



STUDENT
SPONSOR
PARTNERS

Student Guide



2020-2021
School Year

ABOUT US

OUR HISTORY

In 1986, Peter Flanigan, investment banker and former political advisor, founded Student Sponsor Partners (SSP) to address the New York City high school dropout crisis. He wanted to provide students with the opportunity to receive a quality education at private high schools. SSP was launched with 45 financially supported and mentored students attending two partner schools. The programs now serve more than 1,000 students attending high schools in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island.

Flanigan believed the opportunity to attend a challenging and supportive high school is key to jump-starting a student's success later in life. Because of this belief, SSP has a community of thousands of high school graduates who have continued on to college and built careers in engaging fields.

WHO WE ARE

SSP students are given the opportunity to attend private high schools due to the generosity of our sponsors. In addition to being paired with financial sponsors, students are also paired with dedicated mentors. SSP mentors are passionate, successful individuals who support their mentees. Through high school, students will get to know their mentors by attending events together and talking about their challenges and triumphs regularly.

Many of our alumni are so inspired by their SSP experiences that they give back as mentors and sponsors themselves!

SSP STUDENT VALUES

At SSP, we encourage our students to embody a set of values to help them achieve their full potential.

SSP students are...

- *Open-Minded* – Always ready for new experiences.
- *Confident* – Have faith in yourself and your abilities.
- *Motivated* – Do your best and then challenge yourself to do better.
- *Optimistic* – Face challenges with a smile and don't give up.
- *Organized* – Manage your time, meet deadlines, never be late.
- *Proactive* – Don't wait around for help – ask for it!
- *Engaged* – Participate in class and after-school activities.
- *Respectful* – Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- *Team Players* – Go further and achieve more together.
- *Community Service-Oriented* – Help others by volunteering. Give back!
- *Leaders* – Take charge and inspire others.
- *Successful* – Work hard and reach your highest potential!

SSP SUPPORT SYSTEM

STUDENT

Students enter school every day with a positive mindset. They arrive both prepared and on time, and set themselves up for success! Students ask questions, participate in class, and go for extra help when needed.

Teachers want to help students learn. The more students participate in and out of the classroom, the more they will achieve. SSP's most accomplished students stay after school and ask for tutoring support.

PARENT

Parents/guardians can make a tremendous impact on students' high school experiences. SSP encourages parents to speak up and ask for help when working through any challenges their student is facing. SSP has resources to help students and their families on the road to high school graduation and college acceptance!

MENTOR

Students are assigned a mentor who will be there to support, give advice, and help students thrive both in and out of school. To build relationships with their mentors, students should call and email them at least once a month. The more students interact with their mentors, the more their mentors are able to support them.

Students should take advantage of every opportunity to meet with their mentors face-to-face. Once the mentor and student agree on a meet-up time, it is expected that the student arrive on time and not cancel at the last minute. Sharing verbal or written words of appreciation with the mentor is always appreciated and welcome!

SSP SUPPORT SYSTEM

SPONSOR

Students are assigned sponsors who contribute financially to their private high school education (scholarship) for four years. A sponsor may also be a mentor. There will be occasions in which a student and/or family will be introduced to a sponsor. During such instances, students and their families are expected to attend the meeting.

SCHOOL COORDINATOR & PARTNER HIGH SCHOOL

SSP school coordinators are employees of our partner schools who serve as liaisons between SSP and the schools. Students also have the support of teachers, counselors, and administrative staff available to help students solve and work through any challenges they may have. It is imperative that students and families interact with school coordinators in order to maintain their scholarship and stay updated on SSP news. Students are expected to be responsive, show up to meetings, and complete SSP assignments facilitated by their school coordinator.

SSP STAFF

SSP is here to support students along the way by answering questions, responding to concerns, and offering additional programs to enhance their success. Students should attend all scheduled meetings with SSP and take advantage of numerous opportunities including essay workshops, SAT prep, and college visits.

Furthermore, students should immediately notify SSP of any changes. These include, but are not limited to, contact information, extracurricular experiences, and challenges.

SSP POLICIES

ACADEMIC POLICY

Student Sponsor Partners (SSP) is confident that we choose students who can succeed with the support of our partner schools and SSP family! SSP holds students to academic standards to ensure they reach their highest potential.

SSP students strive to commit to the following:

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 75% during freshman year
- Maintain a year-to-date GPA of at least 79% during sophomore year
- Maintain a year-to-date GPA of at least 80% during junior and senior years

Academic Probation – 1st Warning

Students who fall below the GPA requirements after the first quarter of the academic year are strongly encouraged to do the following:

- Attend tutoring at least twice a week at their school until grades improve
- Ask for help from the teachers who instruct challenging class(es)
- Meet with the SSP school coordinator at least once each quarter
- Attend a parent meeting with SSP at least once each quarter – *If the parent/guardian and/or student miss(es) scheduled meetings that were agreed upon by both parties, with no explanation, the student may be subject to funding suspension and/or scholarship dismissal*

SSP POLICIES

Academic Probation & Quarterly Funding Suspension – 2nd Warning

Inability to meet academic standards after the first warning may result in the following:

- Funding suspension for the third quarter – Students and families will be required to cover the entire portion of the school tuition for that quarter
- Students must continue to attend tutoring at the school
- Students must meet with the SSP school coordinator at least twice per quarter
- Students must speak with SSP at least twice per quarter

Review Process

Students who are currently under funding suspension and do not commit to utilizing the academic resources by the end of the school year must attend an academic probation hearing. The decision on whether a student's funding is permanently suspended will be shared with families in writing. Permanent funding suspension means the student will also be dismissed from SSP. If the student wishes to continue attending the high school, the tuition will be the responsibility of the student's family. SSP will not be responsible for contributing to the student's tuition bill.

Failed Courses

Students who fail a course must attend summer school and pass the course in order to matriculate to the next grade as an SSP student. Please note that summer school tuition is the responsibility of the student's family; therefore, SSP will not contribute to the cost of summer school expenses and fees under any circumstances.

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Failed or Missed Regents Examinations

Students must pass all courses and Regents Examinations in accordance with their school's requirements. Students who fail their Regents must report to summer school at a cost to the parent/guardian and complete Regents prep or any program deemed necessary by the school. During the summer, students must also retake the examination(s) and pass with a minimum grade of 65% with the exception of students with unique circumstances as related to the individual school's policy. Students who miss scheduled Regents Examinations dates place their scholarship in jeopardy. Students and their families must submit documentation explaining the reason for any missed Regents Examinations.

Requesting Grades/Progress Reports/Transcripts

SSP reserves the right to request information from schools and access students' grades, progress reports, transcripts, and academic portals throughout the four years of high school.



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ATTENDANCE POLICY

SSP students are expected to arrive at school on time and maintain a good attendance record. Regular attendance at school is essential for academic success. Because delays in the transit system are inevitable, students are expected to allow for delays in travel time. If a student does not regularly arrive at school on time or maintain a good attendance record, SSP has the right to suspend the student's funding or dismiss the student from SSP.

High schools that have four (4) quarters

SSP students are expected to commit to the following:

- No more than four (4) absences during the first quarter (marking period)
- No more than eight (8) absences by the end of the semester (two marking periods)
- No more than twelve (12) absences during the entire academic year
- No more than eight (8) latenesses per semester (two marking periods)

High schools that have trimesters

SSP students are expected to commit to the following:

- No more than four (4) absences per trimester
- No more than eight (8) absences by the end of the second trimester
- No more than twelve (12) absences during the entire academic year
- No more than eight (8) latenesses within half a year (September/January) (February/June)

Students who exceed the accepted number of absences and latenesses within the listed timeframes will be subject to a parent meeting with SSP.

Please Note: Some high schools have a firmer attendance policy; therefore, please review the high school's handbook for more details. At these schools, students must observe their school's attendance policy to remain in good

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standing with their school. In contrast, students at schools with more lenient attendance/lateness policies must adhere to SSP's.

Attendance Probation – 1st Warning

Students who fail to meet the requirements after the first quarter or trimester of the academic year are strongly encouraged to do the following:

- Set multiple morning alarms
- Adjust their morning commute route to account for unexpected delays
- Meet with their SSP school coordinator once a week to discuss progress
- Check in with an SSP engagement manager to discuss progress

Attendance Probation – 2nd Warning

Students who fail to meet the attendance requirements at the end of the second quarter or trimester will be asked to attend an Attendance Hearing. The outcome of the Attendance Hearing may result in the loss of their SSP scholarship.

HEALTH POLICY

It is the responsibility of families to notify the high school and SSP right away if a student's mental or physical health changes or is at risk, thus affecting his/her ability to fully participate in academics and attend school consistently. Families must submit supporting documents.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

SSP students are expected to uphold the standards and expectations set forth in their high school's handbook. Students and families are expected to positively contribute to the school's educational and social environments. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying (online or in person), including but not limited to written, verbal, and physical acts, will not be tolerated.

POLICIES

Students found in violation of the behavior policy will be dismissed from SSP. The following are general examples:

- Racial slurs or derogatory language
- Demeaning comments or pranks
- Recording others without permission
- Physically harming other students or members of the high school
- Insistent negative behaviors that disrupt the educational environment and psychologically impede another student's ability to participate and feel safe at the school

The following are examples of where incidents can occur:

- In-person: Anywhere on the school's grounds or near communities
- Online: Through email, direct messaging, texting, and social media sites (Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.)

Furthermore, any behavior that disrupts classroom instruction or the schools' daily operations such as fighting, yelling, and overall inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.



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ACTIVITIES POLICY

High school is a challenging and rewarding time. SSP provides resources to maximize students' opportunities to achieve academic success. Students are expected to meet with their SSP school coordinator at least once each marking period and attend periodic activities/events.

SSP students are encouraged to commit to the following:

- Engage and participate in the SSP College and Career Success Program
- Academic Workshops, SAT Prep, Regents Prep, College Visits, and College Counseling Sessions
- Meet with SSP staff after school and on the weekends if needed

SSP school coordinators and engagement managers will share information in person and/or via text messages, phone calls, emails, and mail.

SPONSOR COMMUNICATION POLICY

Students doing their finest at school is the best way to thank SSP sponsors for supporting and believing in them and their education. Sponsors will receive periodic updates about their students' grades and extracurricular activities. Please remember to submit all updates about your experience in high school to your SSP school coordinator and engagement manager.

On occasion, the SSP Development Team will reach out to students and families to meet with their sponsor for dinner or an introduction at an office. When this occurs, it is the responsibility of the families to commit to an agreeable time and show up.

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MENTOR COMMUNICATION POLICY

Students are expected to maintain an active and productive relationship with their SSP mentors throughout the four years. Students must:

- Communicate at least once a month with their mentors via phone, text, or email
- Respond to a mentor's outreach within 24 hours
- Share highlights in academics, extracurriculars, and other school events
- Notify the school coordinator and engagement manager if unable to reach their mentors or if mentors are inconsistent with outreach
- Notify the school coordinator, engagement manager, and mentor if the student's contact information changes
- Meet with their mentors face-to-face four to six (4 - 6) times throughout the academic year

DURING COVID-19: Students are expected to speak with their mentors once a month through phone or video chat while staying in touch via text in between.

PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE POLICY

The SSP Communications Team takes individual/group photos during events hosted and sponsored by SSP and publishes them in media that are in direct association with SSP including, but not limited to, the website, social media, newsletters, brochures, annual report, and other marketing materials. As it relates directly to the event, SSP has permission to use images/videos of students taken at events/seminars/workshops/trainings/photo shoots hosted by SSP and its partner organizations.

POLICIES

TRANSFER POLICY

SSP aims to provide the best learning experience for each student – one in which students perform to their full potential in a sound, uninterrupted environment. It is due to this that SSP follows the policy of no transferring between schools with the exception of the following reasons:

- School closing
- Safety concerns
- Distance due to family relocation
- Academic fit – Student needs additional resources (i.e. IEP services)

The SSP scholarship will only transfer to an existing SSP partner high school. If the student and family decide to transfer to a non-SSP affiliated school, they forfeit the SSP scholarship.

Transfer Request Process

If a student and family believe a transfer is absolutely necessary, they should contact an SSP engagement manager and complete the Transfer Request Form. The form and supporting documents submitted by the family and school will be reviewed by SSP and a decision will be made. SSP will take all transfer requests seriously, including the family's preference in transfer SSP partner school. All decisions made by SSP will be final. Students who are approved for transfers must have a \$0 tuition and fee balance at their current schools and be in good financial standing before the transfer.

School Expulsion – Scholarship Termination

In certain circumstances, a school will decide to dismiss a student due to a serious disciplinary, academic, or attendance infraction. When this occurs, the student is dismissed from SSP as well. Students cannot be transferred from one school to another after they have been dismissed from their high school. As a result of the student's dismissal, the SSP scholarship will be terminated.

POLICIES

FINANCIAL POLICY

Family Obligation

Families contribute \$800 toward school tuition costs each academic year. Along with tuition, high schools have fees such as summer readiness, tech, activities, lab, annual events, and fundraising. Along with the direct fees from the school, there are indirect fees that SSP families are responsible for (i.e. uniform and books). These fees can amount to a yearly cost of over \$1,000 at certain high schools. It is the responsibility of families to pay the \$800 tuition expense, direct fees, and indirect fees. Please note that school fees may change as students matriculate to the next grade.

Payment Submission

Payments are made per the school's policies and any questions regarding payments should be directed to the school's finance office. Families must make timely payments. SSP reserves the right to inquire about the families' monthly payments to the high school. Failure to submit tuition payments impedes student access to their grades, school participation, and, in some cases, their attendance. Please be aware that high schools will not release report cards, transcripts, and diplomas to students with outstanding bills, which places their college matriculation in jeopardy.

Financial Hardship – Need-Based Assistance

SSP understands families can experience hard and unexpected financial problems that prevent them from making payments in a timely fashion. In extreme circumstances, families can request additional financial support by completing the Financial Hardship Form.

SSP requires supporting documents with the form. The maximum amount awarded is \$500 and it can only be given to a student once a year. Due to limited funding, it is not guaranteed that you will receive the maximum award or any amount. If granted, funds will be sent directly to the school.

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