

Blackhawk  
Academy



Blackhawk  
ACADEMY

student

# HANDBOOK

SUCCESS ACADEMY

2019-2020

1870 W. GALENA BLVD, AURORA, IL 60506  
630-301.5355

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Mission Statement	2
Philosophy	2
Program Description	2
Criteria for Enrollment	2
Referral Process	2
Enrollment Procedures	3
Attendance	3
Transportation	3
SUCCESS Academy Program Daily Procedures	3
Student Dress Code	4
Electronic Device Usage	4
Discipline	4
Student Support Services	4
Community Partners	5
Communication	5
Home School	5
School Hours and Yearly Calendar	5
Restorative Practices	5
Progress Review	6
Home School Transition Pathway	6
Student Extensions	6
Academic Dishonesty	6
School Closings	6
Student Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement	8

#### **Contact Information for District 129 Secondary Schools**

❖ West Aurora High School	630-301-5600
❖ Herget Middle School	630-301-5006
❖ Jefferson Middle School	630-301-5009
❖ Jewel Middle School	630-301-5010
❖ Washington Middle School	630-301-5017

**Mission Statement**

"The mission of the Blackhawk Academy and SUCCESS Academy Program is to promote an environment that is dedicated to challenging students academically, emotionally and socially through modeling and meaningful interaction. This is achieved by providing a safe, structured, quality educational environment that fosters responsibility, achievement, self-confidence and mutual respect."

**Philosophy**

Through a student-centered, strengths-based approach, educational and behavioral needs are identified and addressed. Interventions targeting students' academic and behavioral progress promote success and educational engagement. With ongoing support and encouragement, students will learn new skills that will benefit their overall functioning and preparedness for future academic, career and life opportunities.

**Purpose**

- To provide an educational environment that supports the individual student's social emotional needs in a structured environment.
- To foster the development of increased self-worth and pride.
- To promote increased student engagement, thereby encouraging increased attendance, academic responsibility, and positive behavior choices.
- To create a transition plan to support the student's return to his/her home school.
- To maintain a student's enrollment in District 129 in lieu of a recommendation for exclusionary discipline, grades 6-12.
- To provide opportunities for career and postsecondary exploration.

**Program Description**

The SUCCESS Academy serves students from West Aurora High School and all four middle schools in District 129. SUCCESS Academy employs a blended model of teacher and web-based instruction. The school day consists of online coursework that programmatically aligns to District 129 curriculum. Based on the Student's Success Plan or SSP, additional supports and behavioral and academic interventions will be provided.

**Criteria for Enrollment**

This program is designed to serve students in grades 6-12 that have displayed an inability to maintain academic, social-emotional and behavioral progress in the general education setting; and may be at-risk of academic failure. A student may be referred to the SUCCESS Academy by the administrative team at his/her home school. SUCCESS Academy staff work closely with the administrative and student services staff to help determine appropriate services and accommodations for each student. Students may also be administratively referred to SUCCESS Academy upon enrollment to the district where an alternative setting was already in place or pending in their previous setting.

To be considered for placement at SUCCESS Academy, a prospective student must be a current District 129 student and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The student requires additional support over and above the existing individual behavior support plan at his/her home school.
- The student demonstrates unresolved serious and repetitive behaviors that violates the student code of conduct.
- The student demonstrates serious truant or school avoidance behaviors
- The student transfers into District 129 not in "good standing" as determined by the previous school district, public, or private educational institution.
- The student participated in an alternative learning program in another school district and subsequently relocated into District 129.
- At the request of a parent/guardian.
- The student was referred to the program in lieu of a recommendation for possible expulsion.

**Referral Process**

A student is referred to SUCCESS Academy by the administration of his or her home school. The referral process includes a series of conversations and meetings with home school personnel, SUCCESS Academy staff, the student, and parents/guardians. Discussion points include: a review of the student's academic and behavior history, a review of behavior, social emotional, and academic interventions implemented at the home school, and a review of the student's current intervention/behavior plan.

### **Enrollment Procedures**

The enrollment process for the SUCCESS Academy begins when the decision to participate in the program is made by the student, the student's parent/guardian, referring school administration, and the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator. An orientation meeting is scheduled by the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator. Participants include the referring school administration, SUCCESS Academy administration and staff, student, and the student's parent/guardian. During the meeting, the following items are reviewed and discussed:

- Reason for referral
- Intervention/MTSS plan
- Current credit or coursework summary
- Current grades
- Discipline summary
- Development of a Student Success Plan (SSP) - academic, attendance, behavioral and career based goals
- Schedule of courses to be completed while in the SUCCESS Academy Program
- Student and parent/guardian contact information

### **Attendance**

School attendance is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians. All absences require a parent/guardian phone call. The number to reach SUCCESS Academy attendance line is 630-301-5370. In certain instances, a note from a qualified medical professional or legal entity may be required to excuse a student absence. Please refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook for information specific to school attendance.

SUCCESS Academy students are expected to be in attendance and on time on a daily basis. Students arriving to school late, must be accompanied by a parent/guardian, signed in to the building, and have documentation of the excused tardy or absence. Students who arrive to school late and are unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, will not be permitted to attend class until the parent is contacted and provides the administration with the appropriate documentation.

### **Transportation**

Transportation to SUCCESS Academy is provided by School District 129. Pickup/drop-off occurs at assigned locations as determined by the District 129 Transportation Department. Students participating in the SUCCESS Academy are not permitted to switch buses. Pickup and drop off will only be permitted at the student's designated bus stop. Questions regarding transportation, including routing and bus stop locations, should be directed to the District 129 Transportation department at 630-301-5620.

All SUCCESS Academy students must follow the District's School Bus Safety Expectations. The building administration is authorized to suspend a student from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for engaging in gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to:  
Prohibited student conduct as defined in Board Policy 7.190, *Student Discipline*:

- willful injury or threat of injury to a bus driver or another rider
- willful defacement of the bus
- willful disobedience of a directive from a bus driver or another supervisor
- use of profanity, slanderous, or obscene language that is unjustly damaging to others

Students suspended from the bus who do not have alternate transportation to school shall have the opportunity to make up work for equivalent academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to notify school officials that a student suspended from the bus does not have alternate transportation to school and it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to request homework.

Electronic visual and audio recordings may be used on school buses to monitor conduct and to promote and maintain a safe environment for students and employees when transportation is provided for any school-related activity. Notice of electronic recordings shall be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle's entrance door and front interior bulkhead in compliance with State law and the expectations of the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety. Students are prohibited from tampering with electronic recording devices. Students who violate this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with the Board's discipline policy and restitution to the District for any necessary repairs or replacements may be invoked.

### **SUCCESS Academy Building Daily Procedures**

Hours of attendance for SUCCESS Academy Program are 10:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. A student must enter through Door 2 at arrival and wait in the vestibule area. A student first undergoes a non-tactile search by SUCCESS

Academy security and assigned staff members. The administration may utilize a handheld metal detector to assist in the search, prior to entering the building. A student is required to present the contents of his/her pockets, jackets, book bags, purses, etc. for examination. A student is permitted to maintain an electronic device on their person during the school day. See *electronic device restrictions in the Responsible Electronic Device Usage section below*.

For student safety and security, all interior and exterior doors remain locked during the school day. A student is to remain in his/her assigned classroom and/or area at all times. A student is escorted by Blackhawk Academy staff during transition times including restroom breaks, nurse visits, and transitions to and from the lunch rooms. For safety reasons, no more than one student at a time will be permitted access to restroom facilities. A student will be dismissed at the conclusion of the school day through Door 2. A violation of these procedures may result in behavioral and disciplinary interventions.

### **Student Dress Code**

Appropriate student dress and grooming are important factors in the safe and orderly operation of the school. A student's appearance should reflect a positive image and contribute to a distraction-free learning environment. A student is required to wear and meet with assigned uniform criteria and his/her **District 129 issued photo ID**. Parental support is required in upholding the dress code and guidelines of the campus. The SUCCESS Academy uniform includes:

- SUCCESS Academy Shirt - A student will be provided with a SUCCESS Academy shirt at the orientation/enrollment meeting. Shirts are to be worn during the school day with khaki pants. Clothing that covers the shirt (i.e., jackets, sweaters or hoodies) is prohibited. Laundering of the uniform is the student's responsibility.
- Pants should be free of holes and tears.
- Gang-related insignias/colors including clothing items, shoe color(s), tattoos, and hairstyles are prohibited.
- All undergarments and midriffs must be covered at all times.
- **Outerwear is not permitted during the school day.**
- Admittance into a SUCCESS Academy classroom without the appropriate uniform is prohibited.

A student in violation of the SUCCESS Academy dress code will be given the opportunity to correct the violation. Parents/Guardians may be contacted to assist in correcting the violation. Questions about the appropriateness of a clothing item or accessory should be directed to the SUCCESS Academy administrator. Disciplinary sanctions may be issued by the building administration should the insubordination continue.

### **Responsible Electronic Device Usage**

A student is required to abide by the District 129 Acceptable Use Policy as outlined in the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook. A student is permitted to maintain his/her electronic device on their person during the school day. All electronic devices must be kept out-of-site and turned on silent. A student assumes responsibility for his/her personal device. A student is subject to disciplinary action for failure to abide by the Acceptable Use Policies. Detailed information pertaining to the use of electronic devices can be referenced in the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook.

### **Discipline**

The SUCCESS Academy strives to provide an engaging program that focuses on academic, social-emotional, and behavioral supports to promote student success. A student enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy is required to read and abide by both the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities Code and the SUCCESS Academy expectations. The SUCCESS Academy handbook is distributed to each student upon enrollment. While enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy, each student is placed on social probation which includes a no trespass restriction on any other District 129 property. A student's failure to abide by the guidelines of the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or the SUCCESS Academy Program handbook may result in a behavioral and disciplinary action, including a possible recommendation for expulsion from District 129 or referral to law enforcement. Student conduct is monitored on an ongoing basis to determine the appropriateness of a student's enrollment in the SUCCESS Academy Program, as well as eligibility to transition back to the home school.

### **Student Support Services/Social Work Services**

The SUCCESS Academy Program has a social worker on staff who is available to work with students as defined by their Student Success Plan (SSP). Social work services include: assessing social, emotional, and behavioral needs that impact student success, crisis intervention, identifying and problem-solving student and family needs, consulting with school staff, assisting in the development and maintenance of a supportive educational environment, and providing direct services to students and families. In addition, social work groups are available to students identified as individuals who would benefit from participating in this service.

A student referred to SUCCESS Academy will be required to meet with the social worker a minimum of five sessions to address the reason for the enrollment. For example, if a student has been referred for multiple physical altercations, he/she may be required to work on topics involving anger management. This may be completed in either a group or individual setting. Please note that the social work requirement must be satisfied in order for a student to return to his/her home school.

### **Guidance Counseling Services**

A guidance counselor from West Aurora High School meets with high school students enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy Program on an as-needed basis. A student may request to meet with the guidance counselor through the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator. In addition to answering course questions, the guidance counselor can offer a variety of other information including post-secondary education and career pathway options.

A middle school student enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy Program meets with his/her home school administrator on an as-needed basis. A student may sign up to meet with his/her home school's home school administrator through the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator. In addition to answering course related questions, the home school can provide necessary information needed for transition back to the students' home building.

### **Community Partners**

The SUCCESS Academy Program collaborates with community partners to provide educational, social emotional, life choices, and career planning support for students. Students benefit from offered activities including job search and interviewing skills, making positive life choices, and social skill development. Services facilitated by community partners provide intervention opportunities and skill acquisition which fosters academic re-engagement and the motivation to plan for post-secondary career and educational choices.

### **Communication/Parents/Guardians**

The SUCCESS Academy Program believes that parents/guardians are an integral member of their child's education team. As a contributing member of their child's educational team, parent/guardians receive a weekly progress update. Teachers are accessible via email, phone, or by appointment. In addition to weekly teacher updates, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their student's progress via eSchool and the online curricular program.

### **Home School**

Communication with a student's home school occurs throughout the school year. Reasons for home school communication may include:

- to develop a transition plan to return to the student's home school.
- to monitor credits/grades towards graduation and/or promotion to the next grade level.
- to meet the identified needs of students in regard to student services.
- to organize the facilitation of standardized testing.
- to issue report cards and transcripts.
- to facilitate graduation processes and information.
- to communicate a student's progress within the SUCCESS Academy Program.

### **School Hours and Yearly Calendar**

School hours for the SUCCESS Academy Program are Monday - Friday 10:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The late start Monday model is **not** applicable within the SUCCESS Academy Program. The District 129 school board approved calendar depicts legal holidays, student attendance and student non-attendance days. Parent-teacher conferences and curriculum night aligns to West Aurora High School and are held at the West Aurora Learning Center for all Blackhawk Academy Program students and their parents/guardians.

### **Restorative Practices**

Restorative practices are strategies that proactively build healthy relationships and a sense of community to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing. Restorative practices:

- build healthy relationships between educators and students.
- reduce, prevent, and improve harmful behavior.
- repair harm and restore positive relationships.
- resolve conflict, hold individuals and groups accountable.
- address and discuss the needs of the school community.

A restorative framework builds problem-solving skills, teaches cause-effect, builds empathy, and allows the opportunity for both an offender and victim to share how harm can be repaired. A restorative model fosters

healthier interpersonal relationships among members of the school community and supports a more effective learning environment.

SUCCESS Academy Program students and staff members routinely engage in Restorative practice strategies to work out classroom and/or interpersonal issues as appropriate. Under adult supervision, restorative strategies may include restorative circles, restorative conversations and restorative conferences. These interventions offer students an opportunity to resolve conflicts before reaching the level of administrative intervention.

### **Progress Review**

A student enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy Program has a Student Success Plan (SSP) that identifies academic, social emotional, and behavioral goals. Each student's progress towards his/her individual goals are evaluated routinely using formal and informal measures including student conferencing. A student who begins to exhibit signs of declining academic, social emotional or behavioral performance may require a more intensive system of supports. When this occurs, a problem solving meeting is scheduled. Parent/guardian participation in a problem-solving meeting is encouraged as he/she is a member of their child's educational team.

SUCCESS Academy Program problem solving meetings seek to identify areas of concern, brainstorm solutions and specify an intervention plan to address needed supports. The student's SSP is updated as a result of a problem solving meeting to reflect the newest level of intensive interventions. Student progress towards the updated SSP is then evaluated at routine intervals to identify (1) the continued need for the current SSP (2) fading of the intensive interventions outlined in the SSP (3) the need for a joint home-school/SUCCESS Academy Program problem solving meeting with the following participants: teacher, student, parent/guardian, and administrator from the child's home school.

A joint problem solving meeting is scheduled when a student has not positively responded to the intensive intervention outlined in his/her SSP or when all available interventions have been exhausted. Discussion at a joint problem solving meeting includes a re-examination of the student's enrollment in the SUCCESS Academy program and whether the student's continued participation in the program is recommended.

### **Home School Transition Pathway**

The ultimate goal of the SUCCESS Academy Program is to teach a student the social emotional, academic, and behavioral skills that will allow the student to return to his/her home school and maintain a level of success that leads to a grade level promotion, graduation or post-secondary plan success. The SUCCESS Academy Program supports a return to the home school through the Home School Transition Pathway program. A student must first meet the following eligibility criteria to be considered for the Home School Transition Pathway program. Eligibility criteria includes:

- School Attendance: student will consistently attend school and not be considered truant according to federal guidelines
- Behavior: student will consistently demonstrate compliance with SUCCESS Academy Program and School District 129's Code of Conduct guidelines
- Performance: student will make ongoing progress towards meeting his/her Student Service Plan goals
- Academic Achievement: student must pass all courses with a 70% (grade of C) or higher
- Life Skills: student is expected to utilize available school resources to achieve a successful transition to his/her home school

A review of the student's eligibility criteria is completed:

- at weekly SUCCESS Academy Program staff meetings.
- via individual student meetings.
- by maintaining open communication with parents/guardians and home school administration.
- by reviewing student attendance.
- by reviewing behavior and discipline history during the student's stay at the SUCCESS Academy Program.
- by reviewing the student's academic progress.

When a student has met eligibility for a home school transition, a transition meeting is scheduled with the following participant's: parent/guardian, student, teacher, the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator, and home school administrator. The purpose of the meeting is to review student progress, select courses, and develop a transition plan back to the student's home school.

If a student has not met the criteria to return to the home school, a meeting is scheduled to review student progress and set new goals that focus on transition preparation. SUCCESS Academy Program staff work alongside the student to identify why goals were not met and address the concerns that adversely impacted the

student's ability to transition back to his/her home school.

Once a student transitions back to his/her home school, the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator and the home school administration monitor the student's performance for no less than least 2 full semesters.

### **Student Extensions**

An extension occurs when a student meets all the behavioral, attendance and academic progress goals indicated in his/her SSP and wishes to remain a student in the SUCCESS Academy Program versus transitioning back to the home school. The student must complete an extension application to be considered for continued enrollment at the SUCCESS Academy Program. Extension applications are reviewed every semester.

A student who is granted an extension must continue to meet the academic, attendance, and behavioral goals indicated in his/her updated SSP. A meeting will be held at the completion of the extension period to determine the student's progress and any program changes that should result.

Submitting a request for an extension does not guarantee that it will be granted. Each applicant and his/her application is evaluated on an individual basis.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

In the SUCCESS Academy Program, the learning domain is primarily provided through an online provider, with supplemental academics offered through direct instruction. Engaging in any academic dishonesty, whether electronic or otherwise, including, but not limited to, cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores may have academic and/or disciplinary consequences assigned by the classroom teacher or building administration.

### **School Closings**

The most effective ways to obtain school closing information are through the West Aurora School District 129 website, SD129 social media pages, and local radio stations.

### **Notification of Parental Rights**

*A parent or guardian must request in writing to have his or her child returned to the regular school program. A parent or guardian must do so no later than 10 school days after the district receives the written request to that effect, unless the notification is received within 2 weeks before the end of a grading period. In that case, the student must remain in the SUCCESS Academy Program until the start of the next grading period. \*Administrative placements are not subject to this notification and parental withdrawal.*



## Student Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a current student enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy Program has been given a copy of the SUCCESS Academy Program Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code, and behavioral contract. I have read and fully understand the information contained in these documents. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by a staff member of the SUCCESS Academy Program. I understand that any and all services and resources are provided to me for my benefit, and I agree to be respectful and responsible for all SUCCESS Academy Program and District 129 requirements.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, had given a copy of the SUCCESS Academy Program Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code, and behavioral contract. I have read and fully understand the information contained in these documents. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by a staff member of the SUCCESS Academy Program. If I have any questions, I understand that I may contact either my child's classroom teacher, or the SUCCESS Academy Program administrator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date