

## Success Academy Middle School Competitive Clubs Team Handbook

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Success Academy Middle School Club Program for our competitive Athletics, Debate, and Chess teams!

We are excited for your scholar to begin their competitive clubs during the 2019–2020 school year! Basketball, Volleyball, Cross-Country, Track, Debate, and Chess club team members are part of a select group of scholars at Success Academy. Team members are selected based on their talent and ability to compete with the best scholars within a given middle school scholar talent area. We are so very proud that your scholar was selected for and will be participating in our competitive After-School Clubs; we celebrate their achievements with you.

**Given the selection criteria, participating in a competitive club is a privilege and a commitment; scholars must meet the behavioral, academic, and culture expectations set by the school to remain eligible for club participation.** We need your support to ensure that your scholar is reaching their greatest scholar talent potential in their chosen club!

Please read the standard club commitment expectations below to ensure that your scholar is prepared to join us this school year. In addition, each club may have its own set of expectations. These club-specific expectations are identified in separate sections throughout this handbook.

### Your Scholar Commitment

#### Club Practice Participation Commitment

We want our club participants to get the most enjoyment possible from participating in our elite clubs. We believe that a large part of this enjoyment is participating in all club-related activities. Therefore, all club participants must fully adhere to the eligibility criteria below. Scholars and families will be required to have a meeting with their school principal and club teacher/coach regarding their eligibility after three eligibility infractions per trimester. If a fourth infraction occurs in any of the following requirements, the scholar will no longer be able to participate in the Club. In order to maintain participation in the club, the following should occur:

Behavior Expectations:

- No more than one, one day suspension
- Demonstrate excellent sportsmanship and effort

Culture Expectations:

- No more than three of the following:
  - Unexcused absences (Excused absences include religious holidays, illness with doctor's note, and tutoring)
  - Unexcused tardies

- Late pickups

Academic Expectations:

- ES: Maintain 95% completion on homework/reading log
- MS: Maintain 80% GPA

### **Chess Team–Specific Participation Commitment**

Scholars on the chess team must participate in two-and-a-half hours of practice every Wednesday after school and participate in Zero-Period, as well as a minimum of ten Saturdays at external tournaments, throughout the year. Chess teams will compete in external events. Top-ranking teams will earn the opportunity to compete in state and national tournaments. See the section below labeled “Chess Club Eligibility Requirements for Participation in Travel Events” for state and national tournament selection criteria.

### **Debate Team–Specific Participation Commitment**

Scholars on the debate team must participate in every Wednesday club practice, as well as a minimum of ten Saturdays throughout the year. Scholars may request an excused absence as Debate coaches are flexible in accommodating scholars involved in other activities (athletics, dance, theater, etc.). However, these absences must be discussed and agreed upon by coaches in advance and will impact a scholar’s eligibility for travel tournaments.

All scholars are eligible to compete in all local tournaments, through their schools, particularly those sponsored by the Newark Debate Academy League. We strongly encourage debaters to attend tournaments regularly. Doing so will increase the likelihood that a scholar will be selected to participate in a debate travel tournament.

### **Athletics Teams–Specific Participation Commitment**

We want to ensure that all of our athletes have enough time to warm up and prepare for practices (also referred to as “training sessions”). The following are the additional commitment requirements for our athletes.

#### *Arrival*

Players must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to their training session or game to use the bathroom, change, and mentally prepare. At the middle school, this means 7:15 am for 7:30 am - 8:45 am Zero Period practice Mon, Tues, Thurs, and Friday.

Scholars are also required to participate in Saturday tournaments and clinics. Tournaments and clinics generally last 2 hours. Start and end times for these practices will be provided to families once scholars are rostered into their respective school teams in September.

#### *Late Arrivals*

Players who are less than 15 minutes late will join the training session or game after the warm up. Players who are more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed to participate and will observe the practice or game from the sidelines.

Please also note that if your scholar is running late, you must text your designated coach with your estimated time of arrival. Parents should not call their coach during training sessions. Coaches are not

able to take any phone calls while coaching unless it is an emergency. This allows our coaches to focus on the safety of our players. This also enables our players to maximize their practice time with our coaches.

### **Club Sportsmanship Expectation**

We expect our scholars to demonstrate excellent sportsmanship and effort. Sportsmanship is demonstrated through fair and friendly behavior or treatment of others, inclusive of the opposing team. Any scholars or families with concerns should raise their concerns with their school coach to manage.

### **Club Eligibility Requirements for Selection for Travel Events**

We believe that all schools deserve the opportunity to participate in travel events. Scholars who are selected to participate in travel events are chosen not only on their ability to demonstrate adherence to the Success Academy academic and culture performance, but also on their exceptional talent within their school community and network community.

### **Chess Club—Specific Participation in Travel Events**

For Grade Nationals, Success Academy will take up to 30 selective Middle School scholars based on the following criteria.

1. Top scholars in the network for each grade (5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th) for a total of 12 scholars. Top scholars will be selected based on their October 1, 2019 USCF published rating. Each grade team has to come from a single school - we cannot mix and match scholars across our network of schools per USCF guidelines.
2. Top scholars in each selective school for a total of 18 scholars - 3 per school. Each selective school can select three scholars to field one grade team - either 5th, 6th, 7th, or 8th grade based on their October 1, 2019 USCF Rating. Schools cannot mix and match scholars from different grades within a grade team.
3. Any remaining spots will be allocated to the next top rated selective school in the selective MS network. However no school will be allowed to bring more than two teams in total.

For Girls Nationals, Success Academy will take up to 18 selective Middle School scholars based on the following criteria.

1. Each school can select only 1 team to participate. Each team is comprised of the top 3 rated players based on their cumulative average rating between September 01, 2019 - February 01, 2020 USCF published rating lists. The team must be the school's top rated team.
2. A team must compete within a specific age brackets - U18, U16, U12, and U10.
3. Each team can only be comprised of scholars from a single Success Academy school. We cannot mix and match scholars from different schools to make one team, per USCF guidelines.
4. In order to reduce the potential for Success Academy to compete against itself, we will only field up to two teams per age bracket. If the top rated teams of more than 2 Success Academy schools want to compete in the same bracket, only the top two schools will be selected for that age bracket, based on the USCF ratings criteria per above. The chess coach from the third school will have to select another age bracket to compete in.

For the New York State Scholastic Championships, Success Academy will take up to 60 selective Middle School scholars for this tournament per the following criteria:

1. The top 4 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 12 scholars each and the bottom 2 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 6 scholars each.

2. Determination of the top 4 schools will be based on the USCF published rating of the top 12 scholars for the school as of Feb 01, 2020.
3. Each of the schools must take their top scholars based on the scholar's top rating as of Feb 01, 2020.

For Junior High School Nationals, Success Academy will take up to 32 selective Middle School scholars for this tournament per the following criteria:

1. The top 2 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 8 scholars each and the remaining 4 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 4 scholars each.
2. Determination of the top 2 schools will be based on the USCF published rating of the top 8 scholars for the school as of Feb 01, 2020.
3. Each of the schools must take their top scholars based on the scholar's top rating as of Feb 01, 2020.

For Elementary Nationals Success Academy will take up to 60 selective Middle School scholars for each tournament

1. The top 4 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 12 scholars each and the bottom 2 rated selective Middle Schools can take up to 6 scholars each.
2. Determination of the top 4 schools will be based on the USCF published rating of the top 12 scholars for the school as of Mar 01, 2020.
3. Each of the schools must take their top scholars based on the scholar's top rating as of Mar 01, 2020.

The Network Chess Director will oversee and decide upon all disputes in consultation with each school's principal.

### **Debate Team–Specific Participation in Travel Events**

In addition to the standard club eligibility requirements for travel, debate team participants must also meet the following criteria:

- Attend all training camp and SA tournaments leading up to the travel tournament.
- Compete in four local tournaments (Newark or SA-based) prior to the travel tournament.
- Attend all Zero-Periods, Wednesday club sessions, and Saturday training camps.
- Show commitment in practice and at tournaments.

Teams to travel for debate tournaments will be chosen across the following criteria weighted equally:

- Overall Rank from SADL Weighted Wins
- Overall Rank from SADL Win/Loss %
- Overall Rank of SADL Average Speaker Score
- Overall Rank of SADL Sum Speaker Score
- External Tournament Team Attendance Rank

### **Athletics Team-Specific Participation in Travel Events**

Scholars participating in MS competitive clubs for Athletics do not travel. Scholars participating in Athletics Network Teams have travel guidelines outlined in the Network Teams Handbook.

## Uniforms

We are proud of our selective club scholars and their accomplishments. We want to share our pride of their achievements and want our scholars to look their best and ensure that they are safe when they participate in our clubs. As part of joining our school competitive clubs, all club participants will be provided a Success Academy club uniform. We require all participating scholars to wear their Success Academy club uniform for every tournament and practice. Scholars who are not in their Success Academy uniform will not be permitted to play and will be sent home. The uniform requirements for each club are described below.

### Chess Uniforms

Scholars must wear the Success Academy chess uniform for every chess tournament and Saturday training event. The SA chess uniform includes: SA chess polo (provided by SA) and khaki pants/skirt or SA uniform pants/skirt.

### Debate Uniforms

All scholars are required to wear their oxford SA debate shirt and SA bottoms (skirts/pants) or other professional dress to all tournaments.

### Athletics Uniforms and Accessories

#### *Uniform*

Scholars must have the full provided SA uniform at all training sessions and games. Players will not be allowed to practice or play in any uniform articles not provided by our after school clubs.

#### *Jewelry*

Out of concern for all players' safety, scholars are not allowed to wear jewelry during training sessions or games. If a player wears any jewelry during a session, a coach will ask the player to remove it and address the issue with a parent at dismissal.

#### *Glasses*

We encourage scholars needing corrective vision to consider prescription sports goggles or contacts, if age appropriate.

## Parent Involvement

We value parent commitment to our club participants and we provide parents with many opportunities to share in their scholar's club experiences.

### Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers may be needed from time to time to chaperone the scholars in weekend events, as well as travel events. Volunteering for a club event provides parents with the opportunity to see their scholars in action!

### Chess Club

Parents may speak with an SA chess coach to request to volunteer at Saturday SA tournaments.

To qualify to chaperone an overnight trip, a parent must have volunteered in the team room at a Saturday SA tournament a minimum of three times.

### **Debate Team**

Debate parents can be trained to judge competitors at debate events. Reach out to your debate coach for more information if you are interested in serving as a judge this school year. You may also be asked to chaperone travel events.

### **Athletic Teams**

Athletics programs do not require any volunteers or chaperones for MS Club Teams. However, we highly encourage your attendance at our school competitive events to cheer on our scholar and their team!

### **Homework**

#### **Chess Club**

To ensure that our club participants gain the skill sets needed to compete, homework is provided to supplement after-school practices. Parents must be aware of all required homework for our club scholars and ensure that scholars have completed it.

“TACTICS” are a series of moves in chess that “win material” from the opponent. Solving chess tactics puzzles are essential to scholar improvement in chess. The required tactics homework is done on the ChessKid website as follows:

- September through January: Ten ChessKid puzzles a week
- January through June: Twenty-five ChessKid puzzles a week
- Paper tactics will be assigned at coach’s discretion

### **Debate Team**

Participation in a debate team does not require completion of content-specific homework.

### **Athletic Teams**

Participation in an athletic team does not require completion of content-specific homework.

### **Competition and Tournament Day Expectations**

We want our club participants to gain as much experience as they can through their participation in competitions and tournaments. These experiences are invaluable in terms of building a scholar’s competitive skill set. We have designed our competition and tournament day expectations to maximize the enjoyment of your scholar of the entire team.

#### **Chess Team**

The following are the competition day expectations for our chess team scholars:

- Scholars must attend 8 out of 9 Saturday SA tournaments.
- Scholars must arrive on time for tournaments. Scholars arriving late may be dropped from the round.

The following are the competition day expectations for our parents:

- Parents/guardians are not allowed in the tournament hall after the first five minutes. Parents/guardians can wait in the designated classrooms for their scholars to complete their competition rounds.

### **Debate Team**

The following are the competition day expectations for our debate team scholars::

- Scholars must arrive on time for all tournaments. Failure to do so will result in being dropped from the first round. Scholars dropped from the first round can re-enter the tournament for all other rounds if they miss round one.
- Scholars must be in the debate uniform or professional dress.
- No “loser talk” is allowed at tournaments. We either win or we learn. Be respectful and professional with your coach, judges, and opponents.
- Report on time to all rounds. Teams will receive an automatic loss if they are more than 10 minutes late to a round.
- From the beginning of the tournament to the final and coach debrief, debaters are with the coach or in a debate room with a judge. Debaters should not be interacting with parents/guardians or spectators unless instructed by the coach.
- Debaters should write down all feedback from judges and report it to the coach after the round.
- At the end of a tournament debaters can all self-dismiss to go home.

The following are the competition day expectations for our parents:

- Parents/guardians are allowed to attend all debate rounds unless a team has requested not to have anyone in the room.
- Parents/guardians may not speak, signal, side coach, or do anything to distract debaters while they are in round.
- Parents/guardians may speak with debaters after the round is finished and the judge has offered feedback.

### **Athletic Teams**

The following are the competition day expectations for our athletes:

- Playing time may be more or less than that of another player on the team and will be determined by the head coach. Playing time is based on attendance at training sessions and games, player attitude, player commitment level, and playing ability. SA Athletics Programs guarantee 100% playing time at every training session unless there are behavior/safety issues.

The following are the competition day expectations for our parents:

- From the beginning of warm up to the final whistle and a debrief, players are with the coach and should not be interacting with parents/guardians or spectators unless instructed by the coach.
- If there is an injury, players will be examined by the medical crew (if applicable) or their coach. Parents/guardians may not enter the field nor the team-assigned area.
- Parents/guardians should wait 24 hours following the game to address any non-urgent concerns with the coach.

We are incredibly excited to have your scholar join our competitive Basketball, Volleyball, Cross-Country, Track, Debate, or Chess club. We look forward to working with you, your scholar, and our coaches in further developing your scholar’s already exceptional talent through their participation in our club programs.