



Humphrey Elementary

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Waverly, MN 55390

320-543-4680

Winsted Elementary

431 4th Street North

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Winsted, MN 55395

320-543-4690

www.hlww.k12.mn.us

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This handbook was approved by the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted District 2687 School Board on April 13, 2020. The handbook may be changed or amended during the school year. Changes will be posted in the office and on the schools' web site. All questions regarding any provisions in the handbook should be directed to the elementary principal.



PARENTS

This handbook is prepared for the families of elementary children in District 2687, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools. It is designed to help you understand how schools and families share in the elementary school experience.

We look forward to an exciting school year. It is our goal to involve parents as key members of our educational team. We sincerely hope you enjoy this year and experience it as a time for real growth.

Teamwork, of course, means good communication between home and school. Please contact us whenever you have questions or concerns. In addition, our schools are always open for you to visit. We welcome and greatly appreciate parent visits, and encourage everyone to share their reactions.

Best wishes for a successful school year!

Sincerely,
Jennifer Olson
Elementary Principal
Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted



HLWW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mission

“The mission of HLWW Public Schools is to prepare students for life by engaging them in meaningful learning experiences.”

Goal Areas

- **Literacy** – To understand that the key to success for an individual and our society is to be literate.
- **21st Century Technology** – To use and apply, in order to learn and achieve.
- **Social Emotional Learning** – To know and show what it means to be a LAKER.
- **Choice Readiness** – To believe that you can be whomever you want to be in the future.
- **Service to School and Community** – To show pride in where you come from through your words and actions.

Lakers are...

Learners – Everything you do is an opportunity to learn to better yourself and others.

Accountable – Set goals and follow-through.

Kind – Practice compassion for the benefit of self and others.

Empowered – Make an impact in all aspects of your life and in the lives of others

Resilient – Never give up and don't be afraid to ask others for help along the way.

Motto

Excellence Through Education

Hashtag

#LAKER proud

GENERAL INFORMATION

Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum at Humphrey and Winsted Elementary is comprehensive and provides a firm foundation for students. The research-based curriculum focuses heavily on the areas of reading, writing, and math. Other areas of classroom study include spelling, handwriting, science, social studies and health.

To complete the foundation for a solid education, specialists at Humphrey and Winsted Elementary teach physical education and music. The physical education curriculum promotes healthy lifestyles and lifelong personal fitness through a wide variety of physical activities. Music education provides every student with opportunities for self-expression and fosters a lasting interest in the fine arts.

Technology is a vital part of a child's day at Humphrey and Winsted Elementary. Computers are used to enhance classroom instruction. The school has a computerized network that serves the media center and all classrooms. Students and faculty use technology to conduct research and have supervised access to the internet.

Allergies

Humphrey and Winsted Elementary are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for students. We understand the increasing prevalence of life threatening allergies among school populations. Recognizing that the risk of accidental exposure to allergens can be reduced in the school setting, we are committed to working in cooperation with parents, students, and physicians, to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for all students. The focus of allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response.

Attendance

School attendance laws of the State of Minnesota require that children must attend school regularly. Regular school attendance is important to the educational growth of students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. Parents are strongly encouraged to remind their children that consistent attendance will result in a continuity of the instructional process, higher grades and a more enjoyable school experience.

Regular classroom attendance will help students develop successful life skills including punctuality, self-discipline and responsibility. The shared learning experiences that take place daily in the schools are a purposeful and important part of the educational process.

The attendance regulations exist to assist the parents and school team to work together to help students develop good punctuality and attendance patterns.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to communicate absences and/or late arrivals to the office by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. Should school staff not hear from you, a courtesy call will be made to determine your child's safety. Any future absences not communicated with the school office will be recorded as unexcused. Please contact the school for absences using these office contacts:

Humphrey 320-543-4680 or tknuth@hlww.k12.mn.us
Winsted 320-543-4690 or jstifter@hlww.k12.mn.us

When calling your child in, give the following information: name of student, grade, name of teacher, and length of and reason for absence.

Excused Absences

- Personal illness – once a student reaches ten (10) absences due to illness in a year, parents may be notified that any additional absences will not be excused unless a school nurse verifies the illness or documentation from a doctor is provided.
- Illness in the immediate family.
- Death in the immediate family.
- Legal obligations.
- Religious holidays.
- Family vacations – you are strongly encouraged to take family vacations during winter or spring break. In the event this is not possible, the elementary office as well as your child's teacher should be informed in advance of any vacation that will cause student absence from school.

- 24 hour notification to the office is required for any planned absences. Examples include an out of town trip, attending a funeral/wedding or other family event, sporting events (tournaments, hunting, etc.). It is important to contact the school office in advance, but prior to 9:00 a.m. the day before the absence occurs to allow the classroom teacher an opportunity to prepare instructional materials that would be missed in his/her absence.
- Suspensions.

Unexcused Absences – These absences are counted!

- An absence not recognized as an excused absence will be considered unexcused.
- Any absence without a written or verbal explanation by the parent/guardian by 9:00 a.m. to the school office will be considered unexcused.

- Examples of unexcused absences are: out-of-town guests, oversleeping, “running late,” shopping, taking care of younger brother or sister, hair appointments, family trips without prior approval, or any duty/errand which can be done outside of the normal school day.

When a student reaches three (3) unexcused absences, school/parent contact will be made in an effort to help improve student’s attendance. Seven (7) unexcused absences will be referred to County Court for educational neglect. Minnesota State Law concerning educational neglect presumes that parents or guardians of a child under 12 years of age are held accountable for any unexcused absences.

Tardies

Students are expected to come to school on time and be in the classroom ready to learn at 7:55 a.m. Frequent late arrivals establish a pattern that is not acceptable. Often classes start with instruction right away and the late student misses important information. A student will be marked tardy if he/she arrives after the second bell. If the arrival is after 9:30 a.m. the student will be marked absent ½ day. If the student leaves before 1:30 p.m. for the remainder of the day the student will be marked absent ½ day. Tardies shall be excused when a note or telephone call is received from the parent/guardian explaining how the tardy was unavoidable.

- Examples of unexcused tardies are: oversleeping, missing bus or being late to class for playing in the hallway or lunchroom. (When unfavorable weather conditions are forecast and Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted is starting on time, please plan ahead so that your child arrives to school before the second bell.)
- Examples of excused tardies are: medical appointments or the bus the student is arriving on is late due to road conditions.

We understand that family schedules do not always mix with school schedules. If your child is late to school, we ask that an adult check your child in at the elementary office. If your child needs to leave early, please send a note in the morning so we can have your child ready for you when you arrive.

Accidents

Accidents which are incurred by children during the portion of the day when they are under the supervision of the school should be reported to the classroom teacher or teacher on duty immediately. An accident form will be filled out and sent home with the child. If the school nurse or designee determines that the injury is serious, the parents will be called immediately.

Arrival – Dismissal Time

For the welfare and safety of all students, it is requested that students do not arrive at school any earlier than necessary. This is especially important for those children who walk, ride bicycles or are dropped off by parents. Students who walk, ride bicycles or are dropped off by parents should not arrive more than 20 minutes before school starts due to supervisory reasons.

If your child attends Winsted Elementary School and they are being dropped off before school or picked up after school, please do not drive on the playground area.

Humphrey Elementary/Winsted Elementary
 School Begins – 7:55 a.m.
 Dismissal – 2:30 p.m.

Animals In The Classroom

To prevent exposure to allergens and to maintain the best possible indoor air quality, prior approval is required before animals are allowed to visit the classroom.

Bicycles

Students who are competent bicycle riders and practice good bicycle safety may ride their bicycles to school, weather permitting. Bicycles are to be walked when on school grounds. Bicycles should be parked and locked in the bicycle racks during the school day. The use of helmets is encouraged. We are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged bicycles.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are strongly discouraged at the elementary schools due to potential learning distractions, as well as possible theft. If you feel your child must have a cell phone for emergency purposes, we expect that it will be kept in your child’s locker on silent mode (or off) during the school day. Students will not be allowed to use them in class, on the playground or

any time during school hours, unless given permission by the classroom teacher. Please contact the school in case of emergencies and not your child’s cell phone as we may need information to assist you accordingly.

Communications

One key feature of effective schools is good communication between school and home. The elementary schools use a variety of communication tools to make our school – family relationship strong: monthly newsletters from the principal and individual classroom teachers, special flyers in the Wednesday folder, phone calls and notes. Classrooms use daily communication journals/student planners.

Our parent organizations hold regular meetings throughout the year, and usually receive updates on important school and district information. In addition, news of special events is published in the local newspaper as well as the district newsletter.

The Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District website address is <http://www.hlww.k12.mn.us> and includes timely general information about the district, its policies and activities. We encourage you to respond to our communication efforts and let us know if they are effective, and how we can improve for the future.

Custody Issues

If there are special concerns or court orders involving our elementary students, we must have current copies of legal court documents on file at school. Parents without specific court documents stating otherwise are entitled and have access to all school functions.

Discipline

At Humphrey and Winsted Elementary School we expect our students to conduct themselves appropriately by showing respect for themselves and others and by demonstrating responsibility by making appropriate choices. The staff at our schools has the goal of establishing an atmosphere throughout the school in which children will feel safe, secure and happy.

The discipline plan at Humphrey and Winsted Elementary Schools is based on the Above the Line program, which was developed by Corwin Kronenberg, a nationally recognized expert on behavior management.

The goal of Above the Line is to promote a safe and caring environment where all students are taught the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. In the program, behavior is divided into three groups, Above the Line, Below the Line, and Bottom Line. The three behavior categories with some sample behaviors are illustrated in the box below.



ABOVE THE LINE		
Be Cooperative	Be Polite	Be a Worker
BELOW THE LINE		
Swearing	Teasing	Budging in Line
Hitting	Not Cooperating	Wasting Time
BOTTOM LINE		
Weapons	Vandalism	Racial Harassment
Assault	Use of Drugs	Sexual Harassment

Students are expected to demonstrate Above the Line behaviors. If a student makes a bad behavior choice and fall Below the Line, the student will be expected to assume responsibility for the behavior.

Students who choose a Below the Line behavior will be given a choice by the adult in charge. They will be asked if they want to “Fix It” or if they want a consequence for going Below the Line. If the child selects the “Fix It” option, the child will be expected to assume responsibility for developing a plan for fixing the problem he/she has caused with his/her Below the Line behavior. When a child requests a consequence for a Below the Line behavior, the consequence will be worked out with the child and the adult in charge. The consequence must be related to the behavior, delivered respectfully, and it must be reasonable. There is a separate form for primary grades (kindergarten-one–two and intermediate grades (three–four).

There are some behaviors that are considered totally inappropriate at school. These behaviors are considered Bottom Line behaviors. A Bottom Line behavior is a violation of state law or district policy or any totally unacceptable behavior. When a student demonstrates a Bottom Line behavior, the principal, parent(s)/guardian(s) and maybe a legal authority will get involved.

Dismissing Students

Students are dismissed only from the office during school hours. If you must take your child out of school a written request should be sent to the office stating the date and time of dismissal. You must come to the office to meet your child. Children will not be released to waiting cars or to anyone who cannot identify himself/herself to the satisfaction of school personnel.

In an effort to minimize classroom disruptions, increase classroom learning time and keep our students safe, parents are asked to communicate dismissal changes to your child's teacher or the elementary office by 12:00 noon for grades K-4. We will no longer be interrupting classes in the afternoon to deliver messages to students except in an emergency.

When picking up your child at the end of their school day, please follow one of the procedures below.

- You may come into the school (using the main entrance) and wait in the main entrance until your child's class is dismissed. Please let the teacher know that you are taking your child. **Parents should not pick up their child at or near your child's classroom.** (This is a busy time and the classroom teacher has the responsibility of getting their entire class dismissed at the end of the day.) **OR**
- You may wait outside (by the buses) for your child's class. For the safety of all students, please meet your child at the bus loading area.
- If you arrive after the buses have gone, your child will be waiting for you in the classroom or in the office. Please come into the building to pick up your child.

Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is required by MN Statutes prior to kindergarten enrollment.

District 2687 offers screening in vision, hearing, growth, immunization status, and skills in thinking, communication and language, large and small muscles and social/emotional development for children who are between three and four years old. If your child has not been screened, please contact Kim Hewson-Garber 320-543-4670 or khweson-garber@hlww.k12.mn.us.

Educational Data Privacy

Pursuant to the requirements of ISD #2687 Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District's Policy regarding educational data privacy, the following constitutes the school district's annual notification to parents and students regarding data privacy practices of the school district.

The school district has adopted a Data Privacy and Student Records Policy incorporating state and federal requirements as to data privacy rights. In summary, the policy provides:

- A. Privacy Rights
Educational records which identify, or could be used to identify, a student other than directory information, may not be released to a member of the public without the written permission of the student's parents or guardians, or the student, if he or she is 18, attends a post-secondary institution, is married or has graduated. This general rule is subject to specific and limited exceptions which cannot be set out here, due to limitations of space, but which are set out in district policy.
- B. Directory Information
"Directory Information" includes a student's picture, parents' name, student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, gender, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height, member of athletic teams, dates of attendance, grade levels completed, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attends by the student and other similar information. Directory information may be released to the public without prior parent or student consent unless the parent or eligible student has objected in writing to the release of one or more categories of such information. Directory information does not include identifying data which references religion, race, color, social position or nationality. A parent of a student or an eligible student in the district may refuse to permit the release of any or all categories of directory information by contacting the building principal in which said student attends and completing the form Non-Release Of Information. This objection must be given to the district within thirty (30) days of this publication notice.
- C. Inspection of Records
Parents of a student or a student who is 18 or older, may request to inspect and review any of the student's educational records except those which are, by State or Federal law, made confidential. The school district will comply with the request immediately if possible and if not, within five days exclusive of weekends and holidays.

In special circumstances, an additional five days may be required in order to comply. Copies of records may be obtained at the actual cost of reproduction.

D. Challenge to Accuracy of Records

A parent of eligible student who believes that specific information in the student's educational records is inaccurate, misleading, incomplete or violates the privacy or other rights of the student, may request that the school district amend or correct the record in question. If the superintendent, within a period of thirty (30) days, declines to amend the record as requested, the parent or student who is 18 or older will be advised in writing of their right to request and obtain a hearing. If either the superintendent, or, after hearing, the hearing officer appointed by the school district determines that the record in question is inaccurate, misleading, incomplete or violates the privacy or other rights of the student, the record will be amended, the parents or student age 18 or older will be notified of their rights to place a statement with the record commenting upon it and setting out any reason for disagreeing with the decision of the school district. Dates in dispute will be disclosed only if the statement of disagreement is included with the disputed data. The decision of the superintendent or hearing officer is the final decision of the school district and may be appealed under the provision of the State Administrative Procedure Act, MN state C15, relating to contested cases.

E. Transfer of Records to Other Schools

ISD #2687 Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted forwards educational records of students to other schools and school districts in which a student seeks or intends to enroll upon request of that school or school district. A parent or student who is 18 years of age may request and receive a copy of the records which are transferred and may, pursuant to the policy, challenge the accuracy of the records. The district does not, however, notify parents or students of age 18 or older prior to such transfer.

F. Data Collection Rights

A parent or eligible student when asked to supply private or confidential data shall be informed of:

- a. The purpose and intended use of the requested data,
- b. Whether he/she may refuse or is legally required to supply the requested data;
- c. Any known consequence arising from his/her supplying or refusing to supply the data;
- d. The identity of the persons or entities authorized by state or federal law to receive the data;

G. Complaints for Non-Compliance

H. The school district is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged personal items. Personal items other than school related items should NOT be brought to school. Parents and students of age 18 or older may submit written complaints of violation of rights accorded them by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Office, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20201. This review of the data privacy rights of students and parents in the educational records maintained by Independent School District #2687 is intended only to be a summary of the provisions of school district policy and applicable state and federal law. Requests for copies of the policy and questions should be addressed to: Superintendent of Schools, ISD 2687 HLWW, PO Box 708, Howard Lake, MN 55349.

Elementary Enrollment

Elementary enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year is approximately 475 students. Total enrollment in grades K-12 is about 1,200 students.

District facilities include two elementary buildings, one in Waverly (Humphrey) and one in Winsted, housing pre-kindergarten through fourth. Students in grades five through eight attend the middle school in Howard Lake and students in grades nine through twelve are enrolled at the senior high school in Howard Lake.

Emergency Drills

Schools are required by law to conduct emergency drills during the school year. The purpose of emergency drills is to prepare students for emergency situations such as fire, lockdown, severe weather, etc.

Field Trips

During the school year various classes take field trips. Permission slips are sent home for parents to sign, thus giving permission for a student to go on a field trip. In the event that a parent does not want his/her child to go on a trip, the child must be in attendance on that day. Provisions will be made for the student.

If there are special health concerns or medications needed, please contact the school prior to the trip.



Health Records

A health record is kept for each child, as required by Minnesota state law. Any significant health condition or immunization that the child has during the summer or during the school year should be reported to the school nurse so the information can be recorded on the child's health card.

Home Prepared Food

Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted abides by State Health Department recommendations and regulations regarding the serving of food in school.

Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted prohibits the distribution and service of food items including treats which are prepared in individual homes. Food for classroom parties, or any occasion, must be purchased from a store which is subject to state food inspection regulation. All food to be shared with other students must be commercially prepared, pre-packed, unopened, and when possible, individually wrapped. This action is needed in order to take a firm preventative stand against the spread of germs and disease.

Homework

The homework guideline we use is quite simple. Ten minutes per school night per grade level. An example is 30 minutes a school night for third grade. We understand children work at different rates. Some students in a class may have less homework because they have made better use of their study time at school, or school work may come easier for them. Some students in a class may not be able to complete their homework within the grade level timelines. If this happens to your child on a regular basis, you should contact the teacher to discuss some options. For most students, the ten minutes per grade level guideline works well.

As parents, you can make homework more successful for your child by providing a work area free from distractions. Another idea is to see that your child is using his/her time well and not spending time getting drinks, sharpening pencils, etc. What works well for some families is setting aside a common homework time each evening for the whole family. On the nights your child doesn't have any homework, he/she could read a book, write a letter to grandma, or practice math flash cards.

If, for any reason, you need to pick up homework, please contact your child's teacher early in the day so that the teacher has time to get the materials ready. It is very difficult for the office and the teachers to handle requests for homework if parents wait until the end of the day to ask the teacher for the materials.

Immunization

In compliance with Minnesota school immunization law, **all students are required to have a complete immunization record at school.** The law requires: five diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis; four polio, two measles, mumps, rubella; three Hepatitis B and two varicella (not required if child already had chicken pox). No child will be allowed to enroll or remain enrolled without a statement verifying these immunizations or a notarized statement that immunizations are contraindicated due to a child's medical diagnosis or a parent's conscientious opposition. The entire policy, as adopted by the School Board, is available in each building.

Keeping Your Child Home from School

Please do not send your student to school with:

- Rashes: If the student has a rash of unknown origin, it needs to be evaluated by a health care provider. Children should not come to school with rashes if they are spreading, itching or open/draining.
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: Student needs to remain home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- Fever of or greater than 100 degrees F: Student should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without the use of fever reducing drugs such as Tylenol.

Kindergarten Early Entrance

Children five years of age on or before September 1 are automatically eligible to enter kindergarten. If a child's birthday falls on a date after September 1 and before December 31, parents may request early entrance. To be considered for early entrance, parents must submit a request to the building principal by July 1. After review, the district may recommend academic testing to verify the request. Parents incur the expense for the testing. Students must score at the 95 percentile or above and show physical, emotional, or social maturity to receive the recommendation for early entrance.

Latex Products

School District buildings are latex restricted sites. No balloons or other latex products are permitted.

Lockers

Most students are assigned a locker for storing books and supplies. Each student is responsible for seeing that his/her locker is kept in order at all times. Students are not to share lockers unless given permission by the principal. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Lockers are the property of Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools and school officials reserve the right to search a locker at any time.

Lost And Found

Please label your children's boots, gym shoes, caps, scarves, mittens, etc., so we can return them if they become lost. Each elementary school has a lost and found container. Parents are welcome to check the lost and found for articles at any time. A good time to do so is during conferences, concerts and other school activities. Lost and found items will be discarded at the end of each quarter.

Mail

Students are not allowed to receive personal mail at school. The mail will be returned to the sender. If there is no return address, the mail will be given to the legal guardian or parent. Any flowers, balloons, etc. sent to your child at school will be held until lunchtime in the office. These deliveries cause disruptions to classroom routines.

Milk Program

Milk is available to every child in kindergarten at no cost.

Milk is available to grades one through four for "classroom milk break" and is optional. You may pay for half a year or for a full year. For families that pay per half of year, money is due the first week of school for the first half and the last day of the second quarter for the second half. After these dates your child will not be able to participate in the program. Milk payment should be given directly to your classroom teacher.

For any student with lactose intolerance, the school will make available upon written request from a parent, lactose reduced milk, milk fortified with lactose in liquid, tablet granular or other forms of milk to which lactobacillus acidophilus has been added.

For students who bring a lunch, deductions will be made from the family account for milk.



Students are not allowed to bring pop for classroom milk break or for their lunch.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA III's) will be given at grade levels three and four. The MCA are state-developed tests that measure high standards in reading and mathematics at grades three and four. Students answer both multiple choice and short answer questions. State law requires all students to take these tests, although special education students and students with limited English-speaking skills participate at the recommendation of their teams. Students do not pass or fail these tests; rather these tests are used to chart school progress, generate information for school improvement, and serve as a tool to make decisions that will improve student achievement.

Students are classified in one of four achievement levels based on their test scores. The district goal is to see the number of students at Level One decrease, while the number of students at Levels Two, Three and Four increases.

Achievement Level Information

Level One (Does Not Meet Standards) scores indicate that the student has significant gaps in the knowledge and skills necessary for satisfactory grade level work.

Level Two (Partially Meets Standards) scores represent partial knowledge and skills required for successful grade level achievement.

Level Three (Meets Standards) scores represent state expectations for achievement of all students. Students who score at Level Three are working successfully on grade-level material.

Level Four (Exceeds Standards) scores represent successful work with challenging, above-grade-level material.

Overdue Library Books

All library materials are to be returned at least one week before the last day of school. The last day to check out materials will be one week before the day all library books are to be returned. Students/Parents are to be notified of overdue materials by written notice and/or a phone call.

Students/Parents will be asked to pay replacement costs of materials that are not returned. Written requests for payment will be issued shortly after the due date of all library materials. Money will be refunded for materials that are subsequently found and returned.

Students who do not return borrowed materials or pay for replacement will be restricted as to checking out library materials in the future.

Parent Access – ParentVUE

Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools are providing parent access to ParentVUE to further promote educational excellence and enhance communications with parents/guardians. ParentVUE allows elementary parents to view their student's attendance, census information, immunization, report card, transportation, and is available to every parent/guardian of a student enrolled at Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools. It is our belief that you will find ParentVUE to be a valuable tool linking family, student, and school in informative, cooperative, and proactive manner.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Parent – teacher conferences take place twice during the school year. Parents will receive information regarding fall and winter conferences from each building. The school will contact parents for specific appointment times.

Personal Appearance

We encourage our students to dress in a neat and appropriate manner that reflects pride in themselves and their school.

The District reserves the right to take appropriate action when student attire and/or grooming endangers the health, safety or negatively influences the educational opportunity of students in the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools.

The District has established no restrictions on student dress or grooming except as follows:

- When the dress or grooming presents a clear and present danger to the student or others health or safety;
- When the dress or grooming interferes with the education process;
- When the dress or grooming creates disorder in the classroom or the school;
- When it displays logos or references to alcohol, tobacco, or drug products, or their use.
- Hats should not be worn in school, except for special occasions.
- No inappropriate short shorts/skirts, biker shorts, or spaghetti strap/midriffs style clothing will be allowed.



Footwear must be worn at all times. Sandals and open-toed shoes are discouraged.

Disciplinary action for infractions of this policy shall be consistent with the disciplinary code outlined in the school student management policies.

Personal Belongings Of Students

Unless a teacher requests them specifically, students should not bring toys, radios, sport equipment, cell phones, hand-held electronic games or other expensive items to school. School staff is not responsible for non-requested items.

Phone Calls

Parents are welcome to call the principal with questions, concerns or ideas they wish to share. Teachers should be called during school hours. However, when classes are in session, teachers may not be available to answer the phone. In case of an emergency, please call the school office and your child will be contacted immediately. A message may be left on the answering machine. Children are to be called only in the event of an emergency. They will seldom be given permission to call from school except in an emergency.

Phone Numbers

It is very important that we have an EMERGENCY NUMBER for each student so parents can be reached at any time. An emergency form will be distributed to each child at the beginning of the school year. It is essential that you return your child's form to the office as soon as possible. It is necessary that you include the phone number of someone who can be reached in your absence in the event of illness or emergency. Please notify us of any change in phone numbers during the school year.

Photographs

Photographs are taken in our buildings throughout the school year. Some of these photographs will be used in district publications or submitted to outside publications. Videotaping, for district use and by news organizations, may also occur.

Requests not to photograph or film specific students will be honored. Please contact your child's principal for additional information.

Physical Education

Children are expected to participate in physical education and recess activities unless they have a health problem. Students may be excused from physical education for three days with a parent's written request. Beyond that, a doctor's excuse is needed.

Pledge Of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance is recited at least once per week at the elementary school in accordance with Minnesota Statute 121.11, Subdivision 3. This is done either via individual classrooms or through the school intercom system. Any student or teacher may decline to participate in the recitation of the pledge for any personal reasons. Anyone electing to "opt out" will be free from discrimination by other students, teachers or staff. Students and staff must respect another person's right to make a choice to recite, or not recite, the Pledge of Allegiance.

Progress Reports

The school seeks your cooperation in its efforts to educate your child. The progress report informs you of your child's progress four times a year, once at the end of each nine-week period. Feel free to visit the school and confer with staff about your child's progress any time during the school year.

Recess

Fresh air in the middle of the day helps refresh students' bodies and minds for a full afternoon of learning. Footwear must be worn at all times. Sandals and open-toed shoes are discouraged.

Please be sure your child has the right outdoor clothing to enjoy our Minnesota winter recesses! All students, grades kindergarten through fourth, are asked to wear hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants during the winter season (**students not wearing boots must stay on the paved area during recess**). Also, a reminder for parents to assist their child, and our staff, by labeling your child's winter apparel.

Students will be outside during the noon hour recess period unless one of the following weather related conditions (listed below) are in existence. If any of the conditions apply, recess (or a portion of recess) will be held indoors. The principal or designee will make decisions related to the application of this policy.

1. The temperature and/or wind chill index is at or below zero degrees. (We will hold very closely to the "zero-zero" rule during the winter season. Due to the variation of the weather, however, it is crucial that children come prepared to go outside on a daily basis.)
2. Precipitation (rain or snow) and/or weather conditions (thunderstorms or lightning) to a degree that it is deemed the conditions are not conducive to student's well-being.
3. The playgrounds are in such condition (wet, icy and/or muddy) that it is deemed unsafe and/or conducive to student's well-being.

School Bus Behavior

HLWW School has contracted with 4.0 Transportation as its transportation provider. HLWW school bus garage is located at 8700 County Road 6 SW, Howard Lake. Phone number for the bus garage is 320-543-4650.

Students riding the bus will be picked up and let off only at their regular stops. Anyone wishing to ride a different bus or get off at a different stop must bring a note from home, have it signed by the principal and presented to the bus driver.

1. Every bus rider must abide by these rules or be deprived of the privilege to ride the bus.
2. All riders shall remain in the seats assigned to them.
3. Keep your head, hands and arms inside the bus.
4. Scuffling, fighting, and obscene language are forbidden.
5. Bus riders will not litter the bus with food or other debris.
6. Bus driver will report any misconduct to the principal.
7. Bus driver is in complete charge while on the bus.
8. Parents will be notified if the misconduct continues. The bus rider may be denied the privilege of riding for the school year.
9. Damage to the bus other than regular usage will be paid for by the rider.
10. Be at the loading pace at the schedule time. The driver will not wait.



11. Follow the recommended procedure when crossing the roadway.
12. Inform driver, if possible, when rider will be absent.
13. Cooperate with the **BUS DRIVER AT ALL TIMES**.
14. Wait in **FRONT** of the bus, never behind.
15. Students are not to possess or use drugs or alcohol while riding a District 2687 school bus. Violation of this rule will mean automatic suspension from riding District 2687 buses.

School Bus Discipline

1. Students exhibiting inappropriate behavior will be written up on a bus discipline report.
2. The first bus discipline report for minor offenses will be a warning.
3. The second bus discipline report may result in a two day bus suspension.
4. Subsequent bus discipline reports may result in longer bus suspensions (i.e. third bus report will result in a 3 day bus suspension).
5. After the fourth bus discipline report for minor/major offenses, a parent/student/administrator/bus driver committee (3 bus drivers) will need to meet at 8:15 a.m. to discuss and set a behavioral expectations plan for further bus riding.
6. Major bus behavior offenses such as fighting and destruction of property could result in automatic bus suspension.

School Closing

School may be closed by the Superintendent in the event of extreme weather conditions or emergency circumstances. An official announcement will be made via the Emergency Notification Service as well as radio stations WCCO-830 AM, KRWC-1360 AM, KDUZ-1260 AM or KARP-106.9 FM and TV stations WCCO (channel 4), KARE (channel 11) KMSP (channel 9), and KSTP (channel 5). When adverse conditions exist buses may run late, so we ask that you do not call the school unless necessary. Parents are advised to make provisions for the care of their children in the event of a school closing, late start or early dismissal.

School Parties and Celebrations

Classrooms occasionally celebrate events such as birthdays, holidays, and special school events. If you wish to send food items for any classroom celebrations, it is important to remember that the district prohibits distribution of food items (including treats) which are prepared in individual homes. Food must be commercially prepared, pre-packed, and when possible, individually wrapped.

School-Wide Procedures For A Positive Climate

Classroom

- Specific classroom rules are generated by each teacher and his/her students.

Halls

- Use quiet voices.
- Always walk and stay to the right.
- Listen to the person in charge.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.

Lunchroom

- Enter the lunchroom in a quiet, orderly way.
- Quietly talk with your immediate neighbor.
- Hands off other people and their food.
- Keep your eating area clean.
- Be polite, use good manners.
- Follow the directions of the supervisor and teacher.
- Exit the lunchroom in a respectful, orderly, and quiet way.

Playground

- Be responsible for school playground equipment.
- Remain within the playground boundaries.
- Keep hands and body to yourself.
- Rocks, sticks and snow stay on the ground.
- Only TOUCH football is allowed.
- Dispose of all litter in the trash container.
- Ask for permission from playground supervisor to use restroom.

Assemblies

- Be a courteous, silent audience.
- Stay seated until the performance is over.
- Stay seated until your teacher signals you to line up.
- No running in and out of the auditorium or gymnasium.

Lavatory

- Quiet time.
- Please flush after use.
- Wash your hands and put the paper towels in the basket.
- Return to your classroom immediately.



- Report any injuries to playground supervisor.
- Climbing Equipment: No climbing on top. No running or playing tag.
- Jump Ropes: Use the jump rope for only jumping. Jump ropes should never be tied or twisted.
- Slides: One person may slide down at a time. Take one step at a time and hold onto the handrail when climbing the ladder to the top of the slide. Slide down feet first and sitting. Climbing up the slide is not allowed.
- Swings: One person at a time is allowed on one swing (three allowed on tire swing). Always sit on the swing. Hold on tightly with both hands. Use back and forth motion. No jumping out while swinging. No underdogs, dodging between swings, twisting, or spinning on the swings.
- Winter Snow Safety: All students are asked to wear hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants during the winter season. Snow stays on the ground (do not throw snow at anyone or anything). Play on the front side of the snow hill only. Only one person can slide down at a time. No standing, sit down to slide. No pushing or jumping off snow hill. Do not play on the ice.

Snacks and Classroom Food

Snacks are important for providing children with nutrients to support growth and learning. Smart snacks enhance children's academic and athletic performance, and provide an opportunity to apply nutrition education principles by having students plan their snack.

Parents are encouraged to provide healthy snack choices. By doing this, you are reinforcing the importance of healthy eating and contributing to the improved eating habits of your child. A healthy snack option is also available for purchase either by half year or full year and should be purchased through the school office.

Try these healthy snack ideas for your child: trail mix, raisins/dried fruit, pretzels, animal crackers, baked chips/crackers, cheese, granola and cereal bars, etc.

Student Meetings Before – After School

At times a teacher may request that a child remain after or come early to school. Parents will be notified the day before so arrangements may be made for transportation.

Student Performance

Our students perform well according to standardized testing measures. In college entrance examinations our students exceed both state and national norms.

Student Registration

Students enrolled in our elementary schools are automatically registered in spring for the following school year. Children entering kindergarten in the fall are registered in the spring during kindergarten registration. Children who move during the summer months from one attendance area to another within the school district and students new to the community should register prior to school opening in the fall. Children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1. Verification of the child's birth date is required, as is verification of all immunizations.

Textbooks

The school district furnishes all textbooks free of charge. Students will be charged for any lost book or for wear beyond normal use. Students will be required to pay the full cost of any lost book. It is recommended that all textbooks have protective covers by the end of the first week of school or a week after issue.

Visitors and Security

We encourage parents to visit school and participate in our activities. Please prearrange visits with your child's classroom teacher. Occasionally, parents ask permission to bring other children – preschool brothers or sisters or other relatives – to visit school. It is important to keep classroom distractions to a minimum, we ask that you find alternate supervision for preschool brothers or sisters while visiting or participating in activities.

For the safety of all Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted students and staff, all visitors – including parents, non-district 2687 students, vendors, and community members – must report to the school office upon entering the building. Visitors must sign in and will be given a visitor's badge to wear. Please return to office to sign out before leaving the building.

Volunteers

HLWW Public School has a long tradition of volunteerism from its parents and community members. The help that volunteers have given to our schools is tremendous!

Many of the volunteer jobs require your undivided attention. It is also important to keep classroom distractions to a minimum to keep students focused on learning. If you have younger children that may need to accompany you, please talk to your child's teacher and/or staff about volunteer projects that might be appropriate or can be done at home.

If you would like to become a volunteer, there are a few steps you need to follow (forms, handout and slideshow can be found at www.hlww.k12.mn.us):

1. Complete a volunteer application form.
2. Review required documents.
3. Complete a background check form.
4. Please remember to sign all forms and submit all forms to your child's school. Failure to complete the forms in full will delay your opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom.

You will be contacted by the HLWW Volunteer Coordinator once your status as a volunteer has been approved. (Please allow five to ten business days for forms to be processed.)

At HLWW Schools, we recognize and value the importance the role parents play in our children's education. It is because of our appreciation for parental involvement that we invite parents to be involved in school for many reasons. In order to best manage parent involvement here at school, we will define two common parent roles in our school.

The first is a "parent volunteer". A parent volunteer is defined as a parent for which the teacher has requested classroom assistance. There is no limit to the number or length of time for parent volunteers to be in any of our classrooms. Teachers, along with the school principal, have complete discretion as to when they make these requests for the benefit of the educational process for their students.

The second is a "parent visitor". A parent visitor is defined as any parent who comes to their child's classroom as a visitor or observer. Parent visitors are welcome to visit their child's classroom up to 2 times per school year, for up to 2 hours each visit.

Whether a parent comes to school as a Volunteer or a Visitor, they must give the teacher at least 48 hours' notice and sign in at the office when they arrive.

Walkers

Students who walk, ride bicycles or are dropped off by parents should not arrive more than 20 minutes before school starts due to supervisory reasons.

Wednesday Folders

As a means of facilitating communication between home and school, the elementary buildings will be using a "Wednesday Folder" program. Each student will be issued a folder to be used for transporting general school information home. Included will be updates, newsletters, school-wide information notes, lunch menus, etc. Folders will come home only on Wednesday. Parents are asked to review the folder, sign the inside and return it with their child the next day.

Withdrawal From School

If a student withdraws from school before the end of the school year, the school's office should be notified one week before departure. All books and school-owned supplies need to be returned to the teacher. A transcript of the student's records will be sent to the new school when requested by the new school.

STUDENT SERVICES

Food Service

Students have an opportunity to begin their day with breakfast at school (breakfast will not be available when school has a late start). Eating a healthy breakfast provides immediate nutritional benefits and leads to improved eating habits throughout the day. School breakfast is linked to positive health outcomes for students.

Nutritious lunches are served each day for students and staff. The food service staff plans each lunch, which consists of five food groups daily: protein (meat or cheese), vegetable, fruit, bread or bread alternative and milk. A student may have all five items, but may select three of the five. Students who bring their own lunch may purchase milk.

The prices for breakfast, lunch and milk are set by the School Board.

All buildings use a computerized program that allows parents to deposit money into a personal lunch account. Each student is assigned a four or five digit ID number (PIN) to access their account. PIN cards are distributed at each school's open house and/or registration, or may be obtained by calling Food Service at 320-543-3900, ext. 4245.

Parents who want to eat lunch with their child are asked to call the elementary office by 8:30 a.m. so a meal can be ordered for you. Cost of guest lunch (no matter the age) is the same as an adult lunch.

Guidance And Counseling

The elementary guidance and counseling program is established to promote the social and emotional growth of children along with their academic growth. The school social worker works with children in large and small groups and may see them individually. The school social worker also works with teachers, parents and other agencies to give your child a well-balanced educational setting.

Health Checkups

We recommend that your child have a thorough physical examination and dental checkup prior to enrollment in school. If there are any health conditions that prevent your child from certain activities, the doctor is asked to indicate this in a note directed to the school nurse. The checkups should be done in the summer before the child begins school. Please advise the school nurse of any significant health condition.

Vision and hearing screening tests are administered in the fall for children. Referrals for further evaluations are phoned or mailed to parents as needed.

Health Service

The school health service is under the direction of a licensed school nurse, who will evaluate the health status of students and staff. If there is evidence of a health problem with a child, the school health office will contact the parents. The school health office will counsel students, parents, staff and others regarding health matters; they will help prevent and control diseases; and serve as a resource person. When children become ill or are injured, the school health office provides emergency care and determines the seriousness of the ailment. If the situation is warranted, the child's parent or guardian will be called.

Homebound Instruction

If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school for several weeks because of serious illness, either at home or in the hospital, arrangements may be made for homebound instruction. Parents must contact their building principal to request that provisions be made.

Special Education

Special education services are provided to students identified in accordance with state and federal standards. Licensed teachers are employed by District 2687 to provide direct and/or indirect service to students with special needs and support for classroom teachers. Related and itinerant teachers are also available for occupational therapy, physical therapy, developmental adapted physical education and other support needs. Minnesota uses a categorical qualifying model to identify students who may need special services. Categories include speech and language, developmental delayed, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, developmental cognitive disabilities, traumatic brain injury, emotional/behavior disorders, physically handicapped, vision impaired, hearing impaired or other health impaired.

Most referrals to special education are made by classroom teachers. Student Success Team (SST) meets in each building to review referral information from parents and classroom teachers.

Parents play a key role in determining whether a child should be assessed or receive special education services. If their child qualifies they are also members of the team that develops the students' Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's development, please contact a teacher, building principal, or the coordinator of special education.

Early childhood special education can begin at birth for children who qualify for this program. A home-based model is used for infants, and a center-based model is used for children from three to five years of age. Children are typically referred to this program by parents, physicians, county health nurses or other agencies. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's development, please contact the school's Early Childhood Special Education Teacher. Parents are also encouraged to look at the "Help Me Grow" website for more information.

Link to Help Me Grow Minnesota: <https://helpmegrowmn.org/HMG/index.htm>

Title One

Title One is a program that is funded by the federal government, administered by the State of Minnesota, and operated by the local school district. Title One gives small-group supplemental help in reading and math to children with the greatest need as identified by the needs assessments. Children in grades kindergarten – third grade are given first priority because of a belief in early intervention. Parental involvement contributes significantly to the success of the Title One program. We ask parents and legal guardians to actively participate.

SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

All policies listed below, in addition to general policies of the district, are located on the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools' website. A hard copy will be made available upon request. Please feel free to contact your child's principal or the district office with questions.

- *102 – Equal Education Opportunity
- *501 - Schools Weapons Policy
- *502 - Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person Policy
- *503 School Attendance
- *504 - Student Dress and Appearance
- *506 - Student Discipline
- *515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
- *516 - Student Medication Policy
- *520 Student Surveys
- *530 Immunization Requirements
- *534 - Food Service Policy/Procedures
- *709 Student Transportation Safety

Link to HLWW Policies: <https://www.hlww.k12.mn.us/page/3063>



413 HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability. [Note: The Minnesota Human Rights Act defines “sexual orientation” to include “having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one’s biological maleness or femaleness.” Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, Subd. 44.]

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The policy of the school district is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability.

B. A violation of this policy occurs when any student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel harasses a student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel or group of students, teachers, administrators, or other school district personnel through conduct or communication based on a person’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability, as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school district personnel include school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.)

C. A violation of this policy occurs when any student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel inflicts, threatens to inflict, or attempts to inflict violence upon any student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel or group of students, teachers, administrators, or other school district personnel based on a person’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability.

D. The school district will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment or violence based on a person’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. “Assault” is:

1. an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death;
2. the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another; or
3. the threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.

B. “Harassment” prohibited by this policy consists of physical or verbal conduct, including, but not limited to, electronic communications, relating to an individual’s or group of individuals’ race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability when the conduct:

1. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment;
 2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance;
- or
3. otherwise adversely affects an individual’s employment or academic opportunities.

C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.

D. Protected Classifications; Definitions

1. “Disability” means any condition or characteristic that renders a person a disabled person. A disabled person is any person who:

- a. has a physical, sensory, or mental impairment which materially limits one or more major life activities;
- b. has a record of such an impairment; or
- c. is regarded as having such an impairment.

2. “Familial status” means the condition of one or more minors being domiciled with:

- a. their parent or parents or the minor’s legal guardian; or

b. the designee of the parent or parents or guardian with the written permission of the parent or parents or guardian. The protections afforded against harassment on the basis of family status apply to any person who is pregnant or is in the process of securing legal custody of an individual who has not attained the age of majority.

3. "Marital status" means whether a person is single, married, remarried, divorced, separated, or a surviving spouse and, in employment cases, includes protection against harassment on the basis of the identity, situation, actions, or beliefs of a spouse or former spouse.

4. "National origin" means the place of birth of an individual or of any of the individual's lineal ancestors.

5. "Sex" includes, but is not limited to, pregnancy, childbirth, and disabilities related to pregnancy or childbirth.

6. "Sexual orientation" means having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical, or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that person or having or being perceived as having an orientation for such attachment, or having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness. "Sexual orientation" does not include a physical or sexual attachment to children by an adult.

7. "Status with regard to public assistance" means the condition of being a recipient of federal, state, or local assistance, including medical assistance, or of being a tenant receiving federal, state, or local subsidies, including rental assistance or rent supplements.

E. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct acts of harassment or violence, prevent acts of harassment or violence from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of acts of harassment or violence.

F. Sexual Harassment; Definition

1. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when: a. submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining employment or an education; or b. submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or c. that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or educational environment.

2. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

a. unwelcome verbal harassment or abuse;

b. unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;

c. unwelcome, sexually motivated, or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical contact, other than necessary restraint of student(s) by teachers, administrators, or other school district personnel to avoid physical harm to persons or property;

d. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status;

e. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status; or

f. unwelcome behavior or words directed at an individual because of sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression.

G. Sexual Violence; Definition

1. 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 Minn. Stat. § 609.341, includes the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast, as well as the clothing covering these areas.

2. Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:

a. touching, patting, grabbing, or pinching another person's intimate parts, whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex;

b. coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone's intimate parts;

c. coercing, forcing, or attempting to coerce or force sexual intercourse or a sexual act on another; or

d. threatening to force or coerce sexual acts, including the touching of intimate parts or intercourse, on another.

H. Violence; Definition

Violence prohibited by this policy is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another or group of individuals because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability by a student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or violence prohibited by this policy toward a student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel or group of students, teachers, administrators, or other school

district personnel should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A person may report conduct which may constitute harassment or violence anonymously. However, the school district may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.

B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

C. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment or violence directly to a school district human rights officer or to the superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the superintendent or the school district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant.

D. In Each School Building. The building principal, the principal's designee, or the building supervisor (hereinafter the "building report taker") is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy at the building level. Any adult school district personnel who receives a report of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy shall inform the building report taker immediately. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the superintendent or the school district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant. The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as a primary contact on policy and procedural matters.

E. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include acts of harassment or violence. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute harassment or violence shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the harassment or violence and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School district personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute harassment or violence or who fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the harassment or violence in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.

F. Upon receipt of a report, the building report taker must notify the school district human rights officer immediately, without screening or investigating the report. The building report taker may request, but may not insist upon, a written complaint. A written statement of the facts alleged will be forwarded as soon as practicable by the building report taker to the human rights officer. If the report was given verbally, the building report taker shall personally reduce it to written form within 24 hours and forward it to the human rights officer. Failure to forward any harassment or violence report or complaint as provided herein may result in disciplinary action against the building report taker.

G. In the District. The school board hereby designates the Superintendent, Brad Sellner, 8700 County Road 6 SW, Howard Lake, MN 55349, (320) 543-4646, bsellner@hlww.k12.mn.us as the school district human rights officer(s) to receive reports or complaints of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy. If the complaint involves a human rights officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the school board chair.

H. The school district shall conspicuously post the name of the human rights officer(s), including mailing addresses and telephone numbers.

I. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.

J. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.

K. Reports of harassment or violence prohibited by this policy are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

L. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

M. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of violence or harassment is prohibited.

N. False accusations or reports of violence or harassment against another person are prohibited.

O. A person who engages in an act of violence or harassment, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting of violence or harassment, or permits, condones, or tolerates violence or harassment shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with the school district's policies and procedures. Consequences for students who commit, or are a party to, prohibited acts of violence or harassment or who engage in reprisal or intentional false reporting may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate violence or harassment or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of violence or harassment may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of violence or harassment may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

V. INVESTIGATION

A. By authority of the school district, the human rights officer, within three (3) days of the receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or violence prohibited by this policy, shall undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation

may be conducted by school district officials or by a third party designated by the school district.

B. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator. C. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the school district should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

D. In addition, the school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the target or victim, the complainant, and students, teachers, administrators, or other school district personnel pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment or violence prohibited by this policy.

E. The alleged perpetrator of the act(s) of harassment or violence shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.

F. The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable. The school district human rights officer shall make a written report to the superintendent upon completion of the investigation. If the complaint involves the superintendent, the report may be filed directly with the school board. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy.

VI. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Upon completion of an investigation that determines a violation of this policy has occurred, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law, and applicable school district policies and regulations.

B. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of targets or victims of harassment or violence and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of alleged perpetrators of harassment or violence who have been involved in a reported and confirmed harassment or violence incident of the remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.

C. In order to prevent or respond to acts of harassment or violence committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the school district shall, where determined appropriate by the child's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 team, allow the child's IEP or Section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in acts of harassment or violence.

VII. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other school district personnel who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged harassment or violence prohibited by this policy, who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of retaliation or alleged harassment or violence, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline the individual(s) who engaged in the harassment or violence. Remedial responses to the harassment or violence shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct.

VIII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action, or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal law.

IX. HARASSMENT OR VIOLENCE AS ABUSE

A. Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment or violence may also be possible abuse under Minnesota law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Minn. Stat. § 626.556 may be applicable.

B. Nothing in this policy will prohibit the school district from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged harassment, violence, or abuse.

X. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY AND TRAINING

A. This policy shall be conspicuously posted throughout each school building in areas accessible to students and staff members.

B. This policy shall be given to each school district employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment with the school district.

C. This policy shall appear in the student handbook.

D. The school district will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.

- E. The school district may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent and reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, resourcefulness, and/or sexual abuse prevention.
- F. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually for compliance with state and federal law.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)
Minn. Stat. § 120B.234 (Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.03, Subd. 2 (Sexual, Religious, and Racial Harassment and Violence Policy)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
Minn. Stat. § 609.341 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 626.556 et seq. (Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors)
20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688 (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)
29 U.S.C. § 621 et seq. (Age Discrimination in Employment Act)
29 U.S.C. § 794 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, § 504)
42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Civil Action for Deprivation of Rights)
42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act)
42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq. (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 102 (Equal Educational Opportunity)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 401 (Equal Employment Opportunity)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 402 (Disability Nondiscrimination Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 414 (Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 415 (Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 528 (Student Parental, Family, and Marital Status Nondiscrimination)

514 BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

I. PURPOSE

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and/or a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, the school district intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond to, and to remediate and discipline for those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. 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.

B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen or negate the prohibitions contained in this policy.

D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with the school district's policies and procedures, including the school district's discipline policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506). The school district may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. The school district shall employ research-based developmentally appropriate best practices that include preventative and remedial measures and effective discipline for deterring violations of this policy, apply throughout the school district, and foster student, parent, and community participation. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events.

G. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying reported to the school district and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

A. "Bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
2. 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.

The term, “bullying,” specifically includes cyberbullying as defined in this policy.

B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.

D. “Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct” means, but is not limited to, conduct that does the following:

1. Causes physical harm to a student or a student’s property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property;

2. Under Minnesota common law, violates a student’s reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; or

3. Is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA). However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.

E. “On school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation” means all school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, schoolsponsored activities, events, or trips. School district property also may mean a student’s walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

F. “Prohibited conduct” means bullying or cyberbullying as defined in this policy or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about bullying.

G. “Remedial response” means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.

H. “Student” means a student enrolled in a public school or a charter school.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.

B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor of each building or available in the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

C. The building principal, the principal’s designee, or the building supervisor (hereinafter the “building report taker”) is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to a school district human rights officer or the superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the superintendent or the school district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant. The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the school district shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.

D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School district personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct or who fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.

E. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. The building report taker, in

conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.

F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.

G. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Within three days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by the school district.

B. The building report taker or other appropriate school district officials may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the complainant, the reporter, and students or others, pending completion of an investigation of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, consistent with applicable law.

C. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.

D. Upon completion of an investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; the student discipline policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506) and other applicable school district policies; and applicable regulations.

E. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are targets of bullying or other prohibited conduct and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of alleged perpetrators of bullying or other prohibited conduct who have been involved in a reported and confirmed bullying incident of the remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.

F. In order to prevent or respond to bullying or other prohibited conduct committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the school district shall, when determined appropriate by the child's individualized education program (IEP) team or Section 504 team, allow the child's IEP or Section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.

VI. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, who provides information about bullying or prohibited conduct, who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying or prohibited conduct. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline the individual(s) who engaged in the prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy.

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A. The school district shall discuss this policy with school personnel and volunteers and provide appropriate training to school district personnel regarding this policy. The school district shall establish a training cycle for school personnel to occur during a period not to exceed every three school years. Newly employed school personnel must receive the training within the first year of their employment with the school district. The school district or a school administrator may accelerate the training cycle or provide additional training based on a particular need or circumstance. This policy shall be included in employee handbooks, training materials, and publications on school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct, which materials shall also be used to publicize this policy.

B. The school district shall require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address bullying and other prohibited conduct. Such professional development includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct;
2. The complex dynamics affecting a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct;

3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for perpetrating or being the target or victim of bullying or other prohibited conduct in school;

4. The incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and

5. Internet safety and cyberbullying.

C. The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying and other prohibited conduct.

D. The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the target or victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to targets or victims of bullying.

E. The administration is encouraged to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and is directed to review programmatic instruction to determine if adjustments are necessary to help students identify and prevent or reduce bullying and other prohibited conduct, to value diversity in school and society, to develop and improve students' knowledge and skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying or other prohibited conduct, and to make effective prevention and intervention programs available to students. The administration must establish strategies for creating a positive school climate and use evidence-based social-emotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct. The administration is encouraged, to the extent practicable, to take such actions as it may deem appropriate to accomplish the following:

1. Engage all students in creating a safe and supportive school environment;

2. Partner with parents and other community members to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs;

3. Engage all students and adults in integrating education, intervention, and other remedial responses into the school environment;

4. Train student bystanders to intervene in and report incidents of bullying and other prohibited conduct to the schools' primary contact person;

5. Teach students to advocate for themselves and others;

6. Prevent inappropriate referrals to special education of students who may engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct; and

7. Foster student collaborations that, in turn, foster a safe and supportive school climate.

F. The school district may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent or reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.

G. The school district shall inform affected students and their parents of rights they may have under state and federal data practices laws to obtain access to data related to an incident and their right to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data. The school district may accomplish this requirement by inclusion of all or applicable parts of its protection and privacy of pupil records policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515) in the student handbook.

VIII. NOTICE

A. The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.

B. This policy or a summary thereof must be conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the school district and the office of each school.

C. This policy must be given to each school employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment with the school district.

D. Notice of the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents under this policy must be included in the student discipline policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506) distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.

E. This policy shall be available to all parents and other school community members in an electronic format in the language appearing on the school district's or a school's website.

F. The school district shall provide an electronic copy of its most recently amended policy to the Commissioner of Education.

IX. POLICY REVIEW

To the extent practicable, the school board shall, on a cycle consistent with other school district policies, review and revise this policy. The policy shall be made consistent with Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 and other applicable law. Revisions shall be made in consultation with students, parents, and community organizations.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act)

Minn. Stat. § 120A.05, Subds. 9, 11, 13, and 17 (Definition of Public School)

Minn. Stat. § 120B.232 (Character Development Education)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy) Minn. Stat. § 121A.0311 (Notice of Rights and Responsibilities of Students and Parents under the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)
Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 124E (Charter School)
Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
20 U.S.C. § 1232g et seq. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
34 C.F.R. §§ 99.1 - 99.67 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 414 (Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 415 (Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 423 (Employee-Student Relationships)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501 (School Weapons Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 507 (Corporal Punishment)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 524 (Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 526 (Hazing Prohibition)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 529 (Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 709 (Student Transportation Safety Policy)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 711 (Video Recording on School Buses)
MSBA/MASA Model Policy 712 (Video Surveillance Other Than on Buses)

524 INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding student and employee access to the school district computer system and the Internet, including electronic communications, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

The school district is providing students and employees with access to the school district computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is more specific than providing students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional or career development activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

A. The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:

1. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, receive, transmit, or distribute:
 - a. pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or other visual depictions that are harmful to minors;
 - b. obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language;
 - c. materials that use language or images that are inappropriate in the education setting or disruptive to the educational process;
 - d. information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption to the educational process;
 - e. materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
2. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post, transmit, or distribute false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
3. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state, or federal statute or law.
4. Users will not use the school district system to vandalize, damage, or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software, or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify, or change the school district system software, hardware, or wiring or take any action to violate the school district's security system, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
5. Users will not use the school district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information, or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
6. Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person, personal contact information about themselves or other persons, or other personally identifiable information, including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, labeled photographs, or other information that would make the individual's identity easily traceable, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message. [Note: School districts should consider the impact of this paragraph on present practices and procedures, including, but not

limited to, practices pertaining to employee communications, school or classroom websites, and student/employee use of social networking websites. Depending upon school district policies and practices, school districts may wish to add one or more of the following clarifying paragraphs.]

a. This paragraph does not prohibit the posting of employee contact information on school district webpages or communications between employees and other individuals when such communications are made for education-related purposes (i.e., communications with parents or other staff members related to students).

b. Employees creating or posting school-related webpages may include personal contact information about themselves on a webpage. However, employees may not post personal contact information or other personally identifiable information about students unless:

(1) such information is classified by the school district as directory information and verification is made that the school district has not received notice from a parent/guardian or eligible student that such information is not to be designated as directory information in accordance with Policy 515; or

(2) such information is not classified by the school district as directory information but written consent for release of the information to be posted has been obtained from a parent/guardian or eligible student in accordance with Policy 515.

In addition, prior to posting any personal contact or personally identifiable information on a school-related webpage, employees shall obtain written approval of the content of the postings from the building administrator.

c. These prohibitions specifically prohibit a user from utilizing the school district system to post personal information about a user or another individual on social networks, including, but not limited to, social networks such as “MySpace” and “Facebook.”

7. Users must keep all account information and passwords on file with the designated school district official. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school district system or any other system through the school district system, attempt to log in through another person’s account, or use computer accounts, access codes, or network identification other than those assigned to the user. Messages and records on the school district system may not be encrypted without the permission of appropriate school authorities.

8. Users will not use the school district system to violate copyright laws or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person’s property without the person’s prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.

9. Users will not use the school district system for conducting business, for unauthorized commercial purposes, or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district. Users will not use the school district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official.

10. Users will not use the school district system to engage in bullying or cyberbullying in violation of the school district’s Bullying Prohibition Policy (MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514). This prohibition includes using any technology or other electronic communication off school premises to the extent that student learning or the school environment is substantially and materially disrupted.

B. A student or employee engaging in the foregoing unacceptable uses of the Internet when off school district premises also may be in violation of this policy as well as other school district policies. Examples of such violations include, but are not limited to, situations where the school district system is compromised or if a school district employee or student is negatively impacted. If the school district receives a report of an unacceptable use originating from a non-school computer or resource, the school district may investigate such reports to the best of its ability. Students or employees may be subject to disciplinary action for such conduct, including, but not limited to, suspension or cancellation of the use or access to the school district computer system and the Internet and discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion, or termination of employment.

C. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. In the case of a school district employee, the immediate disclosure shall be to the employee’s immediate supervisor and/or the building administrator. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. In certain rare instances, a user also may access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher or, in the case of a school district employee, the building administrator.

VI. FILTER

[Note: Pursuant to state law, school districts are required to restrict access to inappropriate materials on school computers with Internet access. School districts which seek technology revenue pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 or certain federal funding, such as e-rate discounts, for purposes of Internet access and connection services and/or receive funds to purchase Internet accessible computers are subject to the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act, effective in 2001.

Those districts are required to comply with additional standards in restricting possible access to inappropriate materials. Therefore, school districts should select one of the following alternative sections depending upon whether the school district is seeking such funding and the type of funding sought.]

ALTERNATIVE NO. 1

For a school district which does not seek either state or federal funding in connection with its computer system, the following language should be adopted. It reflects a mandatory requirement under state law, Minn. Stat. § 125B.15.

All computers equipped with Internet access and available for student use at each school site will be equipped to restrict, by use of available software filtering technology or other effective methods, all student access to materials that are reasonably believed to be obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors under state or federal law. Software filtering technology shall be narrowly tailored and shall not discriminate based on viewpoint. [Note: The purchase of filtering technology is not required by state law if the school site would incur more than incidental expense in making the purchase. In the absence of filtering technology, school sites still are required to use “other effective methods” to restrict student access to such materials.]

ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Technology revenue is available to school districts that meet the additional condition of also restricting adult access to inappropriate materials. School districts that seek such state technology revenue may adopt or retain the following language. However, the school district is not required to do so.

A. All school district computers with Internet access and available for student use will be equipped to restrict, by use of available software filtering technology or other effective methods, all student access to materials that are reasonably believed to be obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors under state or federal law.

B. All school district computers with Internet access, not just those accessible and available to students, will be equipped to restrict, by use of available software filtering technology or other effective methods, adult access to materials that are reasonably believed to be obscene or child pornography under state or federal law.

C. Software filtering technology shall be narrowly tailored and shall not discriminate based on viewpoint.

ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

School districts which receive certain federal funding, such as e-rate discounts, for purposes of Internet access and connection services and/or receive funds to purchase Internet accessible computers are subject to the federal Children’s Internet Protection Act, effective in 2001. This law requires school districts to adopt an Internet safety policy which contains the provisions set forth below. Also, the Act requires such school districts to provide reasonable notice and hold at least one public hearing or meeting to address the proposed Internet safety policy prior to its implementation. School districts that do not seek such federal financial assistance need not adopt the alternative language set forth below nor meet the requirements with respect to a public meeting to review the policy. The following alternative language for school districts that seek such federal financial assistance satisfies both state and federal law requirements.

A. With respect to any of its computers with Internet access, the school district will monitor the online activities of both minors and adults and employ technology protection measures during any use of such computers by minors and adults. The technology protection measures utilized will block or filter Internet access to any visual depictions that are:

1. Obscene;
2. Child pornography; or
3. Harmful to minors.

B. The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; or
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

C. Software filtering technology shall be narrowly tailored and shall not discriminate based on viewpoint.

D. An administrator, supervisor, or other person authorized by the Superintendent may disable the technology protection measure, during use by an adult, to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

E. The school district will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response. [Note: Although school districts are not required to adopt the more restrictive provisions contained in either Alternative No. 2 or No. 3 if they do not seek state or federal funding, they may choose to adopt the more restrictive provisions as a matter of school policy.]

VII. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of the school district computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school district policies and the mission of the school district.

VIII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

A. By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district does not relinquish control over materials on the system or contained in files on the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system.

B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law.

- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.
- D. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.
- E. School district employees should be aware that the school district retains the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their files and e-mail files. In addition, school district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act).
- F. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities or activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.

IX. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and employees of the school district.
- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet Use Agreement form for students must be read and signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher. The Internet Use Agreement form for employees must be signed by the employee. The form must then be filed at the school office. As supervising teachers change, the agreement signed by the new teacher shall be attached to the original agreement.

X. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage, or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives, or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or misdeliveries or nondeliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or the Internet.

XI. USER NOTIFICATION

- A. All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
 2. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
 - a. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives, or servers.
 - b. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks, or online resources.
 - c. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks, or online resources.
 - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
 4. Notification that, even though the school district may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.
 5. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a student through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the student and/or the student's parents.
 6. Notification that the collection, creation, reception, maintenance, and dissemination of data via the Internet, including electronic communications, is governed by Policy 406, Public and Private Personnel Data, and Policy 515, Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.
 7. Notification that, should the user violate the school district's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
 8. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

XII. PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

- A. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies, and other possibly offensive media. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:
 1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
 2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.

3. A notification that the parents have the option to request alternative educational activities not requiring Internet access and the material to exercise this option.
4. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and the supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
5. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

XIII. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A. The school district administration may develop appropriate user notification forms, guidelines, and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, such guidelines, forms, and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The administration shall revise the user notifications, including student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. The school district Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, staff, and members of the community.
- D. Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the school board shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

Legal References: 15 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq. (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act)

17 U.S.C. § 101 et seq. (Copyrights)

47 U.S.C. § 254 (Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA))

47 C.F.R. § 54.520 (FCC rules implementing CIPA)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 (School Student Bullying Policy)

Minn. Stat. § 125B.15 (Internet Access for Students)

Minn. Stat. § 125B.26 (Telecommunications/Internet Access Equity Act)

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969)

United States v. Amer. Library Assoc., 539 U.S. 194, 123 S.Ct. 2297, 56 L.Ed.2d 221 (2003)

Doninger v. Niehoff, 527 F.3d 41 (2nd Cir. 2008)

R.S. v. Minnewaska Area Sch. Dist. No. 2149, No. 12-588, 2012 WL 3870868 (D. Minn. 2012)

Tatro v. Univ. of Minnesota, 800 N.W.2d 811 (Minn. App. 2011), *aff'd* on other grounds 816 N.W.2d 509 (Minn. 2012)

S.J.W. v. Lee's Summit R-7 Sch. Dist., 696 F.3d 771 (8th Cir. 2012)

Kowalski v. Berkeley County Sch., 652 F.3d 656 (4th Cir. 2011)

Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 205 (3rd Cir. 2011)

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc. v. Camdenton R-III Sch. Dist., 853 F.Supp.2d 888 (W.D. Mo. 2012)

M.T. v. Cent. York Sch. Dist., 937 A.2d 538 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2007)

J.S. v. Bethlehem Area Sch. Dist., 807 A.2d 847 (Pa. 2002)

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 406 (Public and Private Personnel Data)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 505 (Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 514 (Bullying Prohibition Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515 (Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 519 (Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Student Sex Nondiscrimination)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 603 (Curriculum Development)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 604 (Instructional Curriculum)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 606 (Textbooks and Instructional Materials)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 806 (Crisis Management Policy)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 904 (Distribution of Materials on School District Property by Nonschool Persons)

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 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).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

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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