



September School Student/Family Handbook 2024-2025

Reawaken Your Love of Learning

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Non-Discriminatory Policy

September School is strongly committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity, without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, sex, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or age in administration of its educational admission, employment, and scholarship policies in accordance with existing state and federal laws or regulations. All students and employees are protected from coercion, intimidation, interference or retaliation from filing a complaint of assisting in an investigation under any of the following policies.

Vision

September School is an intimate and supportive community that fosters individual development and reawakens the love of learning. We exist to help students feel empowered to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and responsible citizens. We are leading the way in relationship-based education as a private, independent school in Boulder, CO.

Mission

Our dedicated team of faculty and administrative staff work hard for our students to feel heard and valued. We encourage everyone in the school community to take personal responsibility and accountability for their success via the commitment to the tenants of the Community Member Agreement:

SHOW UP ~ TAKE RESPONSIBILITY ~ BE RESPECTFUL ~ CHALLENGE YOURSELF

September School Philosophy

Learning takes significant risk. For individuals to take risks, they must have trust and this trust is built through strong relationships with both the teachers and learning community. Once students feel grounded, noticed, and supported, they are more willing to challenge themselves in all facets of their education. At September School, we value the whole person: while we work to develop academic skills, we also work to develop both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, critical thinking, and citizenship. We value depth of knowledge over breadth of knowledge, so students engage in project-based learning, experiential learning, and service 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 they are academically, developmentally, and emotionally.

Health and Safety

When to Keep a Child Home

If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees fahrenheit or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection, please do not send them to school. Keep your child home until you have contacted a health care provider and receive guidance on appropriate procedures. If you suspect your child to have any contagious disease, including but not restricted to COVID-19, other viruses, flu, strep throat or any other illness, please do not send your child back to school until medically cleared by the child's physician. Parents must call the school immediately to report a medically diagnosed communicable condition.

Illnesses at School

If a student becomes sick at school, they need to inform a staff member immediately. If students have a fever of 100.4 degrees fahrenheit or greater, vomit, or are showing signs of possible COVID-19 virus, staff will reach out to a guardian on the emergency contact list to pick their child up from school. If a student is a driver, staff will make verbal contact with their guardian before letting them leave campus.

Emergency Numbers and Accidents

The health and safety of our community is our top priority. All families are asked to fill out an Emergency Contact Number as part of their enrollment paperwork. In the event of an emergency or accident at school, every effort to contact student guardians will be made as the situation permits. If there is a medical emergency, the student will be transported to the nearest medical facility.

Medical Information and Release Forms

Each year, guardians and students must fill out the proper forms in our application. Students will not be permitted to attend school / school trips without this paperwork completed.

Medications

All prescription and non-prescription medications administered during school hours or events must be turned into the front office. Parents or guardians must sign a Prescription Medication Release Form and provide a supply of prescription medication in their original prescription container 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. Exceptions may be made for students with diabetes, severe allergies or asthma, whereby the student may have written permission from their physician to keep their medications with them at all times. It is the guardians responsibility to pick up medications after trips or the school year. All remaining medications will be disposed of once the school year ends.

The School and The Community

Academic Calendar (subject to change)



Academic Calendar

2024-2025

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

8/21 First Day of 1st Semester
1/6 First Day of 2nd Semester

SCHOOL SPECIAL EVENTS

8/19 Back to School Night 5:00 - 7 pm
11/22 Gratitude Meal- Early Dismissal @1
4/19 Prom
5/21 Last Day of School (Half Day)
5/24 Graduation

SCHOOL TRIPS

9/30 - 10/2 Fall Trip days
5/14 - 5/16 Spring Trips days (proposed)

EVALUATIONS

10/17 & 18 Mid-Term Evals
3/20 & 21 Mid-Term Evals

STAFF WORK DAY | NO SCHOOL

8/12 - 20 Teacher Development
10/14 Staff Work Day
12/16 Staff Work Day
2/18 Staff Work Day
3/17 Staff Work Day
4/21 Staff Work Day
5/19 Staff Work Day
5/22 & 23 Staff Work Days

VACATION | NO SCHOOL

HOLIDAY
9/2 Labor Day
11/11 Veteran's Day
11/25-11/29 Thanksgiving Break
12/23-1/3 Winter Break
1/20 Martin Luther King Jr Day
2/17 President's Day
3/24-3/28 Spring Break
5/26 Memorial Day

Total Contact Days - 165

August							September							October							November						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	19	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December							January							February							March						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
										1	2	3	4							1							1
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		

April							May							June							July						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
											1	2	3														
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

Daily Schedule

Fall 2024

A Days: M/W

B Days: T/Th

Friday: Alternate A/B

Monday - Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.	First Period
10:25 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Second Period
11:45 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.	Lunch
12:40 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Third Period
2:05 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.	Fourth Period
3:25 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Bow Out

Friday

8:30 a.m. - 9:40 a.m.	Staff Meeting
9:45 a.m.- 10:40a.m.	First Period
10:45a.m. - 11:40 a.m.	Second Period
11:40 a.m- 12:30 p.m.	Community
12:30 a.m.- 1:25p.m.	Lunch
1:30p.m. - 2:25 p.m.	Third Period
2:30p.m. - 3:25p.m.	Fourth Period
3:25p.m. - 3:30p.m.	Bow out

Snow Days and Weather Related Closures:

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. When BVSD calls a 2 Hour Delay, September School will begin at 11:00. The school will also notify families via email and text if there is a snow day outside of BVSD's decision.

Late Start Schedule

Due to Snow 2024 - 25

11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	First Period
11:55 a.m. – 12:45 a.m.	Second Period
12:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m. – 2:35 p.m.	Third Period
2:40 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Fourth Period

(No bow out, just put chairs up for cleaning.)

Internet Use & Personal Technology

At September School we seek to educate students in the appropriate use of technology to both deliver and enhance curriculum. **All students must have a laptop and charger to participate fully in each class.** Students will be asked to put cell phones in a holder off their person and refrain from using it until lunch.

Note: Refusal to adhere to the policy will be considered non-participation resulting in a possible reduction of credit at end of semester.

Clothing Policy

While September School welcomes students' self-expression in freely choosing what to wear, we expect their attire to be in accordance with the Community Member Agreement, especially the Two Boundaries: No Abuse and A substance-free school. If dress violates these Community Member Agreements (i.e. images of drugs and alcohol, glorification of guns, or violence towards others), staff will ask students to change their attire immediately. Refusal to change attire will result in temporary dismissal from school until the policy can be followed.

Graduation Requirements

A **minimum of 256 credits + annual community credit** 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 plus community. Students must earn 256 credits + annual community credit to walk at graduation.

Students less than 8 credits away from graduation at the end of their senior year may walk at graduation but will not be issued a diploma. Upon completion at the end of summer of the 8 earned credits, students will be given the diploma from September School.

A student who transfers into Sept School, must provide an official transcript detailing the credits earned. Transferred credits, including those earned through approved online programs, will be evaluated.

Language Arts: 4 credits at 8 semesters in grades 9-12

- Research Writing and College Writing are strongly recommended for students who are continuing on to college after graduation.

Social Studies: 6 courses in grades 9-12

- 2 semesters are required to be in American History / 8 credits
- 2 semesters are required to be in World History / 8 credits
- 1 semester is required to be in US Government / 4 credits
- 1 semester is required to be in World Geography / 4 credits

Mathematics: 4 courses in grades 9-12,

- 2 courses are required to be in either Algebra I or in a higher level math class.
- 2 courses are required to be in Geometry.
- An additional 8-16 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 2 Math courses and/or Science courses, for a total of 40 earned in Math and Science.***

Science: 2 year long lab science courses in grades 9-12 16 credits

- 2 courses are required to be in a Life Sciences course such as Biology
- 2 courses are required to be in a Physical Sciences course such as Chemistry, Physics, Geology, or Astronomy.
- An additional 8-16 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 2 courses of Science courses and/or Math courses, for a total of 40 credits earned in Math and Science.***

Physical Education Health: 4 credits / 1 semester in grades 9-12

- 1 course is required to be in Physical Education. Credit may be available for a student's participation in extracurricular organized team sports with approval.
- 1 course is required to be in Health courses such as Healthy Relationships, Mind Body Wellness, or Group class.

Arts: 3 courses in grades 9-12

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

Foreign Language: 4 courses in grades 9-12 / 16 credits

To complete this requirement, a student must:

- Exceptions may be made for students who receive a "D" in one or more semesters, but who nonetheless, with instructor approval, progressed to the next level.
- Some students with disabilities may be eligible for a language exemption. Please speak with the Head of School if you have questions about exemptions.

Community

To complete this requirement, a student must

- Participate in 1 school community service project per semester
- Attend school trips (Fall and Spring)
- Attend Community classes on Friday (attendance will be taken).

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.

Attendance Policies

❖ Late/Tardy Policy -

- Late - Five tardies is equivalent to one absence. A student will be marked late if they arrive after the starting time of class. Five lates equates to an absence per semester (refer to absent policy). Students arriving 20 minutes late for class are considered absent.
- Absent - A student who is not present in class, is marked absent. Eight absences results in a student earning three out of four credits in the class. Twelve absences results in the student earning 2.5 out of four credits. Sixteen absences results in the student earning two out of four credits. Students are required to earn a specific number of credits in designated classes/courses and an overall number of credits to earn their graduation diploma (see below). At the discretion of the teachers, students can be given the opportunity to make up assignments by working outside of class. Not all absences can be made up (e.g. labs and experiential learning).
- Non Participation (NP) - A student who is sleeping, doing other course work, taking excessive breaks, or is unengaged during class, will be marked non participation (NP). An NP equates to an absence and can't be made up. Students will be notified that they have received an NP for a class.
- Medical Leave/Extended Medical Leave/Irregular Attendance/Extended Vacations - **Any absence is an absence from school, regardless of circumstance**. To account for medical appointments, illness, family vacations, and other circumstances, a student may have up to eight absences, equating to 2.5 weeks of missed classes, before they lose the ability to earn all of their credits in that class (see "absences" above). Scheduled medical leaves must be communicated to the Head of School as early as possible. While medical absences are still considered to be absences, every effort will be made to support continued academic growth during absences and upon a student's return. In some cases, it is impossible (and not socio-emotionally viable) to try to catch students up on lost learning. While students may not be able to earn full credits in a class due to

- illness/absence (too much lost “seat” time), they will be reintegrated into class and able to complete the course. Grades for the course are assessed by the quality of work that is completed.
- Vacation Absences - The school schedule provides a significant number of opportunities for family breaks and vacations. Please plan family vacations according to the school’s academic calendar to minimize absences from school.
 - Attendance at Evaluations - Student-led evaluations occur twice per year (October and March). Students will present their learning to their parents and teachers during a 30 minute in-person conversation. Conversations may also include social wellbeing, community participation, graduation requirements and post high school plans. In person attendance for the student is mandatory.

Community Class Attendance

Community class and events are documented and graded on a pass/fail criteria. Friday community is a mandatory class as are trips. Each student is required to attend, to their best ability, each community event.

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 & Community Safety

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

September School is a safe environment for all students, staff, and visitors. 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, in-person or online, 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, restriction of extra-curricular involvement

(trips), restriction of community service, suspension, and, in extreme cases, expulsion.

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 students 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 parked on our premises.

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 guardians 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 our leadership 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.

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. 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

Campus Resources & Policies

Bus Stop, Parking, and Bicycle Racks

The nearest bus stop is on Canyon Blvd.

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. Students who drive to school can park along the Eben G Fine park. In consideration to the limited parking for staff, students can not park in the parking lot of the Arapahoe campus.

Pets Policy

Trained service animals are welcome per ADA guidelines as may be emotional support animals. Students are not permitted to bring pets on campus at any time, unless previously authorized by the principal. Families must provide proof of pet immunization.

Assumption Of Responsibility

September School is a safe and caring community. Nevertheless, the reality of theft is a part of any 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

Coat racks are available for students in the hallway. 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 utilizes laptops for student use and for educational purposes. Each student is assigned a google account 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. Students on financial aid will be issued a school laptop. 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 as will the lost and found area.

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 request 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.

Open Campus

September School is an open campus for high school students who may leave campus during lunch. This is a privilege, and as such may be revoked at the discretion of the office for school violations and misuse. Shadow students may not leave campus without permission from parents and Head of School.

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 teacher will notify families and the student(s) will receive no credit for the assignment. Incidents of such violations will be reported to school leadership, 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 256 credits for graduation, including core curriculum requirements. A minimum of 260 credits is strongly recommended for college applicants. Refer to the 2022-23 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 school Leadership.

Independent Track Option

Students interested in specific course content / taking honors coursework are encouraged to meet with the

school leadership and the 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.
- 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 in more than 8 credits to be recommended for matriculation. If a student has earned at least 256 credits required for graduation and has a documented and approved plan in place to earn the remaining credit by the end of the following fall semester, he or she can request to participate in graduation ceremonies. Refer to the 2022-23 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 the 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.

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 for a whole semester typically are worth 4 credits, while split courses may be worth 2 or 3 credits.

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 with both parents and students to get back on track.

Evaluation Conferences (Evals)

Students and families meet with teachers twice a year in a unique forum to discuss the student's life at September School. Referred to as Evals, these conferences last 30 minutes and are 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 end 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 with certain academic accommodations can arrange to take the ACT and/or SAT at September School.

Students who wish to take the ACT/PLAN and/or PSAT/SAT register with the ACT and College Board respectively. The PLAN and PSAT are typically taken during sophomore year, while the ACT and SAT are 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 the same or similar accommodations by the ACT and the College Board.

Special September School Programs

Community Class

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 come together as an entire school for an hour every Friday to engage in fun activities, talk about issues important to the school, share announcements and create new experiences together. Every student is required to attend Community Class 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 school. Community class is a place where they learn how to become concerned citizens, strong team members, responsible friends, and tomorrow's leaders. This class is an important component of the school program that facilitates a positive and inclusive school culture.

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 and the program will be supervised by our counselor. Details will be provided during the first quarter.

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 September School 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.

Visiting Artists

September School may invite 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 Excursions (September 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 an 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. **Details will follow as trips are planned.**

Family Community

Back to School Night

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.

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, helping supply staff with lunches and snacks during Staff Week and Evals, helping bring your special skills/expertise to the classroom or community class, and/or helping to keep our school and grounds clean and safe.

Contact and Communication Information

Address: Main Office: 303-443-9933 / office@septemberschool.org

Office Hours and Appointments

Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 3:45 pm through the school year.
Families may contact the office to schedule appointments with the administration; teachers can be contacted via email for questions and appointments.

Faculty and Staff Contacts:

Michelle Mullin, Head of School michelle@septemberschool.org

Sarah DeSouza, Dean of Academic Records and Advising
sarahdesouza@septemberschool.org

Angela Beloian, Communications angela@septemberschool.org

Aimee Herman-Durica, English aimee@septemberschool.org

Eitan Fire, History and Social Studies eitan@septemberschool.org

Hunter Amabile, Music and Social Studies hunter@septemberschool.org

Julia Potocnjak-Overn, Science juliap@septemberschool.org

Kelly Kenworthy, Counselor kellyk@septemberschool.org

Nina Michelson, Spanish nina@septemberschool.org

Tania Henderson, Art, Humanities, tania@septemberschool.org

Vajra Granelli, Physical Education, vajra@septemberschool.org

Community Member Agreement
(Example for handbook, actually agreements are signed and kept in student records)

September 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**:

1. 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.

2. CHALLENGE YOURSELF

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. If you are here to grow both academically and as a whole person, then you will get the most out of your time at September School.

3. 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.

4. 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 on school property 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). Abuse can happen in-person or online. 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.