



# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

CATHOLIC PARISH & SCHOOL

Dear SVDP Families,

I am so excited to be joining the community at St. Vincent de Paul this year as the Student Advocate. It is a gift for me to journey alongside your children as they discover what they are capable of in their friendships, in their schoolwork, and in their pursuit of holiness.

Just to introduce myself, I am originally from Georgia, and grew up going to a Catholic school there much like St. Vincent de Paul. I graduated from Georgia College and State University with a degree in Communications, and moved to North Georgia in 2019 to work as a full-time missionary with Life Teen at Camp Hidden Lake. As a missionary, I worked with middle school and high school students doing retreat ministry during the year, and hosting middle schoolers for week-long camp in the summer. While I am not a trained or licensed counselor, I am well-formed in community building, conflict resolution, facilitating small groups, and in training others in those same skills.

Over the course of the year, I will be teaching the social emotional learning course called Second Step for grades K-5 twice a month. This program allows students to become more aware of their feelings and come to a deeper understanding of how to respond to their circumstances, especially to grow in empathy and caring for others. On alternate weeks in the 6th-8th grade classes, I will be implementing the Created for Greatness curriculum (C4G) which will cover a variety of topics depending on grade level; the goal is for middle school students to grow in virtue, self-knowledge, and interpersonal skills so that they can respond more generously to their peers and wider community.

I will also be offering small groups to help build friendships and communication skills -- teachers may refer students to these groups or students may self-refer. As an example, these might occur during lunch periods to give students a chance to put new skills to practice in small group settings.

I look forward to meeting and getting to know your children, especially those who are new to the school community! I will intentionally be meeting with each new student to ask about their experience thus far and see where they may need support from me or their teachers, especially in getting connected with their classmates. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. Know of my continued prayers for your families at the beginning of this new school year!

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Mary Kate Conner  
*Student Advocate*  
303-777-3812 ext. 136  
[mconner@svdpk8.com](mailto:mconner@svdpk8.com)