



THE BROOK HILL SCHOOL

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**2023 SPARC Manual and Course Catalogue**

**Program Coordinator: Jessica Mize**

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*Inspiring a life-long love of learning through enriching,  
interesting, and educational non-traditional learning  
courses*

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## Purpose and Goals

The Spring Potential and Reality Courses (SPARC) program provides each student extraordinary learning opportunities beyond the classroom. Since its inception the program has become an enormously valuable and popular component of a Brook Hill School education. SPARC takes place the week before spring break in March. Not only are students given a plethora of classes to choose from each year beyond the normal high school curriculum, but they also have the unique opportunity to travel around the world through a variety of educational and missional trips. In addition, Brook Hill students also have the option during this week to experience a profession first-hand.

### I. SPARC Overview

#### a. SPARC- What is it?

- Spring Potential and Reality Courses
- A week of life enriching courses designed by our teachers outside of the traditional classroom topics.
- Goes beyond what the traditional classroom offers in the way of learning opportunities
- Modeled after the collegiate interim course offerings
- Most courses come with an additional fee; however, low-cost options are available.
- Most opportunities result in 0.5 credit on the student's BH transcript. Each SPARC course will result in a P/F grade on the transcript. Course instructors determine grades at the end of the course. Each instructor decides on a grading mechanism (such as a reflection journal, pictures, an essay, attendance, and participation, etc.)
- Many courses include community service.
- Students select the course they want to participate early in the school year.

#### b. SPARC- Who, When, Where?

- Who? Faculty and staff design the courses
- Who? All students in grades 6-12 participate
  - Middle schoolers either go on their designed class trip or participate in a local middle school trip. Middle school students, with principal permission, can participate in an international upper school course if they are accompanied by a parent.
- When?
  - The week before spring break
- Where?
  - On campus
  - Local
  - Statewide
  - Domestic
  - International

#### c. Why SPARC?

- SPARC is a distinctive, innovative program designed to challenge our students, expand their knowledge, encourage a lifelong love of learning, and provide our students with non-traditional learning experiences through travel and small group workshops. SPARC is deliberate in its purpose to intensify and expand learning opportunities and has

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become an extremely treasured and popular element of a Brook Hill education. Through SPARC, we fulfill our mission through the exploration in the arts, academics, athletics, service, real-life adventures, and the outdoors. SPARC continues to offer students opportunities to affirm their gifts, challenge their potential, and honor God through Christ-like character.

- Learning not only takes place in a formal classroom, but also in off-campus opportunities or through non-traditional, life enrichment learning occasions. These opportunities serve many important roles in our curriculum. These allow students the real-world experience to learn about different areas of our state, country, and the diverse world in which we live. Students learn a tremendous amount about themselves, their interests, and their talents through SPARC courses. Even through our local course offerings students can learn and to give back to the communities, which will hopefully become a lifelong learning passion. Creating new friendships, lifelong relationships, and many memories are all critical to the learning and growing process of our youth that are enhanced and reinforced beyond the classroom.

d. SPARC Objectives

- To expand the knowledge, exposure, and ideas of our students outside of a traditional classroom environment.
- To deepen the relationship between students and faculty by working together in diverse groups with a common purpose/theme.
- To model a love of learning which will carry into the future and spark future learning and a desire for lifelong enrichment experiences.
- To reinforce the concepts that have been taught in the classroom and to provide learning opportunities through non-traditional avenues.

## II. Rules/Guidelines/Expectations for Students

- a. All students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> are required to participate in SPARC. Regular attendance will be recorded in Veracross and counts toward exemptions.
  - 6<sup>th</sup> grade trip- Hill Country
  - 7<sup>th</sup> grade trip- Texas History
  - 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip- Washington D.C.
  - Two middle school local course options; Eight grade students may choose a local upper school course if they do not participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip.
  - Upper school students may choose from the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> course offerings which will include on campus, local, domestic, and international options.
- b. Boarding students are required to participate in a SPARC course unless explicit, written permission from a biological parent is given permitting that student to go home to the physical presence of a biological parent. Additional requirements, documents, and approval are required.
- c. Students are graded on a pass/fail scale. SPARC week counts for a ½ credit. If a student does not receive credit for SPARC each year, they will be required to take an extra fine arts course.
- d. Students are expected to behave in accordance with the student handbook at all times whether on or off campus for SPARC week. We have a special travel contract form that may be used by SPARC instructors traveling with their students that outlines the expectations, rules, and guidelines for behavior during SPARC week. Students may be removed from a course. Students

- that are participating in an off-campus SPARC course will be sent home at the expense of the parent.
- e. If a student takes medicine during school hours and is traveling off campus, the proper forms from the nurse’s office must be filled out and students must follow the protocol for taking medicine while on the trip. No student is to administer their own meds.
  - f. Beginning in the middle of September, students will be able to view and read about the course offerings. Sign-ups will begin shortly after courses are made available. All parents must sign up their student(s) for a course.
  - g. For courses that cost over \$500, 20% will be due at the time of registration. Families will be billed 20% each month until the balance is paid. If a student has not paid at least half by the communicated deadline, the student will be removed from the course and placed in a local course.
  - h. All payments are non-refundable; however, we will work with families to try and refund as much as possible in an extenuating circumstance, but we cannot guarantee any definitive amount.
  - i. All payments will be made either through the SPARC website, through the Brook Hill business office, or through a travel agency.
  - j. Each course instructor will provide a course syllabus that will outline what each student must do to receive a passing grade. This may include items such as an essay, a daily reflection journal, pictures, etc.

### III. College Tours and Internships

- a. College tours- as an alternative to participating in a course for SPARC week, students can take a parent-led college tour during SPARC week. Specific requirements and approval must be granted. Separate conditions are included as an option in the form of an application due before SPARC week, and additional requirements to be turned in after SPARC week. All trips must be pre-approved. College trip information can be found on the SPARC webpage
- b. Internships- as an alternative to participating in a course for SPARC week, students may do an internship during the week of SPARC. Separate requirements are necessary such as a reflection paper and daily journal and photos. This information is available on the SPARC webpage. All internships must be pre-approved.

### IV. Other SPARC Information

- a. There is a website dedicated to SPARC that can be found on the Brook Hill webpage. It is can be found by clicking on “our school” > “academics” > “upper school”>“SPARC.”
- b. Relevant course information, videos, and forms can be found on the webpage
- c. You can email with questions, feedback, and suggestions [sparc@brookhill.org](mailto:sparc@brookhill.org)



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## Registration Information

Students may register any time after the SPARC expo, if they have not already done so. Students who have already registered for a course, and the course is currently on the student's schedule, do NOT need to register again. Any student who fails to comply before registration closes will be placed in the local community service course. This year, some sign-ups have already started due to the nature of the course requiring airfare.

For those students not currently signed up for a course, follow the directions below:

1. Make your SPARC course selection.
2. Once you have made your SPARC selection, you need to register for the course via the SPARC website. Do this by clicking on the title of the course in this manual to be taken to the registration page.
3. Follow the instructions after you click on the link.
4. Once the student has been registered, the course will be added to their schedule in Veracross. Payments will be invoiced according to the payment schedule. Full payment is due prior to February 15<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any complications, see Mrs. Mize in Lauderdale 101 or email her at [sparc@brookhill.org](mailto:sparc@brookhill.org)

### Important Dates

- **Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>**, SPARC Expo and registration opens
- **November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022** - SPARC registration closes. All students not signed up will be placed on the local community service project for SPARC week.
- **December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022** - Last day to switch courses before a \$100 switch fee will be applied to the student's account
- **February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023**- all SPARC balances must be paid in full.

### What if the course you want is full?

If the course you choose as your first choice is full, please see Mrs. Mize in Lauderdale 101 or email her at [sparc@brookhill.org](mailto:sparc@brookhill.org), and she will place you on the waitlist and help you make plans for an alternative course.

### Waitlist information

1. In the event a course you are interested in is full, you will not be able to register for the course.
2. If you would like to be placed on the waitlist, then speak with Mrs. Mize.
3. You must register for another course. Follow the directions above to register and pay the deposit, where applicable. Being on a waitlist is not considered registered for a course.
4. If you are moved into your waitlisted course, any money paid will transfer.

### What if I sign up for a course that does not make?

There are times when a course does not have enough students sign up for the course to make. In those cases, we work to place you in a course of your choosing; however, you are responsible for communicating your choices. If you do not let Mrs. Mize know your second choice if your first choice does not make, then you will be placed on the local community service course.

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## Rules and regulations

All students in grades 6-12 must participate in a SPARC course. Any student who has not already registered for a course will register for a SPARC course in October.

- FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS- SPARC courses are designed by grade level. Students in grades 6-8 will either choose their class trip or the local course offering(s) for middle school students. Some upper school local courses allow 8th grade students to participate.
  - Middle school students may only travel on an upper school trip with the approval of the middle school principal, and they must be accompanied by a parent.
- FOR BOARDING STUDENTS-Because Brook Hill values family time, boarding students have the option to go home to their parents or legal guardians during SPARC week and spring break. If a student chooses this option, they must have documentation that includes: a “SPARC: Intent to Return Home” form, written permission by parents to return home and a copy of the travel documents (plane ticket-if applicable, itinerary, etc.). This must be turned into Mrs. Mize by December 13. If a student chooses not to go home, they are required to participate in a SPARC course of their choice.
- FOR PARENTS TRAVELING WITH SPARC GROUPS- For any parent/adult traveling on a Brook Hill SPARC trip or participating in any SPARC trip activities, a current background check must be on file in the business office.
- The official dates of SPARC are March 6<sup>th</sup> through March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. However, due to the nature of some courses that require extensive travel, the departure and arrival dates of some courses may fall outside of these dates.
- SPARC days are considered academic days in our school calendar. The Brook Hill attendance policy applies during SPARC; this includes the policy for parent request and college visit days. Each unexcused absence from a SPARC program will count toward the yearly allowance.
- Since SPARC is an academic week, students that fulfill all course requirements as set forth by the course instructor, will receive 0.5 credit for an elective on their transcript. If a student does not participate in SPARC or complete the specific course requirements, no credit will be awarded. Students are required to complete 3 elective credits to fulfill Brook Hill graduation requirements.
  - SPARC course grades are Pass/Fail. If a student does not participate or fulfill course requirements, an F will be placed on the report card/transcript.
- Once a student has been placed in a course, changes may not be made after December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Therefore, it is imperative that the student and parent discuss cost options for SPARC courses. Please do not register for a course if all course requirements, including costs, cannot be met.
- Individual SPARC courses will not be allowed; such courses do not meet the goal of small group interaction. All students should choose a SPARC course from the courses provided. A student choosing an alternative program will have to use his/her parent request days (limited to three days per year).
- If, due to extenuating circumstances, a student must be taken out of a course, The Brook Hill School will do everything we can to reimburse any money paid toward the course. However, there are times when we cannot guarantee a refund if certain items such as plane tickets, hotel reservations, etc. have already been purchased.
- Contact information SPARC Coordinator- Jessica Mize Phone: 903-894-5000 ext. 1101 Email: [sparc@brookhill.org](mailto:sparc@brookhill.org)

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## 2023 Middle School Trips

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Hill Country Hiking and Beyond**

**Austin, TX Area**

**Jenny Wallace & Amy Fitzgerald**

**Cost: \$500**

The sixth graders are taking on the Hill Country of Texas. We will be visiting Enchanted Rock, Hamilton Pools, and the Mammoth Site in Waco to discover the natural beauty and history of Texas. When we are not visiting these sites, we will be enjoying the fun and adventure of the Highland Lakes Camp on Lake Travis. Camp life will be full of action with opportunities like hiking, archery, zip-lining, paintball, and water activities!

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Texas History Adventure**

**Austin, TX and San Antonio, TX**

**Mike Hilliard**

**Cost: \$450.00**

Come experience Texas with the Brook Hill seventh grade. We will be visiting the Texas State Capitol and the Bob Bullock Museum in Austin, and the Alamo in San Antonio. The group will participate in excellent team building and dynamic outdoor recreational activities at Camp Eagle in Rocksprings, TX.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Christianity and the Founding Fathers**

**Washington, D.C.**

**Vicki Smith, Danny Loudermilk**

**Cost: \$2,051 (parent rate separate)**

The eighth grade will be visiting the sites in Washington, D.C. to gain a better understanding of the relationship between our Christian faith and the founding of our nation. There will be tours of the various memorials as well as the Smithsonian Museums, the Holocaust Museum, Washington Monument, Arlington National Cemetery, Mt. Vernon, and other sites. A private tour of the Capitol with Representative Louie Gohmert will highlight the trip. Students will be given the chance to interact with the culture, politics, and heritage of our nation in a way that will ignite in them a love of country that will last a lifetime. The trip will end with a fun-filled evening on the Potomac River Spirit Dinner and Dance Cruise.

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## 2023 Upper School Local Offerings

### Can You Escape?

Jacob Agnew

Local

Max: 16 students

Cost: \$300.00

Students will have their minds and problem-solving skills tested as they try and discover and decipher different challenges and clues to help them out of different scenarios in themed rooms. They will use creativity and teamwork to not only escape the rooms, but to create one of their own escape rooms. We will conclude the week by trying to escape each other's homemade rooms!

### Designer Board Games

Dr. Sloan Lee

On Campus

Max 20 students

Cost: \$60.00

Join Dr. Lee at the Strategy Gaming SPARC week to learn about revolution in board gaming that has taken place over the last 15 to 20 years. This course will focus on different sorts of board games which require significant deliberation and strategic choices to address the decisions of opponents and mitigate the impact of randomness in the game space. Dr. Lee will bring over 200 games to the SPARC classroom.

### Service/Missions

Ben Longenecker

Local

Max 20 students

Cost: \$50.00

This is a week-long service project fulfilling the needs of those right here in our own community. We will use SPARC week as an opportunity to learn through service and to carry out the command Jesus gave, "And He sat down and called the twelve. And He said to them, 'If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.'" Mark 9:35. In the past we have done the following:

- Painting homes with PATH
- Packed/sorted/organized food with East Texas Food Bank
- Trail Maintenance and Camp/Greenhouse clean-up with Camp Tyler
- Trash pick-up (Brook Hill campus through downtown Bullard)

We will not know specific opportunities until closer to SPARC week as it will depend on the needs of our community at that time.

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## **Brook Hill Random Acts of Kindness**

**Jes Moore**

**Local/Dallas, TX**

**Max 15 students**

**Cost: \$150**

Whether planned or random, exercising acts of kindness to the community will be the goal of Acts of Kindness SPARC Class. We will be visiting various businesses, first responders, educators, the homeless, children, animal shelters, the elderly, and others, with the hope of bringing a smile to a face, a good conversation, and a word of encouragement. While this SPARC will cost more than the typical local SPARC (because we need to provide the goods along with our services), we will also be tasked with the challenge of being creative and financially frugal. Ultimately, the goal is to learn to embody the biblical teaching that, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

## **Early Education at the Lower School**

**Shelly Crowell**

**On Campus**

**Max 12 students**

**Cost: \$30.00**

Get hands-on experience in the everyday life of a lower schoolteacher. Students will learn techniques for encouraging student learning, observe developmental stages of child development, design learning activities, and much more. Participants will gather each morning at the upper school to discuss the assignments for the day. Then, participants will work alongside teachers throughout the day, observing students and assisting teachers.

## **Parent Led College Tours**

**Pat Brunson**

**Varies**

**Upper School Students**

**Self-pay**

Deciding where to attend college is big decision, especially when you have no idea about a particular college's atmosphere and academics. The SPARC Parent-led College Tours is a great way to experience a variety of college campuses so that you can make an informed decision about your future. See the website or Mrs. Brunson for more information.

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## 2023 Upper School Domestic Offerings

### Mere Masculinity

Rod Fletcher, Shawn Rhoads, Kent Travis

Cost: \$1,100.00

Max 40 students (Upper School males only)

Catalina

This week-long course is designed to challenge 9th-12th grade boys to explore Biblical masculinity in the wild and rugged environment of Catalina Island. On this remote island, located off the coast of California, students will study Biblical principles that are foundational to Godly manhood while exploring, engaging, and interacting with the “wild side” of Catalina Island. Students will catch and clean fish, search for moray eels, dive through wild kelp forests in search of marine life, kayak along the island coastline, hike the rugged terrain seeking wild buffalo, and possibly swim with dolphins—if their nerves can take it. This course is NOT for the “faint of heart,” but only for the young man who enjoys conquering the unknown and thrives on adventure.

### Boston

Glenn Ballard and Patti Eden

\$1,600.00 (estimated)

Max 36 students

Boston, MA

Students experience first-hand where the American Revolution was born, and will visit numerous great American historical and cultural sites including: The Famous Freedom Trail, The USS Constitution, Bunker Hill, Faneuil Hall, The Quincy Market, Old North Church, Salem & The Witch Trial Museum, Lexington & Concord, The Old North Bridge, Walden Pond & Home Of Thoreau, The USS Cassin Young, Harvard, Hamilton in the Boston Opera House (with optional alternative activity of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts , And The Boston Celtics vs. Portland Trailblazers.

### We Are Free

Meredith Attebery and Melissa Adkins

\$800

Females grades 11-12 only Max 15

Arkansas

We will camp/stay at a restorative care facility for women who have escaped sex trafficking situations. Participate and learn about equine therapy, assist the women in spring planting while learning from Ag specialists. Listen to and learn from the program. Understanding the warning signs/red flags of sex trafficking. During the last days of our trip, we will go white water rafting if weather permits and stay at a campground in treehouses!

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## **Courage, Character, and Leadership**

**Steve Dement**

**\$1,500.00**

**Upper School males only**

**Shenandoah Valley Virginia and Washington, D.C.**

This course is FULL. Students will examine the qualities of courage, character and leadership with particular emphasis on those qualities as exhibited on the battlefield by the students of the Virginia Military Institute during the 1864 Battle of New Market in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. The course will include lectures on the campus of V.M.I. in Lexington, Virginia, assisted by V.M.I. faculty, close examination of the battlefield itself from the perspective of the V.M.I. Cadets, and personal application of lessons learned. Additional highlights will include sight-seeing in Washington, D.C. with a performance at the Kennedy Center and two very “Special Events”. We will also tour Jefferson’s Monticello (Charlottesville, Virginia), make a visit to the Bull Run battlefield (Manassas, Virginia), Stonewall Jackson’s home and Robert E. Lee’s office (Lexington, Virginia).

## **Disney Imagination Campus**

**Jereme Hubbard and Tiffany Hubbard**

**\$1,850.00**

**Max 40 students**

**Orlando, FL**

Students will be a part of the Disney Imagination Campus program, which uses the magic of Disney to engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students will be able to participate in such courses as “Theme Park Design” and “Managing Your Own Brand.” Students will also be able to visit all four Disney World theme parks and other attractions in Orlando!

## **Explore Hawaii**

**Stephanie Hawkins and Travis Bunger**

**\$3,436**

**Honolulu, HI**

Come experience the deep-rooted traditions and culture of the Hawaiian people! On this tropical adventure, soak up the beautiful panoramic views as you hike to the top of Diamond Head Crater, enjoy the unparalleled aquatic life on Waikiki Beach, and stand in reverence at the Pearl Harbor USS Arizona Memorial, plus so much more!

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## 2023 Upper School International Offerings

### Brook Hill in Israel

**Dr. Gary Gardner**

**4,659.00**

**Max 25 students**

Walk where Jesus walked, talk where Jesus talked, and be immersed where Jesus was immersed! We will live in Jerusalem's old city, AND in Modern Israel. We will see where He did what He did the first time He came. Then we will see where He will do what the Bible tells us He will do when He comes back...and He IS coming back! Join us and be ready!

### Guatemala Missions

**David Collins, Austin Reed, Ruth Wetherington**

**\$1,250.00**

**Max 20-30 students**

The SPARC Guatemala trip will be a life changing experience for our students. We will stay at an orphanage named Casa on the Rock. Our students will be blessed with the opportunity to serve and live out the action God calls us to as believers mentioned in James ("Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world: James 1:27). The Trip will be one of memories, character building, and growth as well as an amazing opportunity to humbly serve orphans. Students will also have the chance to practice their Spanish speaking skills. The trip will be led by David Collins, Austin Reed, Joey Wilson, and Lindsey Flores. We will begin with a plane ride to Guatemala City where we will then drive to the orphanage. Meals and lodging are provided through the orphanage. We will help with projects, play and love on kids, participate in devotionals, and grow as individuals and a group by serving as the body of Christ. Please visit the following link to learn more about the orphanage: <http://casaaleluya.org/>

### Viva Italia

**Wally Dawkins, Scott Ryle, Hope Cooper**

**\$3,965.50**

Explore Rome visiting the Colosseum, The Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica, The Sistine Chapel, and more! Travel to the Amalfi Coast, visit Sorrento, Positano, Ravello, and the Isle of Capri. We will visit the volcanic ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum and learn to make mozzarella at a cheese farm.

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## **Amazon Outreach- Until All of Heard**

**Kelly King and Shannan McEuen**

**\$3,181.00**

**Brazil**

Join the Amazon Outreach Organization in serving the River People and Indigenous tribes along the Amazon River in partnership with Brazilian churches. Why do we go?

- 80% of villages along the Amazon River have no gospel presence
- They are humble people that live in deep material and spiritual poverty
- Villagers have a syncretized religion of Spiritism, Macumba (voodoo), and a diluted Catholicism...they are ripe for the gospel of Jesus Christ!
- The great majority of the population along the Amazon River have no access to any medical or dental help or fresh, clean drinking water
- There are very few organizations like Amazon Outreach ministering to these people and even their own country rarely helps them.
- "Transforming lives on two continents" not only will you GREATLY impact the lives of those who live in the villages, but your life will be impacted as well!

## **From the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea: A walk through Northern Spain**

**Blanca Story and Wes English**

**\$3,300.00**

**Max 16 students**

A once in a lifetime trip led by Mrs. Story and Mr. English. We will travel from Barcelona to Santiago de Compostela stopping along the way to see the cities of Bilbao, Burgos, and Leon. We will experience the culture of Spain (the customs and traditions of the people of Spain in their daily lives while hearing and using the Spanish language). We will visit historical sites (Gaudi's Sagrada Familia, Medieval castles, and Gothic cathedrals) as well as the famed Guggenheim Museum. We will finish our trip with a 3-day pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, a city in the province of Galicia, traveling along The Camino de Santiago, The Way of Saint James. This is a medieval route to Santiago de Compostela, historically taken by the faithful to visit the supposed tomb of Saint James in the Cathedral of Santiago. This route is still traveled by modern day pilgrims and travelers and will take us through the beautiful countryside of Northern Spain.

**REFUND POLICY- Please note that all payments are non-refundable. In the event a person cannot attend a trip, the trip leader will determine if any refund is possible.**