on the four commitments we are all making as community members. Many of our goal-setting activities work in concert with these commitments.

Community Class

See the section on Special Programs for more details.

Fall Trip and Winter Excursion (August and February)

Every autumn and winter all students and staff attend a multi-night adventure filled with new experiences, personal reflections, and community connections. During this time, the community will work and play together to cook meals, explore new challenges, identify personal and academic goals, and get to know one another outside of the normal school setting. Students room with other students and a teacher, collaborate with advisee groups for community tasks and goal setting, and have lots of free time to relax and play. **School trips are a mandatory part of the program and students earn credit for them.**

Spring Trips (May)

Spring Trips allow students to translate their understanding of community beyond our local area. They take a variety of forms, but generally involve a smaller group of staff and students exploring a new activity or personal challenge while away from school on a four-day overnight adventure. Trips in the past have included: whitewater rafting, mountain biking, backpacking, horseback riding, archaeology explorations, visiting art museums in Chicago, and much more. We offer an international option some years. **The cost of Spring Trips is NOT included in tuition.** Trip options and costs will vary depending on activities and number of participants, and will be communicated to families no later than April.

Family Community

Back to School Night

Thursday, August 24th, 6:00 pm, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church of Boulder

Back to School Night kicks off the new school year and provides an opportunity for families to meet and learn about plans for the coming school year. **Attendance is required for students and at least one parent**, as this event is the starting point for the ongoing conversation between parents and staff.

Winter and Spring Follies

For one evening each semester, the performing and visual art classes showcase student talent for families and friends. The community takes pride in a variety of art mediums—poetry reading, plays, photography, visual art, and sword demonstrations are just some of the different kinds of artistry on display. Potluck dinner is served, and the school supplies light refreshments.

Graduation

September School graduation is a unique and powerful experience that honors each graduate individually. While containing elements of a traditional graduation, our ceremony invites students and instructors to reflect on their journey and share thoughts with the audience of family, friends, alumni, and the community. We invite all families to attend (even those with non-graduating students) and take part in this important rite of passage and celebration of accomplishment.

Parent Volunteering

Parents are encouraged to actively participate in building and maintaining our school community through various volunteering opportunities as organized and managed by the Parent Volunteer Coordinator. Opportunities include helping with fundraising opportunities

Parent Support Group

The Parent Support Group meets every first Wednesday of the month from 5:30-6:30 from September through June at the school. Parents of current students meet to discuss the challenges and joys of parenting teens. The group provides peer support and is moderated by at least one school counselor. Parent drop-ins are welcome! This group is only open to parents of current students.

Medical Care

Families are responsible to ensure that signed copies of medical forms referenced in this section are on file with the office and contain up-to-date information. September School employs a number of faculty and staff members with First Aid and CPR certification. First aid supplies are present in every building on campus.

Emergency Injury or Illness

For injuries requiring professional treatment, September School will attempt to notify parents immediately and determine the best course of action.

If you have provided a signed Emergency Information Form, September School will have:

- A list of alternative emergency contacts
- Your student's basic medical information
- Authorization to seek qualified medical treatment
- Medical insurance details that may be needed to facilitate emergency treatment.

Parents must coordinate with the office if their student needs EpiPens®, inhalers, or other emergency medication or procedures for allergies or illnesses.

Prescription Medication Release Form

Students are not permitted to carry controlled prescription medications on their person while at school or on any school trips, even if the prescription medication is in the student's own name. Parents or guardians must sign a Prescription Medication Release Form and provide a supply of prescription medication for the staff to safely administer. Prescription medication is locked away at all times, and students must take their medication in the presence of a staff member.

APPENDICES

- Daily Schedule
- 2017-2018 Graduation Requirements
- Tuition Policies
- Community Member Agreement
- 2017-2018 Academic Calendar

September High School Daily Schedule

The office is open 8 am-4 pm during the school year. The school is closed during overnight trips and on federal holidays.

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

8:30am – 9:20am	First Period
9:25am – 9:50am	Community
9:55am – 10:45am	Third Period
10:50am – 11:40am	Fourth Period
11:40am – 12:25pm	Lunch
12:30pm – 1:20pm	Fifth Period
1:25pm – 2:15pm	Sixth Period
2:20pm – 3:10pm	Seventh Period
3:15pm-4:15pm	After-School Academic Support

Tuesday and Thursday

8:30am – 9:20am	First Period
9:25am – 10:15am	Third Period
10:20am - 11:10am	Fourth Period
11:10am – 12:30pm	Staff Meeting (Tues)/Advisories (Thurs)
12:30pm – 1:20pm	Fifth Period
1:25pm – 2:15pm	Sixth Period
2:20pm – 3:10pm	Seventh Period
3:15pm-4:15pm	After-School Academic Support

2017-2018 Graduation Requirements

A **minimum of 240 credits** over 4 years (8 semesters) of school in grades 9-12 are required to graduate from September School. A full class schedule averages 32 credits per semester. A total of 260 credits or more is recommended for students who are continuing on to college after graduation. Students must be at 230 credits to walk at graduation and have a formal plan in place with the office showing how the remaining 10 or fewer credits will be earned by the end of the following fall semester.

Students more than 10 credits away from graduation at the end of their senior year must register for classes at September School for the following year. They must earn their remaining credits by the end of the following academic year (end of spring semester). Students who do not finish will be withdrawn from the school.

A student who transfers from a previous educational program is required to provide an official transcript detailing the credits earned. Transferred credits, including those earned through approved online programs, will be evaluated by the administration.

Language Arts: 40 credits in grades 9-12

- These 40 credits can be completed through a combination of standard Language Arts classes and Language Arts electives; however, each student **must** complete Language Arts 2 (or an equivalent 11th grade level English course) prior to graduation.
- Language Arts 3 is strongly recommended for students who are continuing on to college after graduation.

Social Studies: 30 credits in grades 9-12

- 10 credits are required to be in American History.
- 10 credits are required to be in World History.
- 5 credits are required to be in Government.
- 5 credits are required to be in Geography

Mathematics: 20 credits in grades 9-12

- 10 credits are required to be in either Algebra I or in a higher level math class.
- 10 credits are required to be in Geometry.
- An additional 10-20 credits in higher level math classes is strongly recommended for students who are continuing on to college after graduation.
- ***Each student is required to take an additional 10 credits of Math courses and/or Science courses, for a total of 50 credits earned in Math and Science.***

Science: 20 credits in grades 9-12

- 10 credits are required to be in a Life Sciences course such as Biology, Anatomy, or Ecology.
- 10 credits are required to be in a Physical Sciences course such as Chemistry, Physics, Geology, Meteorology, or Astronomy.
- An additional 10-20 credits in science courses is strongly recommended for students who are continuing on to college after graduation.
- ***Each student is required to take an additional 10 credits of Science courses and/or Math courses, for a total of 50 credits earned in Math and Science.***

Physical Education and Health: 15 credits in grades 9-12

- 5 credits are required to be in Physical Education courses such as Volleyball, Basketball, Weights, or Martial Arts. Credit may be available for a student's participation in extracurricular organized team sports.
- 5 credits are required to be in Health courses such as Human Issues, Mind Body Wellness, or Group class.
- The remaining 5 credits may be completed in any Physical Education or Health class.

Arts: 15 credits in grades 9-12

- 15 credits can be completed through a combination of any Arts electives including, amongst a wide variety of offerings, Mixed Media, Photoshop, Music Workshop, Music Theory, and Theatre.

Foreign Language:

To complete this requirement, a student must:

- Complete 4 successive semesters of study in a foreign language with a grade of "C" or better in each semester. Exceptions may be made for students who receive a "D" in one or more semesters, but who are nonetheless, with instructor approval, progressed to the next level.

Community

To complete this requirement, a student must

- Participate in 1 school community service project per semester
- Attend all school trips (Fall, Winter, and Spring)
- Attend Community class

Independent Study

- Independent study contracts are allowed for graduation credit.
- No more than 30 credits may be taken in Independent Study.

Elective Credits

- The remainder of the student's 240 required credits may be completed through any combination of further study in a core academic area, elective coursework, or independent study.

Honors Credits

- With instructor approval, a student may do additional extracurricular coursework in order to receive honors credit for a class in which they are enrolled.
- The honors credit program allows a student to get a weighted grade for a class in which they are enrolled, and **requires 30 hours of additional work outside of class.**
- The details of any honors program are to be worked out individually on a case-by-case basis between the student and instructor of the class in which honors credit is being sought.

September School Tuition Policies

Full year tuition for the 2017-2018 academic year is \$17,850. This amount includes the non-refundable \$300 deposit, which is due when the Registration Packet is turned in. Tuition is prorated for students who enroll during the school year. Tuition pays for materials and two of three mandatory school-sponsored trips--Fall Trip and Winter Trip. **Tuition does not cover the mandatory Spring Trip.**

Tuition is the responsibility of those guardians who sign the Billing Information and Fees Agreement in the Registration Packet. Signees agree to the following terms in the Registration Packet:

“(1) It is my responsibility to pay tuition as outlined in the Tuition Payment Policies & Procedures [in the Registration Packet] for this form.

(2) Students may enroll at any point in the year. Tuition will be prorated accordingly. Enrollment at September High School is for a full year and tuition and fees are billed in increments delineated by a chosen payment plan. Refunds or reductions in tuition may be given to families whose students withdraw (with 30 days notice) or are expelled as determined by the Head of School and Board of Directors. There are no refunds or reductions in tuition for students who have an excessive amount of absences. Financial responsibility to September High School for tuition extends to the length of my payment plan unless prior arrangements have been made that dictate otherwise.

(3) I understand that if my payments are delinquent, September School reserves the right to execute the third party collections process described in the Tuition Payment Policies & Procedures for this form.

(4) No student records including grades, transcripts, diplomas, or any other student information will be released until a student's tuition account balance is paid in full.

(5) Financial Aid at September School is need based, and in most cases, awards are given in the form of an outright grant. Recipients of financial aid are expected to meet the same standards of performance as other students; they are not subject to special standards or other requirements that would treat them unequally. Financial Aid Awards are for full year enrollment and can be revoked upon early withdrawal as determined by the Head of School and Board of Directors.”

Signees set up payment plans and accounts with the office when they return the Registration Packet. Payments are made online through FACTS, a payment management company. Accounts in delinquency are reported to credit bureaus and are sent to collections.

Withdrawal: Per the terms of the Billing Information and Fees Agreement, 30 days' notice in writing of a family's intent to withdraw their student from September School is required in order to receive a refund or tuition reduction. This notice may be delivered via email or post to the administration office. Neither the student's last day at school nor a verbal notice is considered proper notice of withdrawal.

Community Member Agreement

(Signed during the first week of school)

September High School is an intimate and supportive learning community that fosters individual development and reawakens the love of learning. We empower ourselves to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens. Many of our students feel like this place is a second home to them. Everyone should feel welcome here and together we are all responsible for creating this unique place where we all are growing and learning.

To be successful in this community, we ask everyone to make the following **FOUR COMMITMENTS**:

SHOW UP

Showing up is about coming **on time**, being ready to participate, having whatever materials are needed, and having a clear mind, ready to focus.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

If you are not here to grow academically and as a whole person, then there is no purpose for you being here. This is a great place to challenge yourself to go further in your education, in who you are as a person, and in how you impact the community.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Whatever life throws at you, you will get better results if you look at what you yourself can do, instead of relying on or blaming others. No one can or should take responsibility for you. Part of becoming an adult is developing the skills that make you able to respond to anything that comes your way.

BE RESPECTFUL

Everyone deserves to feel like they are respected and are welcome in the community. Respect yourself, others, and the physical environment. This could mean throwing away your trash, going out of your way to be nice to someone, and abiding by the no-tobacco policy, among other things. Of the four agreements, being respectful has the most impact on the community.

We also have **TWO BOUNDARIES** that we need everyone to follow to make the community work well:

NO ABUSE

The opposite of being respectful is being abusive. This could be physical abuse (i.e. fighting) or emotional abuse (i.e. being mean to someone). You will see that this rarely happens at September High School, and when people cross this boundary it is taken seriously because it is a threat to the positive culture that we value and expect.

A SUBSTANCE FREE SCHOOL

There is no place for drugs and alcohol in our school. Using drugs or alcohol at school disrespects your teachers, other students, and the mission of the school. Our substance abuse policy lays out in detail the school's response to use or possession of substances or paraphernalia. When a student violates this boundary, the school intervenes with a comprehensive approach that emphasizes education, support and enforcement. Unfortunately, as in the past, students who are unable to respect this boundary despite other interventions from the school will be expelled.

By signing this agreement, I am stating that I would like to be a member of the September High School community. I will do my best to uphold the four agreements by showing up, taking responsibility, challenging myself, and being respectful. I understand and agree to follow the two boundaries of no abuse and a substance free school. I understand that the staff is here in part to help me stay on track with these agreements and boundaries and that if I violate them, I might not be able to remain here.

Signature: _____

Date: _____