



Albert Lea High School

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Albert Lea, MN 56007
Ph: 507.379.5340
Fax: 507.379.5498
Attendance Line: 507.379.5344
Web Site: <http://www.alschools.org>

Administration

Sean GastonPrincipal
Amy StiehlAssistant Principal
Christina GerberDean of Students
Harrison KoetzDean of Students

ALHS Mission

To ensure individual academic, social and emotional growth that leads to engaged citizens and lifelong learners.

Updated 07/2026

Welcome to Albert Lea High School for the 2026-2027 school year!

High school is a time for students to grow, develop life-long skills/habits, and build positive relationships with peers and adults. Students who attend school regularly and are involved in clubs or other activities, combined with school and families partnering together to teach, encourage, and support will more likely encounter academic success and have a positive educational experience that will better prepare them for their journey after high school.

ALHS is committed to working together with families and the community to ensure a successful educational experience for our students. Our hope is that the time spent here at ALHS will allow our students to become curious learners who are provided diverse opportunities to grow and learn in a safe, respectful, and positive environment that will foster them to develop to their fullest potential. ALHS staff is here to support and guide students in choosing the pathway for success that best meets their needs. There are many opportunities for students to challenge themselves. We offer Advanced Placement coursework, College in the Schools courses, Concurrent Enrollment, Post-Secondary Enrollment Options, and Work Based Learning and Project Lead the Way courses.

This handbook has been prepared as a guide in understanding the expectations for ALHS students in regard to school policies and procedures. It is the responsibility of each ALHS student and parent/guardian to become familiar with this handbook and its contents as students and parents are held accountable for knowing the policies. This is a live document with the most updated version being available on the Albert Lea High School website. If you need clarity on anything in the handbook, please feel free to contact a teacher or administrator. It would be impossible to address every situation that arises during the school day and its related extracurricular/enrichment activities. The administration will develop and implement additional procedures they see necessary in operating the school. The policies and procedures in this handbook may be amended or changed during the school year. The changes will be noted in the handbook online and may be found on the ALHS website, alschools.org. At the discretion of administration, any infraction to Albert Lea Area Schools policies and ALHS procedures may be shared with the Police Liaison Officer for review for possible criminal violation.

We wish every student at ALHS a successful and rewarding year filled with engaging and challenging learning opportunities along with positive and respectful social interactions.

Go Tigers!

Sincerely,

Sean Gaston, Principal

Building Staff

Main Office

Attendance Secretary507.379.5347
Attendance Line (all day absences)507.379.5344
Becca Larson, Secretary to the Principal
Sean Gaston, Principal
Amy Stiehl, Assistant Principal
Christina Gerber, Dean of Students
Harrison Koetz, Dean of Students

Student Services

Tena Tasker, Student Services Secretary
Cynthia Manuel, Counseling Secretary
Jessica Hatland, School Counselor
Katelyn Flatness, School Counselor
Missy Hoscheit, School Counselor

Special Services

Jay Escobar, Social Worker
Heather Leiste, Social Worker
Sheena Possin, Social Worker
Brittany Roberts, Social Worker

Miscellaneous

Renae Sandsmark, School Health Clerk.....507.379.5836
Patty Jones, Food Services Manager507.379.5392
Albert Lea Bus Company507.373.1467
Duane Miller, Building Head
SiBlue Soe, Karen Success Coach
Paw Sher, Karen Success Coach
Janet Serrano, American Indian Success Coach
Leslie Blouin, Spanish Success Coach
Cesar Zamora, Spanish Success Coach
Officer Adam Conn, School Resource Officer
Jenny Habana, Freeborn County Truancy Officer

Activities

Tammy Oudekerk, Activities Secretary.....507.379.5345

- Student Days
- ALHS Student Days
- New Student Orientation
- Conferences
- Holidays & Breaks - No school
- District Days / No School
- AL Academy Day / No School

August 2026

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

Aug 12 Grades 8-12 Conferences 7:30-7:30
 Aug 12 ALC Open House 11-7:00
 Aug 13 Grades 6-7 Open House 11-7:00
 Aug 13 Preschool - Grade 5 Conferences 11-7:00
 Aug 14 Preschool - Grade 5 Conferences 7:30-3:30
 Aug 18 8th grade Student Orientation
 Aug 19 Grades PreK-12 First Day of School

September 2026

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

Sept. 4-7 Labor Day Weekend Break (NO SCHOOL)
 Sept. 25 District Day (Staff Only)

October 2026

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

Oct 15-16 Fall Break (NO SCHOOL)
 Oct 22 Grades 8 - 12 & ALC Conferences 3:30-7:30

November 2026

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

Nov. 5-6 No School Preschool - Grade 7
 Nov. 5 Preschool - Grade 7 Conferences 11-7:00
 Nov. 6 Preschool - Grade 7 Conferences 7:30-3:30
 Nov 25-27 Thanksgiving Break (NO SCHOOL)

December 2026

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

Dec 21 District Day - Staff Only
 Dec 22-Jan 1 Winter Break (NO SCHOOL)

January 2027

M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Jan 18 District Day (Staff Only)
 Jan 28 Grades 8-12 & ALC Conferences 3:30-7:30

February 2027

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

Feb 15 Holiday Break (NO SCHOOL)
 Feb 25 No School Preschool - Grade 7
 Feb. 25 Preschool - Grade 7 Conferences 11-7:00
 Feb 26 No School - All sites
 Feb. 26 Preschool - Grade 7 Conferences 7:30-3:30

March 2027

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Mar 22-26 Spring Break (NO SCHOOL)

April 2027

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

April 12 NO SCHOOL

May 2027

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

May 20 ALC Graduation
 May 21 ALHS Graduation
 May 26 Last Day of School
 May 27 District Day

Instructional Days
 Preschool - Grade 7 = 171 days
 Grades 8 - 12 = 175 days

ALHS Daily Schedule

Period 1	8:25-9:09
Period 2	9:13-9:56
Period 3 (<i>FLEX/TV</i>)	<i>10:00-10:20</i>
Period 4	10:24-11:07
"A" Lunch	11:11-11:36
Period 5	11:39-12:32
Period 5	11:11-11:39
"B" Lunch	11:39-12:04
Period 5	12:07-12:32
Period 5	11:11-12:07
"C" Lunch	12:07-12:32
Period 6	12:36-1:19
Period 7	1:23-2:06
Period 8	2:10-2:55

ALHS Daily Schedule

Period 1	8:25-9:07
Period 2	9:11-9:52
Period 3(<i>FLEXeX/TV</i>)	<i>9:56-10:28</i>
Period 4	10:32-11:13
"A" Lunch	11:17-11:42
Period 5	11:45-12:38
Period 5	11:17-11:45
"B" Lunch	11:45-12:10
Period 5	12:13-12:38
Period 5	11:17-12:13
"C" Lunch	12:13-12:38
Period 6	12:42-1:23
Period 7	1:27-2:08
Period 8	2:12-2:55

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Equal Opportunity for All

Albert Lea High School is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual preference, age, marital status, physical and mental disability, status due to receipt of public assistance, or any other group or class against which discrimination is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, and any other applicable state or federal laws. Inquiries regarding compliance should be directed to the Albert Lea High School Principal.

Pledge of Allegiance

State law requires that all students shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice.

Security System

Please be aware that Albert Lea High School is protected by a video security system. Any attempt by students to damage or disconnect the system itself may result in suspension from school and charged with the cost of repairing the equipment.

Visitors

Visitors must use the intercom system and receive a visitor badge. ID may be required. Only pre-approved guest speakers or presenters will be accepted as school guests. The school does not allow former student visitors. You will be asked to wait in the vestibule unless necessary to enter the building.

SECTION 1 - Information

Activities/Athletics

Fine Arts and Activities

***The 2025-2026 fine arts/fee based non-MSHSL activities participation fee is \$50 per activity** (except if noted). We offer the following activities for students:

Activities (potential outside fee)		Clubs (no fee)
Caroliers	*Chamber Strings	Astronomy Club
*Clay Target Trap Team	*Chorale	Chess Club
*FFA	*Fall Musical	Environmental Awareness Club
Link Crew (application process)	*Jazz Band	French Club
*Marching Band	*Mock Trial	Genders & Sexualities Alliance Club
Student Council	*One-Act Play	Student Council
Tigers Roar	*Robotics	National Honor Society (NHS)
* E-Sports	*Show Choir	Humanities Club
	*Speech	Karen Club
	*Spring Play	Spanish Club
		Archery Club

Athletics

The 2025-2026 athletic participation fee is \$150 per sport. We offer the following competitive opportunities for students:

Sport	Season	Sport	Season
Baseball	Spring	Softball	Spring
Basketball, Boys & Girls	Winter	Swimming, Boys	Winter
Cheer Team	Fall, Winter	Swimming, Girls	Fall
Cross Country, Boys & Girls	Fall	Tennis, Boys	Spring
Dance Team	Winter	Tennis, Girls	Fall
Football	Fall	Track, Boys & Girls	Spring
Golf, Boys & Girls	Spring	Volleyball	Fall
Hockey, Boys & Girls	Winter	Wrestling	Winter
Soccer, Boys & Girls	Fall		

The following procedures apply to all students involved in any extracurricular activity scheduled either during or outside of the school day:

- School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted.
- Students may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
- If a student is suspended from any class, he/she may not participate in any activity or program during the length of their suspension.
- If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, he or she must present a physician's statement or a statement from the student's parent/guardian clearing the student for participation that day. The note must be presented to the coach or advisor before the student participates in the activity program.

Athletic/Activity Pass

Attendance at sporting events is free for all ALAS students. A student ID or Go Fan pass is required for entrance.

Dances

There will be separate dances for grades 8-9 and grades 10-12 for Homecoming and Winterfest.

The following rules will apply to all dances sponsored by Albert Lea High School. No exceptions will be made.

- Only ALAS students are eligible to attend.
- ALAS student ID is required for admission.
- Hats, coats, and jackets must be removed before entering the dance.
- Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated.
- No slam dancing, moshing, or any other dangerous activities.
- A uniformed law enforcement officer will be on duty.
- Students under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will be removed from the dance. School procedures will be enforced and law enforcement will be notified.
- Once a student leaves the dance they cannot return.
- The school reserves the right to shut the dance down or impose appropriate guidelines at any time.

Prom Guidelines

ALAS students who are juniors or seniors may request permission to bring a guest that does not attend ALHS. The guest cannot be a high school freshman or younger, or be older than 20 years of age. If in high school, the guest must be in good standing at their school (not under suspension or expulsion). For all guests, a permission form will be completed along with a copy of the guest's high school ID or Driver's License by the deadline given in the spring. There are no exceptions.

School Assemblies and Sponsored Events

Assemblies, pep fests, and other school sponsored events will be held in the gymnasium or auditorium. Students are expected to attend these events. All students are expected to demonstrate respectful behavior and follow the student code of conduct. The assembly programs are an important part of our high school educational experience.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability that are important for lifelong success. The purpose of this procedure is to partner together to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive. Attendance is the responsibility of the student, parent/guardian, and the school. It is our hope that this procedure will assist students in attending school on a regular basis. According to Minnesota Compulsory Attendance Law, 7-17 year old students are required by law to attend school on a regular basis. All reasonable efforts should be made by families to make school attendance a priority and ensure that students are in school each and every student contact day. Parent/guardian involvement can reduce truancy.

Student Responsibilities

- Attend all classes on a daily basis and arrive on time.
- Follow all check-in and check-out procedures. Check-in by signing in at the Attendance Office if the student arrives after 8:25 a.m. Check-out by signing out at the Pool Door with a pass from the Attendance Office or Health Office.
- Students may not leave school grounds for any reason without permission. The Attendance Office or the Health Office may grant permission, with parent approval, for a student to leave the building and will provide a pass.
- Contact the teacher to arrange make-up work when absent.
- Ensure the teacher changes the absence notation to a tardy if a student is late to class within the first five (5) minutes.
- Complete all make-up work for all absence types within two (2) days of return. Previously announced projects and/or assessments must be turned in or taken on the day of the student's return to school. If extenuating circumstances exist, the teacher may grant additional make-up time.
- Students are expected to attend their study hall unless the student has Senior Privilege. On any unexcused absence, the teacher will address such absences with the student and parent/guardian. Absences from study halls will be treated as it would be with a regular class.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Ensure their student attends school.
- Be aware of their student's attendance: online access through the Parent Portal is available for parents.
- Inform the school of absences prior to, the day of, or no later than 10:00 a.m. the day after the absence stating a reason for the absence. **(Attendance Line: 507.379.5344)**. Failure of parent/guardian to contact the Attendance Office by 10:00 a.m. the following day will result in an unexcused absence and apply toward the student's county truancy program.
- Parents are asked to notify the Attendance Office and fill out an Advance Absence form for an extended absence prior to or at the start of the absence and to make arrangements for the student to make up work.
- Schedule student appointments outside the school day when possible.
- Contact the Attendance Office, Administration, Counselor, or teachers if there are any concerns about the student's attendance.
- If you suspect your student is not attending school, contact the Attendance Office.

Tardiness

A tardy is defined as a student not in the classroom when the class period bell rings up to but not to exceed five (5) minutes of the class. Arrival after five (5) minutes is considered an absence. Consequences related to tardiness may include non-consideration for Students of the Quarter recognition, scholarship awards, and may impact academic lettering.

Make-Up Work

Students are required to make-up all missed assignments or complete alternative assignments deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher. **Previously announced projects and/or assessments must be turned in or taken on the day of the student's return to school.** If extenuating circumstances exist, the teacher may grant additional make-up time.

Students are expected to work with teachers to ensure the completion of all missing work in compliance with school-wide late work deadline (1 week after due date).

Excused Absences

Parents/guardians may clear three (3) days per month and a total of 12 per school year while school is in session. Subsequent clearance for illnesses require verification by a valid health care professional or administrative approval. Student attendance will be monitored to detect patterns of excessive excused absences so appropriate intervention action takes place.

- Absences with proper written verification (written parent note or office form)
- Pre-approved vacation (paperwork turned in prior to absence)
- College visit (paperwork turned in prior to absence)
- Drivers test appointment
- Funerals
- Illness with parent note

Unexcused Absences

Parents/guardians will receive an automatic call notifying them of any unexcused absences.

- Babysitting
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping
- Running late
- Transportation problem
- Work/job
- Other reasons that are not listed under excused absences

Absences that are ALWAYS excused

- 504s and IEPs that have attendance clauses
- Court appearances
- School-sponsored activities
- Suspension
- Verified meeting with office personnel
- Doctor-ordered absence
- Official religious holidays

- Death of an immediate family member (parent, step-parent, guardian, sibling, grandparent)
- Unique or emergency circumstances which are authorized by a school administrator

Advance Absences: Vacation/College Visit/Medical

Students must pick up an Advance Absence Form from the Attendance Office, have it completed by their teachers and administrator, and returned to the Attendance Office. Failure to submit this form in advance may result in an unexcused absence. Vacation days and college visits will be included in the attendance cap per semester.

First Unexcused Absence and Second Unexcused Absence

- Automated phone call to parent/guardian

Third Unexcused Absence and beyond in one class during one quarter

- Truancy letter sent home
- Student will be discussed at the weekly attendance meeting (Administration and Freeborn County Truancy Officer)
- Student will meet with the school administrator
- Freeborn County Truancy Referral Form will be recommended
- Further unexcused absences will result in referral to the Freeborn County Truancy Diversion Program

Truancy

Continuing Truant

MN. Stat. 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of MN. Stat. 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in MN. Stat. 120A.05, without a valid excuse within a single school year for: three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school.

Habitual Truant

MN Statute 260C.007 provides that a habitual truant is a student under the age of 17 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days per school year if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the student is in middle school, junior high, or high school, or a student who is 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days per year and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under section 120A.22, subdivision 8.

A school district attendance officer or other designated school official shall refer a habitual truant student and the student's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under MN. Stat. Ch. 260A.

Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, MN. Stat. 260A.03 provides that the school Attendance Office or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent/guardian by first class mail or other reasonable means of the following:

- The student is truant
- The parent/guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the student's absences

- The parent/guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the student at school pursuant to MN. Stat. 120A.22 and parents/guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under MN. Stat. 120A.34
- This notification serves as the notification required by MN. Stat. 120A.34
- Alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district
- The parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions for the student's truancy
- If the student continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under MN. Stat. Ch. 260C
- If the student is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the student may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the student's driving privilege pursuant to MN. Stat. 260C.201
- It is recommended that the parent/guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

ALHS ConnectED Learning & Internet Use Agreement

The purpose of this agreement form is to inform parents about our commitment to provide a ConnectED Learning environment in the classroom, to notify parents about policies we have to support the safe and appropriate use of technology tools and online digital resources to support this environment for students, and to obtain necessary consent for student participation.

What is ConnectED Learning?

A ConnectED learning environment is one in which all students enjoy daily access to a full range of educational resources, web-based learning tools, and technology to support rich, meaningful, and student-centered learning experiences. ConnectED Learning includes the following components:

- **21st Century Skills** - communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.
- **Digitally-Rich Curriculum** - Digital Content resources, including a variety of online interactive programs such as Google Apps for Education, blogs, digital storytelling, concept mapping, and visual presentation tools and applications.
- **Mobile Devices & Computer Labs** - ALHS students will have regular access to mobile devices and/or computers during class.
- **Differentiated and Personalized Learning** - the use of a wide range of resources and assessment data to meet diverse learner needs and empower students as self-directed learners.

A successful implementation of a ConnectED learning environment is not measured by the number of devices or technology used, but rather by the powerful learning it enables and supports. A ConnectED learning environment may increase student engagement, encourage student participation, boost creativity, facilitate communication with other learners and educators around the world, and expand the classroom experience beyond four walls.

Google Apps for Education & other web-based Digital Learning tools

Use of Chromebooks requires Google Apps for Education. The following services are available to each student and hosted by

Google as part of Albert Lea Area Schools online presence in Google Apps for Education:

- **Classroom** - a collaboration & workflow tool that helps teachers and students manage assignments and online discussion.
- **Mail**(grades 6-12 only)- an individual email account for school use managed by Albert Lea Area Schools.
- **Calendar** - an individual calendar providing the ability to organize schedules, daily activities, and assignments.
- **Docs** - a word processing, spreadsheet, drawing, and presentation toolset that is very similar to Microsoft Office.
- **Sites** - an individual and collaborative website creation tool.
- **Drive** - users are provided with unlimited online storage to store digital files. These files are accessible from any web-connected device.

For more information on Google Apps for Education, please visit

<https://www.google.com/edu/products/productivity-tools/>

Student Safety, Security & Privacy

Filtering

Filtering of Internet & emails

School accounts must comply with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student emails and Internet will be filtered and monitored as outlined in the Technology Acceptable Use district policy ([524](#)¹) to ensure student safety online. Every email sent and received from a school email account (whether from any home, school or public computer or mobile device) goes through filtering software that scans for language and images. Student email addresses will have restrictions on what can be received. Albert Lea makes every effort to block inappropriate content; however, technology is ever-evolving. If a student receives any inappropriate emails or accesses inappropriate content on district-owned devices, these incidents should be reported to a school administrator.

Student Online Safety

Students will receive instruction in online safety while at school. We also encourage you to talk about online safety with your children. (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/pdf-0001-netcetera.pdf>)

Student Data Privacy & Security

Student data privacy and security and Internet use in our schools including Google Apps for Education and other digital learning tools are governed by the district policy([515](#)²,[524](#)¹)and federal and state law including:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents the rights to review student records. Under FERPA and the Protection and Privacy of Student Records district policy ([515](#)²), schools may disclose directory information, but parents may request the school not disclose this information. Parents are provided the opportunity annually to opt out of disclosing their student's directory information using the Procedure for Obtaining Nondisclosure of Directory Information outlined in the Protection and Privacy of Student Records district policy ([515](#)²) --FERPA- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/>

For more information on how Google Apps for Education provides data security and protects student privacy, review the complete policies here.

-- Google Apps for Education- Privacy & Security- <https://www.google.com/edu/trust/>

Communication and Publication of Student Work

The use of digital learning tools in a ConnectED Learning Environment may include, but is not limited to, blogs, videos, wikis, e-portfolios, and others that make it possible to share content with classmates, students across the globe, and, where appropriate, the general public. Through the use of these educational tools, the school district may cause student work or video/audio images to be published by including materials in instructional materials, booklets, blogs, websites, messaging, video/audio connections on the Internet or intranet, brochures or flyers used in award ceremonies, sports, or fine arts presentations, and any other form that may be used to distribute or communicate the work. Under the Protection and Privacy of Student Records district policy ([515](#)²), the school must obtain parental consent to publish student work as described. This signed agreement serves as consent. [Student Expectations in a ConnectED Learning Environment](#)

Digital Citizenship

District computer systems and mobile devices are intended for educational purposes. Students must adhere to the Albert Lea Area School District Technology Acceptable Use Policy ([524](#)¹) as well as all school rules, policies, and teacher directives. Students should always conduct themselves as good digital citizens by adhering to the following:

- **Respect Yourself** - Show respect through your actions. Select online names that are appropriate. Use caution with the information, images, and other media that is posted online. Carefully consider the personal information you share about yourself.
- **Protect Yourself** - Ensure that the information, images, and materials posted online will not put you at risk. Do not publish personal details, contact details, or personal activity schedules. Immediately report any inappropriate behavior directed at you while online. Protect your passwords, accounts, and resources. Never share this information with others.
- **Respect Others** - Show respect to others. Do not use technology to antagonize, bully, harass, or stalk people.
- **Protect Others** - Protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. Avoid unacceptable materials and conversations.
- **Respect Intellectual Property** - Request permission to use copyrighted or otherwise protected materials. Properly cite the use of websites, books, media, etc.
- **Protect Intellectual Property** - Do not use pirated software or distribute music or media in a manner that violates license agreements.

E-learning Day

An E-learning Day will be in effect when school has been canceled due to inclement weather or other situations. Students are expected to complete assignments on these days. Teachers have or will provide students assignments via Google Classroom or email. Students are expected to complete their assignments within three school days (E-learning day counts as day 1). If the due date lands on the weekend or holiday, E-learning assignment will be due on the first day back to school. Attendance will be marked as an eL (E-learning) absence for work not completed. Teachers will be available to help students with questions and concerns during regular school hours via phone, email or the AL Tigers Unite app.

Internet Procedure

Albert Lea Area Schools has access to the Internet. Students access the Internet to ask questions, consult with experts, communicate with other students and individuals, and to locate materials to meet their educational and personal needs. All educators have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the skills needed to select appropriate information sources and to evaluate and use information to meet educational goals.

- Making the Internet available carries the potential that some users might encounter information that some have identified as controversial and of potential harm. Because information on the Internet is fluid (appears, disappears, and changes), it is not possible to predict or control what users may locate.
- School officials cannot promise to control the Internet environment. While we are committed to maintaining a safe environment for student use of computers, we are also focused on providing our students with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet appropriately to meet their individual educational needs. The district's guidelines for use of the Internet define appropriate educational and ethical uses of the Internet and identify individual user responsibilities. The Internet is considered an educational resource, and as such, any objection to its use should be addressed according to the District's Instructional/Media Resources Procedure. This procedure defines selection procedures for resources as well as procedures for dealing with an objection to the resource.
- The building administrators, at their sole discretion, reserve the right to terminate immediately the Internet and/or computer privileges of any student who misuses it. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Administrators will deem what is inappropriate and their decision is final.

Other Information

Annual Notice - Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act is a nondiscrimination statute barring discrimination on the basis of disability or perceived disability. It is the policy of Albert Lea Area Schools not to discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the Act. The 1973 Rehabilitation Act requires the school system to locate, evaluate, and determine if the student is a qualified individual requiring accommodations necessary to provide access to educational programs. Parents are entitled to have the opportunity to review relevant educational records under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) by contacting the school principal. Parents/guardians disagreeing with the decisions reached by school personnel regarding necessary accommodations or services for access to educational programs may file a formal grievance and/or request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer by notifying the 504 coordinator. The designated school district section 504 coordinator is the Director of Special Services, who may be reached at the Special Services Office, Brookside Educational Center, 211 West Richway Drive, telephone 379-4822.

Closed Campus

ALHS is a closed campus. Students are not allowed to leave the building at any time during the day unless a parent/guardian has called to excuse their student for an appointment or other pre-approved absence. The purpose for such restrictions is to ensure safety and to aid in supervision. Students who plan to leave school grounds during the day must request a pass from the Attendance Office and must sign out by the pool door prior to exiting the building. Passes will only be issued by communication from a parent/guardian. Students returning to school must report to the Attendance Office to receive a readmit slip to class. Students leaving the building without a pass will not be allowed to return until the next day and be marked unexcused from classes.

Senior Privilege

Students in grade 12 who meet established criteria will be allowed to leave campus during lunch and study halls. Seniors wishing to exercise this privilege must meet the following requirements:

- Be present and on-time to 90% of all classes
- Maintain passing grades in all classes
- Maintain disciplinary expectations for the period of review
- Have a parent or guardian sign a release
- Sign out and in each day at Door 3 (Pool Door)

Students exercising this privilege are expected to do so in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process of the building. Behaviors such as repeatedly returning to class late or bringing in outside food can result in student's privilege being revoked.

Employee Background Checks

The school district will seek criminal history background checks for all applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district. The school district also will seek criminal history background checks for all individuals, except enrolled student volunteers, who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services to the school district, regardless of whether compensation is paid. These positions include, but are not limited to, all athletic coaches, extracurricular academic coaches, assistants, and advisors. The school district may elect to seek criminal history background checks for other volunteers, independent contractors, and student employees.

Counseling Office

The Counseling Office has information and computer programs to assist students and their families with career, college, military, and apprenticeship programs. The Counseling Office is located in the Main Office. Stop in and see how your counselor can help you plan for the future.

Daily Announcements

A video news program, Tiger Vision, is produced each day by the Video Production class. Weekly announcements are also distributed to all high school staff and post-secondary students via email through Tiger Notes and are available on the high school website. Please contact Katie Cords if you would like to be added to the Tiger Notes email list.

Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises (Policy 505)

The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes distributing nonschool-sponsored material, subject to school district regulations and procedures, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner. A full description of the policy can be found on the district website.

Fundraising

Fundraising is permitted only when authorized by the administration. No solicitation is permitted. A schedule of student activity fundraisers is developed to space fundraising throughout the school year.

Instructional Resources/Objections

District employees take great care to ensure that materials chosen for use are appropriate for students in the district. However, sometimes parents/guardians may object to the inclusion or exclusion of a material on the basis of appropriateness. A parent/guardian may ask that their own student be restricted from using any materials he/she might find objectionable. However, if a parent/guardian has an objection concerning materials used for students other than their own, he/she should contact the teacher using the materials or the building principal. He or she will advise the parents/guardians of the proper procedure for dealing with the objection.

Lockers

School lockers are the property of the school district. Locker assignments will be issued to all students who request to use a locker. In addition, each student who participates in physical education is assigned a PE locker. Lockers are to be used for books, coats, clothing, and supplies.

Backpacks will be allowed in classrooms. All backpacks should be stored under the student's desk/table or in an area designated by the teacher.

The following suggestions regarding locker use:

- Keep lockers locked at all times.
- Do not reveal your locker combination to any other students. DO NOT SWITCH OR SHARE LOCKERS.
- Lockers should be cleaned periodically.
- Do not leave money in your locker.
- Do not kick or mark your locker in any way. If lockers are damaged, a fine will be assessed for the damage.
- Please do not bring valuables to school intending to store them in your locker.
- Students are responsible for keeping the front of their lockers clean.
- Problems with combinations should be referred to the Guidance Office. Theft/vandalism should be reported to the office and/or the ALHS Police Liaison.
- District 241 is not responsible for items lost or stolen from lockers.

In the event that a student officially withdraws from ALHS, lockers will be cleaned out by school officials and all items found within that locker will be held for two (2) weeks in the Back Office. After two (2) weeks, all items will be transferred to storage. At the end of the school year all remaining items will be disposed of.

Lost and Found

Any item found in the school or on school grounds should be turned into the Main Office. If you have lost an item, inquire about it in the Main Office. Unclaimed items will be donated throughout the school year.

Lunch

Students are to remain in the commons during their lunch period. Remember, Albert Lea High School is a closed campus. Students leaving without permission may receive up to a two (2)-day suspension. Students will eat their lunch in the school commons area and respect the cleanliness of our school. All waste will be placed into the containers provided. Students are expected to refrain from littering paper, cans, bottles, wrappers, and other trash. Students found littering in the commons or in other school building areas will receive appropriate discipline, including cleaning the commons or assigned building maintenance. Students may have water in classrooms if approved by their teacher. All containers for water need to be in clear bottles. Food from outside vendors is prohibited. Any DoorDash orders by students while school is in session will be turned away at the

door. Students are allowed to bring a sack lunch from home, but not from an outside vendor. Vending machines are shut off during lunch.

Lunch prices are set each year. Students and parents are notified of price changes before school starts. Each student will input their Student ID number at the end of the lunch line as means of payment from their account. The Meals Plus program will automatically call parents daily when their student has a balance of three meals or less in their account. Chartwells Dining Services phone number is 1-844-753-6321. Albert Lea Food Service phone number is 507-379-5300.

Media Center

ALHS has an extensive collection of Media Center resources for student use. Books may be checked out for a 3-week period and magazines for three days. A student who wishes to use the Media Center during study hall needs to sign out with their study hall teacher, report to the Media Center, and remain there the entire period. Students should be prepared to make use of the time spent in the Media Center with constructive tasks that make use of the facilities.

- The Media Center is open from 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Students are welcome to make use of the facilities before and after school.
- Make-up tests from individual teachers can be completed in the Media Center during the hours of operation with the exception of Fridays after school.
- Students have access to a computer lab in the Media Center. In order to use this, they must first have the ALHS ConnectED Learning and Internet Use Agreement signed by their parent/guardian and on file in the Media Center.
- Personal mobile devices such as tablets or laptop computers may be used in the Media Center and may access the school's wireless network. Students shall comply with the school district's ConnectED Learning and Internet Use Agreement policies and procedures as well as other school expectations when using their own personal devices in school and on the school's network.

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Volunteers

Parents/guardians/caregivers are welcome in the schools and are able to volunteer in their children's classrooms. To volunteer in the school district, parents/guardians/caregivers should speak to the building principal. To volunteer in the school building or classroom, parents/guardians/caregivers should contact the principal secretary. Parents/guardians/caregivers who visit the school should sign in at the office before entering. A volunteer form will need to be filled in and signed prior to volunteering. For more information, contact the principal secretary.

Parent Right to Know

If a parent requests it, the school district will provide information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional licensing status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;

4. Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, the school district will provide parents with information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The school district will provide notice to parents if their child has been assigned to, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Pesticide Application Notice

Parents/guardians and school employees may request to be notified prior to pesticide application on school property. Pesticides include chemicals which are used to control insects, weeds, rodents or other pests as defined by the law (M.S. 123B.575, Subd. 9). Pesticides and non-chemical treatments may be used in combination in and around schools for a variety of reasons, including the control of pests which have the potential to bite, sting, spread disease, cause asthma, and/or trigger an allergic reaction. Pesticides may also be used to prevent or control damage to materials within the school building or to the school building itself, or to control pests or weeds that are seen as a nuisance.

To limit the potential pesticide exposure, this school follows safety regulations to ensure pesticides are applied properly. All pesticide products, which are used in and around school buildings, are required to be registered with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, school employees and certified and licensed applicators are required by state and federal law to comply with all requirements of the pesticide label, including building sites, application rates, re-entry intervals, posting, use of personal protective equipment, use restrictions, and disposal on the product label.

If you would like to be notified prior to pesticide applications, please contact Paul Durbahn, Assistant Director of Finance and Operations at 507-379-4800.

Posters

Any posters, signs, and/or announcements that individual students or clubs/organizations wish to post in the school must be pre-approved by the principal and must bear an administrative signature.

Request for Student Social Security Number

All Minnesota school districts are part of a statewide computer reporting system which uses the student social security number to record information about your student. This information is, in turn, provided to the Minnesota Department of Education. This department is required by law to collect and store information about each student, staff member, and educational program (MN. Stat. 121.932 and 124.17). Therefore, we ask that you, the parent or guardian, provide your child's social security number although you are not legally required to do so. The Minnesota Department of Education uses this information to determine how much money your school district receives from the state and federal government. This information is also used to judge the quality of the state's educational programs, to improve instruction, to follow trends in student enrollment, and to track student participation in various programs. Your student's school district will share this information with the Minnesota Department of Education. The Minnesota Department of Education will share the information with the Department of Human Services to allocate additional funding and improve instruction. As a parent/guardian, you do not have to provide your child's social security number. If you choose not to provide the number, the school district staff might need to submit another type of report to receive money distributed by the state or federal government.

Student Messages and Deliveries

Student messages will only be taken from a legal parent/guardian/caregiver in cases of an extreme emergency. Flowers, balloons, etc. will not be delivered to classrooms. Students will receive a note to pick up their items in the Main Office at the end of the day.

Student Surveys (Policy 520)

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students. The purpose of this policy is to establish the parameters of information that may be sought in student surveys. A full description of the policy can be found on the district website.

Unpaid Meal Charge Procedures

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that students receive healthy and nutritious meals through the school district's nutrition program and that school district employees, families, and students have a shared understanding of expectations regarding meal charges. The procedure seeks to allow students to receive the nutrition they need to stay focused during the school day and minimize identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for school meals as well as to maintain the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

- Payment of Meals
 - Students have use of a meal account. A meal is made available to the student regardless of the balance on their meal account.
 - If the school district receives school lunch aid under MN. Stat. 124D.111, it must make lunch available without charge to all participating students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals regardless of account balance.
 - When a student has a negative account balance, the student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items.
 - If a parent/guardian chooses to send in one payment that is to be divided between sibling accounts, the parent/guardian must specify how the funds are to be distributed to the students' accounts. Funds may not be transferred between sibling accounts unless written permission is received from the parent/guardian.
- Low or Negative Account Balances - Notification
 - The school district will make reasonable efforts to notify families when meal account balances are low or fall below zero.
 - Families will be notified by an automated calling system and letters mailed to the household of an outstanding negative balance.
 - Reminders for payment of outstanding student meal balances will not demean or stigmatize any student participating in the school lunch program.
- Unpaid Meal Charges
 - The school district will make reasonable efforts to communicate with families to resolve the matter of unpaid charges. Where appropriate, families may be encouraged to apply for free and reduced-price meals for their students.
 - The school district will make reasonable efforts to collect unpaid meal charges classified as delinquent debt. Unpaid meal charges are designated as delinquent debt when payment is overdue, the debt is considered collectable, and efforts are being made to collect it.
 - Negative balances of more than \$25, not paid prior to the end of the school year, will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. Collection options may include, but

are not limited to, use of collection agencies, claims in the conciliation court, or any other legal method permitted by law.

- The school district may not enlist the assistance of non-school district employees, such as volunteers, to engage in debt collection efforts.
- Communication of Procedure
 - This procedure and any pertinent supporting information shall be provided in writing (i.e., mail, email, back-to-school packet, student handbook, etc.) to:
 - all households at or before the start of each school year;
 - students and families who transfer into the school district, at the time of enrollment;
 - all school district personnel who are responsible for enforcing this procedure.
 - The school district may post the procedure on the school district's website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

Weather Related School Closings/Early Dismissal

All announcements of school closings and early dismissals will be announced through our School Messenger program. Arrangements can be made for School Messenger to be sent to you via email, text, and/or phone call. Additional announcements will be broadcasted on the district webpage.

PUBLIC NOTICE—GRADES 8-12

Independent School District No. 241 gives notice to parents of students currently in attendance in the District, and eligible students currently in attendance in the District, of their rights regarding pupil records.

1. Parents and eligible students are hereby informed that they have the following rights:
 - a. That a parent or eligible student has a right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the request for access is received by the school district. A parent or eligible student should submit to the school district a written request to inspect education records which identify as precisely as possible the record or records he or she wishes to inspect. The parent or eligible student will be notified of the time and place where the records may be inspected;
 - b. That the parent or eligible student has a right to seek amendment of the student's education records to ensure that those records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A parent or eligible student may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. The request shall be in writing, identify the item the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy rights of the student, shall state the reason for this belief, and shall specify the correction the parent or eligible student wishes the school district to make. The request shall be signed by the parent or eligible student. If the school district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing;

- c. That the parent or eligible student has a right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that federal and state law and the regulations promulgated thereunder authorize disclosures without consent;
- d. That the school district may disclose education records to other school officials within the school district if the school district has determined they have legitimate educational interests. For purposes of such disclosure, a "school official" is a person employed by the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or other employee; a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school district has consulted to perform a specific task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, public information officer, or data practices compliance official); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or any individual assisting a school official in the performance of his or her tasks. A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" if the individual needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility and includes, but is not limited to, an interest directly related to classroom instruction, teaching, student achievement and progress, discipline of a student, and student health and welfare and the ability to respond to a request for educational data;
- e. That the school district forwards education records on request to a school or post-secondary educational institution in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled, as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment, including information about disciplinary action taken as a result of any incident in which the student possessed or used a dangerous weapon, suspension and expulsion information pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 7917, part of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and data regarding a student's history of violent behavior, and any disposition order which adjudicates the student as delinquent for committing an illegal act on school district property and certain other illegal acts;
- f. That the parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding an alleged failure by the school district to comply with the requirements of 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the rules promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the office that administers the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

- 2. Copies of the school board policy and accompanying procedures and regulations are available to parents and students upon written request to the Superintendent.
- 3. Pursuant to applicable law, Independent School District No. 241 gives notice to parents of students currently in attendance in the school district, and eligible students currently in attendance in the school district, of their rights regarding "directory information."

"Directory information" includes the following information relating to a student: the student's name; address;

telephone number; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; dates of attendance; grade level; enrollment status; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors and awards received; the most recent educational agency or institution attended by the student; and other similar information. "Directory

information” also includes the name, address, and telephone number of the student’s parent(s). “Directory information” does not include a student’s social security number or a student’s identification number (ID) if the ID may be used to access education records without use of one or more factors that authenticate the student’s identity such as a personal identification number, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user. It also does not include identifying information on a student’s religion, race, color, social position, or nationality.

- a. THE INFORMATION LISTED ABOVE SHALL BE PUBLIC INFORMATION WHICH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY DISCLOSE FROM THE EDUCATION RECORDS OF A STUDENT OR INFORMATION REGARDING A PARENT.
- b. SHOULD THE PARENT OF A STUDENT OR THE STUDENT SO DESIRE, ANY OR ALL OF THE LISTED INFORMATION WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED WITHOUT THE PARENT’S OR ELIGIBLE STUDENT’S PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT EXCEPT TO SCHOOL OFFICIALS AS PROVIDED UNDER FEDERAL LAW.
- c. IN ORDER TO MAKE ANY OR ALL OF THE DIRECTORY INFORMATION LISTED ABOVE “PRIVATE” (I.E., SUBJECT TO CONSENT PRIOR TO DISCLOSURE), THE PARENT OR ELIGIBLE STUDENT MUST MAKE A WRITTEN REQUEST TO THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF THE LAST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE. THIS WRITTEN REQUEST MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- (1) NAME OF STUDENT AND PARENT, AS APPROPRIATE;
- (2) HOME ADDRESS;
- (3) SCHOOL PRESENTLY ATTENDED BY STUDENT;
- (4) PARENT’S LEGAL RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT, IF APPLICABLE;
- (5) SPECIFIC CATEGORY OR CATEGORIES OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION WHICH IS NOT TO BE MADE PUBLIC WITHOUT THE PARENT’S OR ELIGIBLE STUDENT’S PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.

4. Pursuant to applicable law, Independent School District No. 241 hereby gives notice to parents of students and eligible students in grades 11 and 12 of their rights regarding release of information to military recruiting officers and post-secondary educational institutions. The school district must release the names, addresses, and home telephone numbers of students in grades 11 and 12 to military recruiting officers and post-secondary educational institutions within sixty (60) days after the date of the request. Data released to military recruiting officers under this provision may be used only for the purpose of providing information to students about military service, state and federal veterans’ education benefits, and other career and educational opportunities provided by the military and cannot be further disseminated to any other person except personnel of the recruiting services of the armed forces.

SHOULD THE PARENT OF A STUDENT OR THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT SO DESIRE, ANY OR ALL OF THE LISTED INFORMATION WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED TO MILITARY RECRUITING OFFICERS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT.

IN ORDER TO REFUSE THE RELEASE OF THIS INFORMATION WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT, THE PARENT OR ELIGIBLE STUDENT MUST MAKE A WRITTEN REQUEST TO THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY, BUILDING PRINCIPAL, BY OCTOBER 1 EACH YEAR. THIS WRITTEN REQUEST MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- (1) NAME OF STUDENT AND PARENT, AS APPROPRIATE;

- (2) HOME ADDRESS;
- (3) STUDENT'S GRADE LEVEL;
- (4) SCHOOL PRESENTLY ATTENDED BY STUDENT;
- (5) PARENT'S LEGAL RELATIONSHIP TO STUDENT, IF APPLICABLE;
- (6) SPECIFIC CATEGORY OR CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION WHICH ARE NOT TO BE RELEASED TO MILITARY RECRUITING OFFICERS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT;
- (7) SPECIFIC CATEGORY OR CATEGORIES OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION WHICH ARE NOT TO BE RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC, INCLUDING MILITARY RECRUITING OFFICERS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Notice: Refusal to release the above information to military recruiting officers and post-secondary educational institutions alone does not affect the school district's release of directory information to the public, including military recruiting officers and post-secondary educational institutions. In order to make any directory information about a student private, the procedures contained in the Directory Information section of this notice also must be followed. If you do not want your child's or eligible student's directory information released to military recruiting officers or post-secondary educational institutions, you also must notify the school district that you do not want this directory information released to any member of the public, including military recruiting officers and post-secondary educational institutions.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 241

ALBERT LEA, MINNESOTA

Ron Wagner, Superintendent of Schools

School Transportation

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The policies and guidelines for transporting students are provided to each student in a handbook at the start of the school year. Questions concerning bus transportation should be addressed to:

- Albert Lea Bus Company: 507.373.1467
- Paul Durbahn, Director of Finance, Operations & Safety: 507.379.4809

Albert Lea Area School Rules for School Bus Passengers

The Albert Lea Public School System provides bus transportation for students to and from school. It is necessary to have certain rules and regulations in order to protect the welfare of every student. Each person, regardless of age, must take the responsibility of following these rules. They should realize that carelessness, thoughtlessness, or misconduct can cause injury to themselves or their fellow passengers. Please review the safety rules listed below.

1. Only pupils assigned to the bus by the school board or designated administration officer shall be transported at district expense.

In no case shall the number assigned result in more than three passengers per seat.

2. At the bus stop (home or school) students are asked to:

- Be on time. Board the bus only at your assigned pick-up point.
- Stay back from the curb so you will not accidentally slip or fall into the street or distract passing motorists.
- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and the driver to open the door before proceeding to the bus. Do not push, crowd, or cut the line. Line up in a single row.
- Take a seat promptly, remain seated, and do not move around the bus.
- When it is time to leave the bus, stay seated until the bus has completely stopped. Do not push or crowd to get off.

3. On the bus: The school bus ride is part of the school day. Your driver is on the bus to provide a safe and pleasant trip.

- Please follow the instructions of the driver promptly and courteously.
- For everyone's safety, materials such as: guns, loaded or unloaded; gasoline cans, empty or full; animals or any other object of dangerous or objectionable nature are not allowed on the school bus.
- A student may be charged for damage to the bus. Please respect your bus.
- Remember to keep voices quiet so your driver can hear traffic noises and be especially quiet at railroad crossings.
- First aid kits, flares, and the emergency door are for emergency use only and should not be handled by students.
- Fighting, abusive language or profanity, throwing objects, use of chemicals or tobacco, and general "horseplay" will not be tolerated.
- Windows may be opened only with the permission of the bus driver. Never put your head, arms, feet, or any object out the window.
- Spitting, littering, lighting matches, and other behavior threatening the safety, well-being, and respect for others will not be tolerated.

4. When leaving the bus:

- Use the handrail when stepping off the bus.
- When you step off the bus, move away from the bus.
- If you must cross the street you should:
 1. Walk ten feet ahead of the bus.
 2. Stop and look back at the bus driver and wait until the driver gives you the signal to cross. Then look left, right, and left again.
 3. Walk quickly across the street. Don't stop or turn back.

Students who do not obey these safety rules and regulations may be denied transportation as outlined in the following "Discipline Procedures." Any action by a student that threatens the safety of the bus driver and/or passengers or violates a school regulation will be dealt with according to the following procedures. In all cases, the decision of the bus driver is final and will be reported in writing to the appropriate school administrator.

- Referral #1 - The bus driver will make a written report to the principal. The student will be informed with the reminder of the procedures and written notice will be sent to the parents.
- Referral #2 - The bus driver will make a written report to the principal. The student will be suspended from riding the bus for a period of one (1) to five (5) days. The parents will be contacted informing them of the duration of the suspension.

- Referral #3 - The bus driver will make a written report to the principal. The student will be suspended from further bus service for a period of more than five (5) days or until the end of the school year. Furthermore, the School District also reserves the right to suspend students from bus service for the entire period of the student's enrollment. The parents may request a conference with the principal, Director of Transportation, and/or a representative of the bus company to review the reasons for the suspension or propose alternatives to suspension.

However, Referrals #1 and #2 may be waived by the District if the severity of the first violation is such that common sense dictates immediate suspension for any amount of time up to the balance of the school year for the safety of other students and/or a bus driver.

SCHOOL BUS STOP LAWS

Do you know what to do when you encounter a stopped school bus?

Flashing Yellow Lights

Flashing yellow lights will be activated at least 100 feet before a school bus stop in a speed zone of 35 mph or less, and at least 300 feet before it stops in a speed zone of more than 35 mph. The flashing yellow lights (at the top of the bus) warn the motorists that the school bus is about to stop to either load or unload children. It is against the law to pass on the right side of the school bus while it is displaying flashing red or yellow lights.

Flashing Red Lights

Flashing red lights warn motorists that the school bus is loading and unloading students. When a school bus is stopped with its red lights flashing and its stop arm extended, you must stop your vehicle at least 20 feet from the bus. Oncoming traffic, and motorists approaching the bus from behind, may not move until the stop arm is retracted and the red lights are no longer flashing. You are guilty of a misdemeanor if you break the law. The penalty for this violation is a fine of no less than \$300 and your driver's license suspended.

Exception for Separated Roads

You are not required to stop for a school bus with its red lights flashing if it is on the opposite side of a road that is separated by a safety aisle or safety zone. The safety aisle or safety zone includes a grass median or cement barriers. Painted stripes on a roadway are NOT considered a safety aisle or safety zone.

Passing a School Bus

It is illegal to pass a school bus on the right side when its red lights are flashing and its stop arm is extended. It is also illegal to pass a school bus on either side when one or more children are outside of the bus, red lights are flashing, and the stop arm is extended. A law enforcement officer with probable cause to believe a driver has violated this law may arrest the driver within four hours of the violation.

Vehicle Owner May Be Penalized

When a vehicle is used to violate the school bus stop arm law, the owner or lessee of the vehicle is guilty of a petty misdemeanor. However, if the owner or lessee of the vehicle can prove that another person was driving the vehicle at the time of the stop arm violation, the driver-not the owner or lessee- will be charged with the violation.

When you apply for a driver's license, you must certify, by signing the application, that you understand that you must stop for a school bus and are aware of the penalties for violating this law.

Final Thoughts

All of us must do our part to ensure the safe transportation of students. We can all get distracted while driving by listening to the radio, thinking about home or work, talking to passengers, or talking on a cell phone. It takes only a moment for a tragic event to occur. Please pay attention when you drive. Everybody is depending on you.

The Department of Public Safety has a website where you can view more information on this topic if you would like: Visit

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/msp/commercial-vehicles/Pages/school-bus-safety.aspx>

SECTION 2 - Academics

Grading/Graduation

Curriculum Development (Policy 603)

Curriculum development shall be directed toward the fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the education program of the school district. A full description of the policy can be found on the district website.

Within the ongoing process of curriculum development, the following needs shall be addressed:

1. Provide for articulation of courses of study from kindergarten through grade twelve.
2. Identify minimum objectives for each course and at each grade level.
3. Provide for continuing evaluation of programs for the purpose of attaining school district objectives.
4. Provide a program for ongoing monitoring of student progress.
5. Provide for specific, particular and special needs of all members of the student community.
6. Develop a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3, including English learners, and teachers providing comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction consistent with law.
7. Integrate required and elective course standards in the scope and sequence of the district curriculum.
8. Meet all applicable requirements of the Minnesota Department of Education and the No Child Left Behind Act.

Students who do not meet or exceed Minnesota academic standards, as measured by the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments that are administered during high school, shall be informed that admission to a public school is free and available to any resident under 21 years of age or who meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes section 120A.20, Subd. 1(c). A student's plan under this section shall continue while the student is enrolled.

The Superintendent shall have discretionary authority to develop guidelines and directives to implement school board policy relating to curriculum development.

Grade Classification

To be considered on track to graduate, students must have earned the following number of credits prior to the start of the school year:

- 12 credits to be a Sophomore (Grade 10)
- 24 credits to be a Junior (Grade 11)
- 36 credits to be a Senior (Grade 12)

Scheduling Classes

The Albert Lea High School instructional program is designed to meet the requests of the students for specific classes. All students receive guidance and assistance from our counseling department to help select the classes that best align with the future academic and career goals. Parents are highly encouraged to use the ParentVue app to view their student's registration requests and assist their student in reviewing their selections.

Student Schedules

The student, parent, and school counselor will be planning the educational program the student should follow. ***Transfers to other classes will not be permitted after the first three days of class in each semester.*** A school counselor or Administrator must approve all transfers to other class sections. Dropping a course is discouraged.

Grades

Grades are issued at the end of each semester and reflect the cumulative work completed by students throughout the term. Each course successfully completed with a passing grade earns the student 1.0 credit for each class period of daily instruction.

Assignment Deadline

Assignments must be submitted within one (1) week of the assigned due date. Extensions will only be granted in limited cases involving excused absences and require approval from both the classroom teacher and school administration.

Assignments submitted after the assigned due date, but before the one (1) week deadline may result in a penalty no greater than one-quarter (25%) of the assignment's value.

Assessment Deadline

Missed assessments (tests, quizzes, etc.) need to be rescheduled with the teacher within one (1) week of the missed assessment. Failing to reschedule the assessment during that time frame will result in the student not being able to take the assessment for credit.

Parent and Teacher Conferences

Parent and teacher conferences will be held twice a year from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Monday, November 10 and Monday, February 23. For more information, contact the building principal.

Honor Roll

The "Straight A," "A," and "B" honor rolls are compiled at the end of each quarter. The honor roll lists are published in the local newspaper. To be eligible for the honor roll, a student must earn a letter grade (A-F) in at least three courses per term. Students earning a P or S in more than one course per term are not eligible. To be eligible for the Straight "A" honor roll, a student must have a grade point average of 4.0 or better. To be eligible for the "A" honor roll, a student must have a grade point average of 3.5 or better. To be eligible for the "B" honor roll, a student must have a grade point average of 3.0 or better.

Academic Honors

Students will be recognized for academic honors based on their grade point average starting in 9th grade. In order to recognize seniors for their accomplishments during these events, the information for honors recognition will be based upon grades submitted following the end of the first semester of a student's senior year.

- Cum Laude: A student achieving the honor of Cum Laude has maintained a GPA between 3.7 - 3.84. Cum Laude means being honored with praise. These students will receive a red honor cord.
- Magna Cum Laude: A student achieving the honor of Magna Cum Laude has maintained a GPA between 3.85 and 3.99. A student achieving Magna Cum Laude is graduating with great honor. These students will receive a silver honor cord.
- Summa Cum Laude: These students have achieved a GPA of 4.0 and above, ranking them as the highest academic honor ALHS has to offer. These students will receive a gold honor cord.

Academic Lettering

The purpose of this is to reward academic excellence, provide peer and community recognition, to raise academic expectations amongst students, validate the efforts of academic achievement, and increase the pride in academic achievement. Students must abide by the Minnesota State High School League rules and those of Albert Lea School District #241. Any violations of rules will disqualify the student from lettering in that period. Letters will be awarded each school year after semester 1, based on cumulative GPA for all subjects accordingly:

- 9th grade — 4.0 after semester 1
- 10th grade — 3.9 after semester 1
- 11th grade — 3.8 after semester 1
- 12th grade — 3.7 after semester 1

Commencement Participation

Seniors who have earned the right to graduate will be allowed the privilege to participate in the graduation ceremony. Seniors who are unable to follow district and high school expectations will be held out of the graduation ceremony, activities, and party. Students who are not passing required classes must bring their grade(s) up to passing by the end of the school year or they will not be able to participate in graduation. Parents/guardians will be notified if their student is not allowed to participate in Commencement.

NCAA Requirement

<http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/EB17.pdf>

Graduation Requirements: Class of 2025 and 2026

Students must earn 46 required course credit requirements.

Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)	Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)
English	8	Health	1
Social Studies	6	Physical Education	1
Economics	1	Fine Arts	2
Math	6	Electives	15
Science	6	TOTAL CREDITS	46

Graduation Requirements: Class of 2027

Students must earn 47 required course credit requirements.

Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)	Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)
English	8	Health	1
Social Studies	6	Physical Education	1
Economics	1	Fine Arts	2
Math	6	Electives	15
Science	6	Personal Finance	1
		TOTAL CREDITS	47

Graduation Requirements: Class of 2028 and Beyond

Students must earn 48 required course credit requirements.

Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)	Subject	Required Credits (grades 9-12)
English	8	Health	1
Social Studies	6	Physical Education	1
Economics	1	Fine Arts	2
Math	6	Electives	15
Science	6	Personal Finance	1
Career Exploration	1	TOTAL CREDITS	48

SECTION 3 - Rules & Discipline

Student Code of Conduct/Discipline

It is the position of Independent School District 241 that a fair and equitable district-wide discipline procedure will contribute to the quality of the students' educational experience. An environment conducive to learning and teaching must be maintained to ensure maximum educational opportunities for all.

It is the responsibility of all school district employees to safeguard the health, safety, and rights of each student. The School Board and District Administrators will support district personnel who, in dealing with students on disciplinary matters, act in accordance with State Statute, State Board of Education regulations, and this procedure.

District 241 has a Police Liaison Program with a full-time officer from the Albert Lea Police Department assigned to the school district. The officer is available for education, conflict resolution, and consultation about safety concerns.

It is the responsibility of all students to abide by our school policies to help maintain a quality learning environment.

- Students will be in class, prepared, and on time.
- Students will commit to honesty and integrity in all they do.
- Students will keep the building clean and orderly.
- Students will use the furniture and equipment properly.
- Students will understand that loud, abusive, profane, and obscene language is disrespectful and will not be tolerated.
- Students will follow the school dress code at all times.
- Students will understand that public display of affection (PDA) is not acceptable and makes others feel uncomfortable.

The chart below provides a general overview of the areas of student conduct addressed in the Albert Lea High School Student Code of Conduct, along with the possible consequences for violating expectations in each area.

Later in this section, you will find more detailed descriptions of specific areas of the Code of Conduct that are directly linked to school board policies and state statutes.

ALHS & SWMS

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Violation	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense & Beyond
Abuse, Verbal - The use of language that is obscene, threatening, intimidating or that degrades other people is prohibited. Verbal abuse that is also sexual, religious or racial harassment shall be addressed under the guidelines for harassment.	-Range from a conference with deans to ISS	- Possible 1-5 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- Possible 1-10 day suspension -Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.

Alcohol or Chemicals, Possession or Use - Possession or use of any alcohol, narcotic, controlled substance or drug paraphernalia is prohibited by Minnesota or federal law. Any student in possession of or under the influence of alcohol, a narcotic, a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia at a school location will be reported to the police. Further recommendations such as possible chemical assessment may also be required. A chemical assessment may be required on a second school offense prior to readmission to school.	-3-day OSS with a recommendation for further action per district policy. - Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Police Referral	-5-day OSS with a recommendation for further action per district policy. - Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Police Referral	-10-day OSS with a recommendation for further action per district policy. - Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Police Referral -Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Assault - The act with the intent to cause fear of immediate bodily harm or death, or the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another. It encompasses both acts that cause physical harm and those that create fear of harm, even without physical contact.	- 10 Day OSS -Possible Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral	- 10 Day OSS -Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral	- 10 Day OSS -Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral
Bullying - Bullying is defined as a behavior that is intimidating, threatening, abusive or hurtful conduct, objectively offensive, or involves an imbalance of power and is repeated, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's education or ability to participate in school activities.	- Range from a conference with a dean to ISS - Referral to School Social Worker or other student support staff.	- Possible 1-5 day suspension. - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- Possible 1-10 day suspension -Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Closed Campus - Students are not allowed to leave the building at any time during the day unless a parent/guardian has called to excuse their student for an appointment or other pre-approved absence. Leaving, propping doors open, and returning	- Range from a conference with a dean to a 2 day suspension.	- Possible 1-2 day suspension	- Possible 2 day suspension
Disruptive Acts - Major school disruptions, disobedience, disrespectful behavior, defiance of authority, insubordination, failure to identify oneself, threats. Any student who interrupts the peace or good order of the school or school-sponsored activities, whether on or off-campus.	- Range from a conference with a dean to 5 day suspension. -Obscene, abusive or offensive language toward a staff member may result in a minimum 2-day suspension and a possible disorderly conduct ticket.	- Possible 1-5 day suspension. - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- Possible 1-5 day suspension. - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Driving, Careless or Reckless - Driving any motorized or non-motorized vehicle on school locations in such a manner as to endanger people or property is prohibited.	- Range from a conference with a dean to revocation of parking permit to identified time period. - Police Referral	- Revocation of parking permit to identified time period. - Possible 1-3 day suspension - Police Referral	- Permanent revocation of parking permit - 1-3 day suspension - Police Referral
Fighting - Engaging in any form of fighting where blows are exchanged. A student who aggressively or violently directs a physical attack on another student	- 3-5 day OSS - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- 5-10 day OSS - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- 10 day OSS - Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.

Gang - Gangs or supposed organization and association of gangs will not be tolerated at ALHS. Any manifestation of gang apparel or display of gang symbols will not be allowed. Any person(s) found to be knowingly and/or intentionally recruiting or promoting gang-type activity within or on the school property	- Conference with a dean and School Resource Officer - Student signs Gang Activity/Signs Form	- Conference with a dean - 1-5 day suspension	- Conference with a dean - 1-10 day suspension - Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Harassment - Harassment toward staff or fellow students will not be tolerated. Harassment is intimidating or abusive behavior toward an individual(s), based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, socio-economic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability, that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the school district's program. Harassment can be in written, oral or electronic form, or displayed through gestures, stalking, or other action.	- Range from a conference with a dean to 10 day suspension.	- 1-10 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- 1-10 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Misuse of Internet - Anyone who knowingly or unknowingly breaks the ALAS Connected Learning & Internet Use Agreement will have consequences. The building administrators, at their sole discretion, determine to terminate immediately the internet/computer privileges of any user who misuses it. The use of the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action.	- Range from a conference with a dean to a 10 10-day suspension. - Possible revocation of school-issued internet devices and internet access for an indefinite amount of time.	- Range from a conference with a dean to a 10-day suspension. - Possible revocation of school-issued internet devices and internet access for an indefinite amount of time.	- Range from a conference with a dean to a 10-day suspension. - Possible revocation of school-issued internet devices and internet access for an indefinite amount of time.
Hazing - "Hazing" is defined in MN. Stat. 121A.69 as committing an act against a student or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization. No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property, during or after school hours. "Student organization" as defined in MN. Stat. 121A.69 means a group, club, or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular student events.	- Range from a conference with a dean to 10 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral	- Range from a conference with a dean to 10 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral	- Range from a conference with a dean to 10 day suspension - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral
Photography/Videos. Students must receive prior permission to take pictures or videos of individuals. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in disciplinary action. Use of any device to record or take pictures is prohibited in locker rooms and bathrooms. Use of any device to record or take pictures is prohibited throughout the building without permission of staff or administration.	- Up to 10 day suspension - Possible loss of cellphone privilege - Further discipline could result from a violation of harassment and/or hazing.	- Up to 10 day suspension - Possible loss of cellphone privilege - Further discipline could result from a violation of harassment and/or hazing.	- Up to 10 day suspension - Possible loss of cellphone privilege - Further discipline could result from a violation of harassment and/or hazing.

Theft , Receiving or Possessing Stolen Property - The unauthorized taking, using, transferring, hiding or possessing the property of another person without the consent of the owner, or the receiving of such property is prohibited. Restitution, when appropriate, will be required. Felony offenses may result in more severe consequences.	- Range from a conference with a dean to 3 days suspension. - Police Referral	- Up to 3-5 day suspension - Police Referral	- Up to 3-5 day suspension - Police Referral
Threat, Direct/Indirect - Intentionally making, publishing or conveying in any manner a threat pertaining to an individual or school location is prohibited. Whoever threatens, directly or indirectly, to commit any crime of violence with purpose to terrorize another or to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly, vehicle or facility of public transportation or otherwise to cause serious public inconvenience, or in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five years or to payment of a fine of not more than \$10,000 or both. Note to parents who elect to keep students home after authorities have determined the threatening situation to be safe: students staying home after an "all clear" may not return that day for school sponsored or co-curricular activities.	- Up to 10-day suspension -Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral	- Up to 10-day suspension -Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral	- Up to 10-day suspension -Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police referral
Tobacco - Possession or use of tobacco in any form on school property, in district buses or vehicles, or at district events is prohibited. Students who congregate in an area where smoking has recently occurred (bathroom stall, ect.) will each be considered smoking. This includes the use of e-cigarettes, vaping, any electronic nicotine delivery system, liquid nicotine and non-nicotine vaping products.	- 2 day suspension -Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Report filed with Freeborn County Attorney's Office and possible charges.	- 3 day suspension -Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Report filed with Freeborn County Attorney's Office and possible charges.	- 3 day suspension -Students will meet with the School's Chemical Dependency Counselor or another student support staff member. - Report filed with Freeborn County Attorney's Office and possible charges.
Vandalism - Littering, defacing, cutting or damaging property that belongs to the school district, other students, staff members or other individuals is prohibited. Restitution, when appropriate, is applied. All school property loaned by the school during the school year is the student's responsibility. Students are liable for all damages incurred. The school will charge an appropriate replacement fee for textbooks, workbooks, library books, or other property lost or destroyed by students. This includes manipulating computer files or entering or printing unauthorized files.	- Range from a conference with a dean to 10 day suspension. - Police Referral	- Possible 1-10 day suspension - Police Referral - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.	- Possible 1-10 day suspension - Police Referral - Possible recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion.
Weapons - The Albert Lea School District has a "No Weapons" policy. This policy is in effect during the school day, on school grounds, on the school bus, and during athletic events, or any other school sponsored activity. A weapon is any object used in a threatening manner. This could include, but is not limited to, an object that looks like a gun, a pocket knife, or ammunition. (Refer to policy 501)	-Up to 10 Day Suspension -Possible Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral.	- 10 Day Suspension - Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral.	- 10 Day Suspension - Recommendation to the Superintendent and School Board for change of placement and/or expulsion. - Police Referral.

Note - At any time steps may be jumped or not advanced depending on the severity of the situation. This is the school district's ultimate decision.

Albert Lea Public Schools - Policy 506

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students are aware of and comply with the school district's expectations for student conduct. Such compliance will enhance the school district's ability to maintain discipline and ensure there is no interference with the educational process. The school district will take appropriate disciplinary action when students fail to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct established by this policy.

Students are required to fully and honestly participate in investigations led by building administration. Participation can include answering questions and submitting to administrative searches. Failure to cooperate could result in disciplinary action.

Albert Lea Public Schools - Policy 529

PARENTAL NOTICE--Policy #529

1. The administration will notify parents annually that the school district gives classroom teachers and other school staff members notice about students' history of violent behavior.
2. Prior to providing the written notice of a student's violent behavior to classroom teachers and/or school staff members, the administration will inform the student's parent/guardian that such notice will be provided.
3. Parents will be given notice that they have the right to review and challenge records or data, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior, in accordance with Policy 515, Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

If a student violates the rules of Albert Lea High School, certain consequences will follow. The specific consequence will be determined by the severity and frequency of the offense. Potential consequences include:

- **Loss of Privilege**
First-time violations of school rules will typically result in a loss of one or more privileges a student might have.
- **In-School Suspension (ISS)**
Students assigned ISS for discipline consequences. There is no talking allowed except during lunch. Students must bring homework or their own reading.
- **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)**
OSS is typically assigned for up to ten (10) days for serious offenses such as fighting and drug, alcohol, and tobacco violations, as well as violations of attendance and behavior contracts. Repeated violations or serious acts of violence against individuals or the school may result in suspensions up to ten (10) days in length.
- **Suspension from Co-Curricular Participation**
Students who commit serious violations of school rules may temporarily or permanently lose the privilege of participating in activities or athletic programs.
- **Expulsion**
For particular offenses outlined in the district behavior procedures, a student may be expelled by the School Board.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is essential to ensure individual academic growth and development. Since assignments, exams, and other school work are measures of students' performance, honesty is required to provide an accurate measurement of student learning.

Scholastic dishonesty which includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a school assignment or test, plagiarism, or collusion, including the use of picture phones *or other technology to accomplish this end*; (Policy 506; Section VI, Item 34)

All students are expected to:

- Engage with honesty and integrity in their academic life.
- Arrive to class ready to learn and demonstrate the ability to discern right from wrong.
- Know which academic behaviors are acceptable and which are dishonest.
- Produce work that is their own or give credit when the work is not their own.

All parents/guardians are expected to:

- Support their students in meeting the expectations of this academic integrity protocol.
- Review the policy with their child and encourage their child to practice ethical behavior.
- Refrain from completing assignments for their child.

All teachers are expected to:

- Review the Academic Integrity protocol with students as needed.
- Teach the skills necessary to prevent a violation of academic integrity.
- Enforce the protocol in all instances of academic dishonesty following the procedures below.

All administrators are expected to:

- Support the spirit of the academic integrity protocol with students, parents/guardians, and staff members in conferences and in classrooms.
- Follow the student disciplinary process as outlined in the academic integrity protocol.

The procedures whereby a student will be held accountable for infractions of the Academic Integrity policy are as follows:

Incident 1:

1. The teacher will address the student with evidence when the infraction occurs and notify parents/guardians. Evidence will be submitted to the administrative team.
2. The student must arrange a time to meet with the teacher and set up an opportunity to re-do the assignment with supervision.

Incident 2:

1. The student will receive an automatic zero on the assignment or test and no make-up work will be offered to compensate for lost points.
2. The teacher will file an incident referral form with the administrative team, who will conference with the student and notify parents/guardians. Evidence will be submitted to the administrative team.

Assertive Discipline

Classroom management is the responsibility of the teacher in charge and the students present. To maintain a pleasant educational environment, both parties must work to assure that individual rights and opportunities are respected. To facilitate good classroom operation, each teacher will communicate with students the discipline plan for their classroom. Copies of the plan will be given to students through classroom notes or through handouts. These plans will include three to five behaviors they expect from all students. Behavior that disturbs the class or is threatening or harmful in nature will result in removal from class. The student will be sent to the Principal or Dean.

Students can be removed from class for violating discipline policy, disrupting class, or based on teacher decision.

Bullying Prohibition (Policy 514)

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe environment and is expressly prohibited. Bullying could be any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to one or more students.

MN. Stat. 121A.031 provides that "bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

MN Stat. 121A.031 provides that this section applies to bullying by a student against another student enrolled in a public school and which occurs:

- on the school premises, at the school functions or activities, or on the school transportation;
- by use of electronic technology and communications on the school premises, during the school functions or activities, on the school transportation, or on the school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists; or
- by use of electronic technology and communications off the school premises to the extent such use substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.
- A nonpublic school under section 123B.41, subdivision 9, consistent with its school accreditation cycle, is encouraged to electronically transmit to the commissioner its anti-bullying policy, if any, and any summary data on its bullying incidents.

A school-aged child who voluntarily participates in a public school activity, such as co-curricular or extracurricular activity, is subject to the same student bullying policy provisions applicable to the public school students participating in the activity.

This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying or other prohibited conduct that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. This policy also applies to an act of cyberbullying regardless of whether such act is committed on or

off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources. This policy also applies to sexual exploitation.

Malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A is prohibited. This prohibition applies to students, independent contractors, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.

Malicious and sadistic conduct and sexual exploitation by a school district or school staff member, independent contractor, or enrolled student against a staff member, independent contractor, or student that occurs is prohibited.

Any person who believes he/she has been the victim of bullying should report the alleged acts immediately to their Dean. Students also have the option to submit an online [Anonymous Bullying Report](#), which is located on the high school website. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, the School District shall undertake or authorize an investigation and may take immediate steps to protect the complainant, reporter, students or other pending completion of an investigation of bullying. Upon completion of the investigation, the School District will take appropriate disciplinary action.

Cell Phone Responsible Use Protocol

The use of personal electronic devices has become a major topic of discussion in schools across the nation. Research consistently shows that teenage students benefit from guidance in the responsible and appropriate use of such devices, including cell phones and earbuds.

For the purposes of this policy, an *electronic device* refers to any personal item that could distract a student from learning. This includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, smartwatches, headphones/earbuds, laptops/Chromebooks, portable gaming systems, and music players.

To reduce distractions, students at Albert Lea High School are not permitted to use their cell phones or earbuds from the bell that begins the class period until the bell that ends the class period (“No Usage Bell to Bell”), unless specifically directed by the teacher or granted a pre-approved exception.

Upon entering the classroom and before the bell rings, all students must place their phones in the designated cell phone pouch or storage container and remove/store their earbuds. Devices will remain there until the teacher permits access at the end of the class period.

Outside of the classroom, students are responsible for keeping their phones put away in privacy-restricted areas such as restrooms, locker rooms, the health office, and the back office. Students referred to the back office for disciplinary matters must place their phone in the designated lock box until the matter is resolved.

Harassment (Policy 413 and Policy 514)

Everyone at District 241 has a right to feel respected and safe. Harassment toward staff or fellow students will not be tolerated. Harassment is intimidating or abusive behavior toward an individual(s), based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, socio-economic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability, that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student’s participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the school district’s program. Harassment can be in written, oral or electronic form, or

displayed through gestures, stalking, or other action. Harassment may include the following when related to religion, race, sex, or gender:

- Name calling, jokes, or rumors
- Commenting on or unwelcome touching of a person or their clothing
- Graffiti
- Notes or cartoons
- Offensive or graphic pictures, posters, or book covers
- Exposing of intimate body parts to another

If any words or actions embarrass you or make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, please contact a teacher, counselor, Principal, Dean, or the Director of Human Resources (Located at the District Office). We take all reports of religious, racial, sexual harassment, and/or violence seriously and will take all appropriate actions based on your report. Your right to privacy will be respected as much as possible. Violence is any word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or things. No one is entitled to use violence and it will not be tolerated in this school.

Definitions

- **Assault:** An act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death. The intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another. The threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment consists of unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct, or communication of a sexual nature.
- **Racial Harassment:** Racial harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race.
- **Religious Harassment:** Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion.
- **Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression or force, or the threat thereof which involves the touching of another's intimate parts, or forcing a person to touch any person's intimate parts. Intimate parts, as defined in MN. Stat. 609.341, include the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast, as well as the clothing covering these areas.
- **Racial Violence:** Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to race.
- **Religious Violence:** Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to religion.

Hazing (Policy 533)

No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property, during or after school hours. A person who engages in an act that violates the school hazing policy or other law, in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act. "Hazing" is defined in MN. Stat. 121A.69 as committing an act against a student or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization.

The term hazing includes, but is not limited to the following activities:

- Any type of physical brutality such as striking, paddling with a board, branding, electric shocking, sexual contact, or placing a harmful substance in or on a student's body.
- Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, restrictions on personal hygiene, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, public nudity, being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public, calisthenics, personal servitude, or other activity that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm or adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, tobacco, controlled substance (prescription medication not belonging to the student, synthetic, or illegal drug), product or other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, or that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school. This may include verbal abuse, such as yelling, swearing, and insulting the student.
- Any activity that causes or requires a student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies and regulations. This includes abuse or mistreatment of animals, public nudity, and theft.

“Student organization” as defined in MN. Stat. 121A.69 means a group, club, or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular student events. Any person who has knowledge of violation of this policy or has been the victim of hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to the Principal, Superintendent, or designee. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation and may take immediate steps to protect the complainant, reporter, or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

Parking

Students are expected to park in the ALHS back lot in the areas designated by the yellow lines. Students may not park in the area designated for staff, visitors, or handicap parking. Staff areas are designated by the white lines. Unauthorized vehicles found in those areas will be ticketed or towed. Albert Lea Area Schools is not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles in parking lots. Any vehicle parked on ALHS/District 241 property may be searched by school officials or law enforcement officers at school request.

Students who drive to school must:

- Register their vehicle with the office and park in the designated student parking lot.
- Clearly display the parking permit on the rearview mirror.

Any violation of the driving/parking rules may result in:

- A ticket being issued ranging from \$5-\$15.
- Revocation of your parking permit.
- Vehicle towed at the owner's expense of \$100 or more.

All motorized vehicles are subject to full provisions of these rules and applicable state laws. If you violate a rule, you will be asked to hand in your permit. Students are subject to ticketing, booting, and/or towing if parking permits are not displayed or if parked in the following locations:

- “No Parking” zone, including “Visitor's Parking”
- Blocking any delivery area or emergency exit
- Double parking

- Designated staff parking areas

Permits will be rescinded for violation of parking regulations. Permits are **non-transferable** to students or vehicles not listed on the parking permit application.

Remember, it is a privilege to drive and park at the ALHS campus. Please give us your full cooperation.

Photography/Videos

Students must receive prior permission to take pictures or videos of individuals. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in disciplinary action.

Use of any device to record or take pictures is prohibited in locker rooms and bathrooms. Use of any device to record or take pictures is prohibited throughout the building without permission of staff or administration. Further discipline could result from a violation of harassment and/or hazing.

Safe Zone

In accordance with MN. Stat. 609.66, District 241 schools, including ALHS, are in a Drug-Free, Weapon-Free Zone. Anyone convicted of possessing, storing, or keeping a dangerous weapon while knowingly on school property is guilty of a felony and may be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five (5) years or to payment of a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both.

School Property

All school property loaned by the school during the school year is the student's responsibility. Students are liable for all damages incurred. The school will charge an appropriate replacement fee for Chromebooks, textbooks, workbooks, library books, or other property lost or destroyed by students. Students must respect school property and property belonging to others. Students causing damage to or destroying school property will pay for the damage and be disciplined accordingly. This includes manipulating computer files or entering or printing unauthorized files.

Student Attire (Policy 504)

The purpose of a dress code is for students to be dressed appropriately to encourage learning and be dressed appropriately for school activities. Good judgment should be used in choosing clothing to be worn at school or students will be asked to change clothes or be sent home to get appropriate attire. The administration (or appointed designee) will be the final arbiter of what is appropriate dress. Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Hats and other headgear, except as a religious observance, must allow the face to be visible and must not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff, including while the student wearing the hat is seated. Hoodies must allow the face and ears to be visible from the front and sides and must not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff including while the student wearing the hoodie is seated.
- Pants and shirts should be worn to cover all undergarments, which includes underwear and bra straps.
- Clothing that promotes products or activities that are illegal for use by minors are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Clothing with obscenities or sexual connotations is forbidden.
- Footwear must be worn in the building at all times due to state health mandates.
- Any clothing or actions deemed to be gang-related will result in suspension.
- Students are not allowed to bring blankets or coats to class or wear blankets or coats during school hours.

Student Hall Passes

In an effort to maintain building safety, all students will be issued an e-hallpass by their teacher when signing out of the classroom for any reason. e-hallpass is a digital hall pass system. Students will use their Chromebooks to initiate a pass within the e-hallpass system and teachers and staff members will then approve the pass by pinning the student in or out of the classroom or designated location. Students will not be allowed to leave the classroom during the first five or last five minutes of the class period. Additional limits on passes can be utilized to ensure the safe and orderly operations of the building.

Student Identification

All District 241 students in grades 5-12 must have a student picture identification card with them to attend a home athletic contest or school-sponsored dances. Students must carry their ID with them at all times. Staff and event supervisors may ask students to show their ID at any time.

Weapons (Policy 501)

The Albert Lea School District has a “No Weapons” policy. This policy is in effect during the school day, on school grounds, on the school bus, and during athletic events, or any other school sponsored activity. A weapon is any object used in a threatening manner. This could include, but is not limited to, an object that looks like a gun, a pocket knife, or ammunition.

Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students [are/are not (choose one)] expected to provide their own pencils, pens, paper, erasers, notebooks, and other personal items. Students may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including (not an inclusive list):

- Admission fees or charges for extracurricular activities, where attendance is optional and where the admission fees or charges a student must pay to attend or participate in an extracurricular activity are the same for all students, regardless of whether the student is enrolled in a public or a home school.
- Cost for materials for a class project that exceeds minimum requirements and is kept by the student.
- Security deposits for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Items of personal use or products that a student has an option to purchase such as student publications, class rings, annuals, and graduation announcements.
- Field trips considered supplementary to the district’s educational program.
- Admission fees or costs to attend or participate in optional extracurricular activities and programs.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Use of musical instruments owned or rented by the school district.
- A school district-sponsored driver or motorcycle education training course.
- Transportation to and from school for students living within two miles of school.
- Transportation of students to and from optional extracurricular activities or post-secondary instruction conducted at locations other than school.

Students will be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact the back office at 507-379-5342.

SECTION 4 - Health & Safety

Asbestos Management Plan

The school district has developed an asbestos management plan. A copy of this plan is available on the district's website.

Emergency Drills

Fire, lock-down, tornado, and active shooter drills are required by law and may help you in the event of an actual emergency. The teacher will give instructions on evacuating the building. It is important that students follow these directions quickly and completely. Please move away from the building, even on cold days. In the event of a tornado, there will be an announcement initiating for students and staff to take cover. Students will be informed of which area of the school they are to go. During a tornado, students should kneel down and cover their head with their hands.

Accidents

There is a possibility that you may get injured during the school day. If you do hurt yourself, you must do the following:

- Report all accidents to the teacher/coach if you were injured in the classroom or during an athletic program.
- Report all injuries to the Health Office.
- If medical attention is needed, your parents/guardians will be notified and the correct procedure for your injury will be followed.

Health Office

Students reporting to the Health Office need to have a pass from the class they are missing before they can be admitted. Students too ill or incapacitated to get a pass need to be accompanied to the Health Office. Students will not be allowed to remain in the Health Office for more than one class period within a day. Generally, after approximately a 20-minute time period, the student will be encouraged to return to class.

Parent permission must be obtained in order for students to be sent home from the Health Office. The person in contact with the parent/guardian will explain any related concerns (need for medical care, frequency of visits, routine missing of class, etc.). The parent will make the decision whether the student is legitimately ill and permitted to go home.

General criteria to be considered for calling a parent: an injury or illness requiring medical attention; an temporal temperature of 100 degrees or higher; signs/symptoms of a possible communicable disease; other illness signs/symptoms upon discretion.

The Health Office does not prescribe or administer any prescription or over-the-counter drugs or medication, including aspirin. If it is necessary for students to take medication, a doctor's written order and a parent's written permission must be provided and the student must furnish their own medication supply before the medication can be given at school. The medications must also be kept in the Health Office. Any medication

given by school personnel, other than oral or inhalers, must be dealt with on a one-to-one basis with the school nurse, parents, physicians, and school personnel. The School District retains the discretion to reject requests for administration of medication by school district staff.

Suicide Prevention Information

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States. If you're in crisis, there are options available to help you cope. You can also call the Lifeline at any time to speak to someone and get support. For confidential support available 24/7 for everyone in the United States, call 988.

If someone you know is struggling emotionally or having a hard time, you can be the difference in getting them the help they need. It's important to take care of yourself when you are supporting someone through a difficult time, as this may stir up difficult emotions. If it does, please reach out for support yourself.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-TALK (8255) -or- 988

Crisis Text Line

Text HOPELINE to 741741

Freeborn County Crisis Services

1-877-399-3040

Emergency Procedures

The Albert Lea Area Schools utilizes a Standard Response Protocol (SRP) from The "I Love U Guys" Foundation. This SRP uses levels of responses to assist in a variety of situations. This SRP will be reviewed and drills will be performed throughout the school year.

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults

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Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student's achievement, but your student's participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student's school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota's implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered "proficient."
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

Academic Standards and Assessments

What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
• Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science. • Majority of students take the MCA. • MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.	• Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards. • Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. • Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs. • Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](https://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

*To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required **each year** parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.*

Date _____ (This form is **only** applicable for the 20____ to 20____ school year.)

Student's Legal First Name _____ Student's Legal Middle Initial _____

Student's Legal Last Name _____ Student's Date of Birth _____

Student's District/School _____ Grade _____

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

_____ I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](http://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

_____ MCA/MTAS Reading

_____ MCA/MTAS Science

_____ MCA/MTAS Mathematics

_____ ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered "proficient."

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

To be completed by school or district staff only.

Student ID or MARSS Number _____

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