

Information and Tips for Parents
Successfully Transitioning Students To Spring Creek

Website link: [Spring Creek](#)

Change can be challenging for anyone. Parents and students may have many questions about how things will change when transitioning to a new grade level, building and/or program. It can be beneficial for IEP teams to start planning early for a student's transition to a new environment. If you see a need, consider requesting an IEP meeting to discuss any of the following:

- Foreseeable challenges and ways to bridge the gap for a smooth transition
- The identification of individuals who can help facilitate a smooth transition
- Ideas focused on how/what parents can do to partner with the school throughout the transition

Prior to the transition, review and reflect upon the following information for your child's future success. Please consult with district staff if additional information is needed.

Information About Spring Creek

1. Building: What is the layout and where are the classrooms, drop-off locations, nurse's office, and bathrooms in relation to the classrooms?
 - a. [Exterior Map](#) - This map shows drop off/pick up zones for Spring Creek
 - b. An Interior map of Spring Creek is available in the student planner and in the office upon request.
 - c. **Daily Schedule**
 - Doors Open.....7:00 a.m.
 - School Starts.....7:35 a.m.
 - Dismissal.....2:45 p.m.
 - Buses Leave.....2:52 p.m.
 - Late Start Wednesdays School Starts at....9:35 a.m.
2. Building Contacts: Who do I contact if I have questions for Spring Creek staff?
 - a. Phone Number: (515) 967-5533
 - b. Principal: Scott Bauer - scott.bauer@southeastpolk.org
 - c. Administrative Assistant:
 - i. Linda Johnson - linda.johnson@southeastpolk.org
 - ii. Kristina Wheatly kristina.wheatly@southeastpolk.org
 - d. Counselor: Spencer Stumpff - spencer.stumpff@southeastpolk.org
 - e. Nurse: Shelly Lundholm - shelly.lundholm@southeastpolk.org

- f. Building Instructional Coaches:
 - i. Denise Gulling denise.gulling@southeastpolk.org
 - ii. Beth McElroy beth.mcelroy@southeastpolk.org
 - g. Special Education Instructional Coach: Jeff Crowley - jeffrey.crowley@southeastpolk.org
 - h. District Special Education Director: Charlie Taylor - (515) 957-3428, charles.taylor@southeastpolk.org
3. Spring Creek Tree Groups: What are tree groups? Will my student be in one? Does it make a difference what group my child is part of?
- a. Spring Creek teachers are divided into three groups, called Tree Groups: Hickory, Mulberry, & Willow.
 - b. Each student is assigned to a Tree Group, there are no differences in each tree group, with the exception that 6th grade students taking 7th grade math are automatically on the Willow team due to there only being one 7th grade math teacher.
 - a. Hickory & Mulberry consist of 2 ELA, 2 Math, 1 Social Studies and 1 Science teacher.
 - b. Willow is larger with 2 additional teachers that teach 2 subjects (Math/SS and ELA/Science)
4. Parent Information/Involvement Meetings: How can I be involved as a parent?
- a. Join our SCIPT group! (Spring Creek Involved Parents & Teachers)
 - i. Meets the first Tuesday night of every month at 6:30 PM in the Spring Creek library. All parents and guardians of 6th grade students are welcome to attend.
 - ii. For more information on SCIPT visit our website - [Link](#)
 - b. Attend Parent/Teacher Conferences -
 - i. Fall Conferences - October 16th and 18th
 - ii. Spring Conference - March 5th and 7th
 - c. Other ways to engage
 - i. Check Infinite Campus for grades and announcements
 - ii. Check student planners each day - Some teachers may expect parent signatures.
5. Additional Information: Additional information on Spring Creek can be found by accessing the Spring Creek webpage either by clicking [here](#) or by going through the Southeast Polk District website.
- a. Spring Creek staff work hard to ensure smooth transitions and to address all student and parents' questions. Multiple opportunities have been created to help facilitate these smooth transitions. Information on these opportunities are listed on the [Spring Creek webpage](#).

Information About Spring Creek Procedures and Routines

Below is a basic look at Spring Creek procedures and routines. For more detailed information consider looking at the Spring Creek [Student Handbook](#). When applicable a quick reference page number will be provided.

1. How are grades determined?
 - a. Grading will vary according to subject matter
 - b. Refer to pages 6 and 7 of Student Handbook for more information on grading.
2. What are the ways information is commonly shared?
 - a. Spring Creek staff use Infinite Campus to post grades and send mass communications to parents regarding upcoming events.
 - b. Spring Creek is a Google school and uses a variety of methods to convey information (i.e. gmail and Google Classroom)
3. What system is in place to reinforce safe, respectful and responsible behavior?
 - a. Spring Creek is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) School
 - b. PBIS is implemented school-wide - around the building, in classrooms, in the planners and student handbooks you will see what the expectations are and rewards/minors for following the expectations.
 - c. Students are given multiple opportunities to learn about and benefit from positive behavior examples throughout the school year.
4. What are the routines and expectations of the building?
 - a. Bells: The bells ring at the beginning and end of the day. 7:30, 7:35, and 2:45
 - i. Tardy policy page 5
 - b. Black Day/Gold Day Schedule: Days alternate between being designated as Black and Gold. The difference between the 2 days impact social studies/science and art/music.
 - c. FLEX Period: Students have a 60 minute FLEX period every day except 2 hour late starts or the occasional early out. During FLEX, students are engaged in some of the following activities:
 - i. Reading
 - ii. Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (differentiated support for core content courses)
 - iii. Band (2 days a week, typically Monday and Thursday)
 - iv. Small group instruction - on top of Specially Designed Instruction
 - v. Guidance
 - vi. Olweus - Anti-bullying program
 - d. Three 90 minute core classes per day. (everyday Math and ELA, alternating Social Studies and Science)
 - e. Lunch Shifts: There are four (30 minute) lunch shifts beginning 10:40. Your

student's lunch time depends on his/her assigned teacher's scheduled time.

5. What are teachers' expectations regarding students' typical levels of independence?

Students are expected to independently complete the following:

- a. Bring expected materials to class. Most teachers have certain materials expected everyday and will post or request any additional materials beyond routine items.
- b. For student to advocate on their own behalf. This may look like asking for help when needed, asking questions when they don't understand or need clarification, etc.
- c. Bring their daily planner to class and record assignments in it. (Teachers will post daily tasks and assignments on their boards.)
- d. Additional support and assistance in these areas will be provided to students who need it.

Suggestions for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

1. Prior to the end of the 5th grade year consider the possible need to have an IEP meeting to discuss your child's transition to Spring Creek. Some helpful tips may include to:
 - a. Develop a list of questions and concerns that you would like to discuss at this meeting - feel free to share these questions ahead of time with the IEP team to make sure they are addressed.
 - b. Share ideas on things that might help your child with this building transition. i.e. building tours, practice opening lockers, etc.
 - c. A small number of students have a great deal of difficulty adapting to change. For these students, consider whether your child needs to spend time at Spring Creek before transitioning full-time in the fall. Discuss this with your child's special education teacher or the building principal/counselor.
2. My student's Spring Creek schedule:
 - a. Schedules will be available on Infinite Campus in July. If schedules become available sooner, a notice will be sent to families through Campus Messenger. Schedules will include teacher, tree group, and locker information.
 - b. Review your child's Spring Creek schedule with your child.
 - c. Spring Creek is open most of the summer. Consider bringing your student to Spring Creek help him/her acclimate to the building, find classrooms and practice using the combination lock on their locker.
3. Opportunities to learn about the building prior to the start of the school year:
 - a. Mission Transition: Students will be able to spend 4 hours at Spring Creek between the hours of 8:00 AM and 12:00 PM on July 24th through the 27th. Each day students' will have an hour of reading, math, science, and transition opportunities such as figuring out locker combos, learning school surroundings, and adjusting to the Spring Creek building. Registration for Mission Transition

will be available in mid-April at www.southeastpolk.org. If you have further questions you may contact the Spring Creek office at 515-967-5533.

- b. Open House: Time for parents and students to briefly meet teachers and walk around the building with their schedule in hand. Families are encouraged to walk around the building following their student's daily schedule.
4. Important dates: Information on upcoming events can be obtained through:
 - a. Infinite Campus emails
 - b. Spring Creek webpage
 - c. Emails from classroom teachers
 - d. District Calendar
 - e. Teachers will typically have students write upcoming dates in planners
 - f. Calling Spring Creek for information on important dates.
5. Encourage independence and self-advocacy.
 - a. Help your child work on his/her self-advocacy skills, including asking questions and requesting help.
 - b. Help school staff learn the level of prompting and support your child may need when presented with familiar and unfamiliar tasks.
6. Anticipate and address your child's anxiety and your own. We all experience fear of the unknown; sometimes this can be heightened if a student has a disability and needs support in communicating needs.
 - a. Some of these worries are natural and part of the growing process.
 - b. Consider brainstorming with the IEP team about possible solutions and supports to positively meet your child's needs.
7. Send a brief note to Spring Creek teachers letting them know you are interested in feedback and to collaboratively find a mutually beneficial communication method.
 - a. What is your communication preference?
 - i. Do you prefer to be contacted via phone, email, or text?
 - ii. What time of day do you prefer?
 - iii. For non-emergency communications-- do you prefer phone or email?
8. Encourage positive risk taking. Students may need a push to try something new such as:
 - a. playing a musical instrument,
 - b. joining a club/sport/activity or
 - c. making new friends
9. Stay positive! We are committed to partnering with you to work through any situation should it arise. Working together to address the needs of the your child works best! Children respond based upon the reactions of adult role models. Those behaviors and attitudes can quickly impact their own perceptions of school, circumstances, and people. Work together with the school to ensure you are on the same page with the IEP team and school staff as it greatly impacts your student.

10. Once you have reflected on these questions and key points, think about how you will introduce this new information to your child.
 - a. Consider what is important for your child and how to make sure he/she feels comfortable, too.
 - b. Communication is the key to a successful transition.
 - c. Even with the most thoughtful planning, there may be something unexpected that arises.
 - d. If so, communicate in a calm, open and honest manner with school staff to ensure a workable solution.

Other Resources: Click [here](#) for special education resources posted to the SEP district website.