Blackhawk Academy
SUCCESS
Connections
Transition

2021-2022

West Aurora Learning Center
Blackhawk Academy
1870 W. Galena Blvd.
Aurora, IL  60506
630-301-5355
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WELCOME TO THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about countless challenges which required us all to make difficult decisions and channel resilience, even when it seemed impossible. West Aurora School District 129 is thankful for our educators, families, and students who, by way of their creativity, adaptability, and dedication, rose to the challenge. We now have an opportunity to emerge stronger and make lasting changes in the ways we support, teach, connect with, and value the more than 12,000 students in our care.

As the 2021-22 school year gets underway, some of the procedures from last school year will look the same and others will look different and continue to change as the pandemic metrics designate. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize students and families with the most current procedures and expectations needed to keep our buildings operating in a safe and orderly manner. Any updates or changes to these procedures will be communicated in multiple media formats, including an update to this document. Access to the student handbook can be found on the district and individual school websites. If you would like a printed copy, please contact your child’s school office and they can assist you.

For the most updated COVID-19 information, please visit our website at www.sd129.org/covid-19/sanitation-procedures

Our entire staff would like to welcome our new and returning students to a new and exciting school year in School District 129, where we embrace the curiosity, complexity, and joy of learning!

Student Support Resources

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
800-273-8255

**National Crisis Counseling Text Line**  
Text HOME to 741741

**SAFE2HELP Illinois**  
*Seek Help Before Harm*  
1-844-4-SAFEIL  
Text - 72332  
Download the SAFE2HELP Illinois mobile app  
Bookmark the page: www.safe2helpIL.com
Blackhawk Academy Mission Statement
Blackhawk Academy’s mission is to promote an environment dedicated to challenging and supporting students academically, emotionally, and socially through modeling and meaningful interaction. This is achieved through a safe, structured, and quality educational environment that fosters responsibility, achievement, self-confidence, and mutual respect. Blackhawk Academy proudly serves students within three programs: SUCCESS Academy, the Connections program and the Transition program (Transition program information is detailed on page 15).

Philosophy
Through a student-centered, strengths-based approach, academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs are identified and addressed. Interventions targeting students’ academic and behavioral needs 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
SUCCESS Academy and the Connections program at Blackhawk Academy both serve students from West Aurora High School and all four middle schools (SUCCESS only) in District 129. Programs employ a blended model of teacher and web-based instruction. The school day consists of online coursework that programatically aligns to District 129 curriculum. Based on the Student’s Success Plan (SSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) additional supports and behavioral and academic interventions will be provided.

Criteria for Enrollment
SUCCESS Academy: 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 by the administrative team at their home school.

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 their home school.
- The student demonstrates unresolved serious and/or repetitive behaviors that breach 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 their 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.

**Connections:** This program is designed to serve students in grades 9-12 whose social, emotional and/or behavioral needs significantly impede their ability to access curriculum within the typical general education environment. A student may be referred to Connections by the IEP team at their home school or upon enrollment with the district (district to review IEP upon enrollment).

**Referral Process**

**SUCCESS Academy:** A student is referred to SUCCESS Academy by the administration of their home school. The referral process includes a series of conversations and meetings with home school personnel, Blackhawk 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 and future goals. Blackhawk Academy staff work closely with the administrative and student services staff to help determine appropriate interventions and accommodations for each student.

**Connections:** A student may be referred to Connections by the IEP team at their home school. The referral process includes a series of conversations and meetings with home school personnel, Blackhawk Academy staff, the student, and parents/guardians. Discussion points include: a review of the student’s academic and social emotional current needs, supportive plans, as well as current and future goals. Blackhawk Academy staff work closely with the current IEP team to help determine appropriate services and accommodations for each student. When an IEP team makes a recommendation for a student to attend the Connections Program, Blackhawk Academy will work with the family to schedule a tour and introductory meeting with a Blackhawk Academy Administrator, schedule transportation, and schedule a speedy start date.

Students may be administratively referred to SUCCESS or Connections upon enrollment to the district where an alternative setting was already in place or pending in their previous setting.

**Enrollment Procedures**

**SUCCESS Academy:** The enrollment process for SUCCESS begins when the decision to participate in the program is made by the student, the student’s parent/guardian, the referring school administration, and the Blackhawk Academy administrator. An orientation meeting is scheduled by the Blackhawk Academy Administrator. Participants include the referring school administration, Blackhawk Academy administration and staff, the 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

Connections: Connections enrollment is determined by the homeschool IEP team, as noted above.

Notification of Parental Rights: SUCCESS Academy only
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.

YEARLY CALENDAR, SCHOOL HOURS and GENERAL PROCEDURES
School hours for SUCCESS Academy and Connections are Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. The late start Monday model is not applicable at Blackhawk Academy. The District 129 School Board approved calendar depicts legal holidays, student attendance, and student non-attendance days. Parent-teacher conferences and curriculum nights align to West Aurora High School and are held at Blackhawk Academy (in the West Aurora Learning Center) for all Blackhawk Academy Program students and their parents/guardians.

Attendance
School attendance is essential to student success and is the responsibility of the student and their parents/guardians. All absences require a parent/guardian phone call. The Blackhawk Academy attendance line number 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.

Students at Blackhawk Academy 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 may be required to provide documentation.
● Students who arrive at school late without a parent/guardian, will not be permitted to attend class until the parent/guardian contact has been made.
● If a student requires an early release on a given day, a parent/guardian must call the main office to schedule the request and come to the main office to sign out the student when picking them up.

Virtual/Remote Learning
If shift to Virtual/Remote Learning ever occurs, parents/guardians will be notified via the district website and school messenger system. During times of Virtual/Remote Learning, students are expected to continue to abide by the District 129 Acceptable Use Policy as outlined in the District
Every student at Blackhawk Academy will be issued a Chromebook as needed to allow them to actively and meaningfully engage in their expected learning activities for the day. If a student is in need of a Chromebook, the student or parent/guardian can contact the office to set up an appointment to pick one up.

Attendance remains essential to student success, as does engagement. Students are expected to attend to and engage in their virtual learning during their typical school hours, every school day. The Blackhawk Academy team remains dedicated to supporting students in achieving their goals and is available to support students during school hours as they need.

In the event that School District 129 returns to remote instruction at any time, attendance expectations remain. Students are to (virtually) attend their classes daily and any absences must be reported to the school office.

If technical assistance is needed, not related to coursework, students and/or parents/guardians can call the help desk at (630) 301-5038 or email helpdesk@sd129.org between the hours of 8 am and 4 pm, Monday-Friday.

If there is a need for additional social/emotional support, students and/or parents/guardians can text (331) 684-7640 to report that they are missing the support they typically receive from a school social worker, counselor, nurse, or other emotional support person, in need of shelter or food, or worried about themselves or a friend.

**Transportation**

Busing to and from Blackhawk Academy is provided by School District 129 to all students. Pick-up/drop-off occurs at assigned locations and times as determined by the District 129 Transportation Department. Students should arrive at their scheduled bus stop 5 minutes early. Blackhawk Academy students are not permitted to switch buses or change their mode of transportation for a given day. Pick-up 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.

Blackhawk Academy students must follow the District’s School Bus Safety Expectations. 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 those listed below. 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 parent/guardian to notify the school office that the student suspended from the bus does not have alternate transportation to school and to request alternate work.
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.

**Student Driving Privileges**

Parking at Blackhawk Academy is an earned privilege and only occurs with consent from the Blackhawk Academy Principal. Students interested in this privilege should schedule a meeting with the Blackhawk Academy Principal to discuss their current standing, progress towards goals, and/or eligible individual special circumstances.

To be considered for driving privileges, initial guidelines include:
1. Students must hold and show a valid driver’s license.
2. Students must hold and show proof of valid insurance.
3. Parent/Guardian written consent must be given.
4. Students must have consent from Blackhawk Academy Principal

Students must park in the designated student parking area (parking lot near Downer) and hang their permit on their mirror. Vehicles with or without a valid permit that are parked in unauthorized areas will be towed at the owner’s expense. Loitering in parking areas is prohibited. District 129 is not responsible for loss or damage to vehicles while on school property.

Parking privileges may be revoked for disciplinary or attendance infractions and school officials maintain the right to search vehicles in the parking areas.

**Visitor Information**

Student and staff safety is a top priority in District 129. In order to maintain safe school environments, all visitors must check-in at the school’s main entrance at Door 2. When prompted, visitors will be asked to state their name and the reason for their visit. Once entrance to the building has been permitted, visitors should immediately check in at the school’s office. All visitors will be asked to present a valid and legal photo identification card prior to being issued a visitor’s badge. All identification cards will be scanned through District 129’s visitor management system, which is linked to the National Sex Offender Registry. Once the scan is complete, approved visitors will be provided a visitor’s badge to be displayed at all times throughout the visit. The badge should then be turned in when the visitor checks out of the building at the end of their stay. At this time, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state guidance requires schools to reduce visitors to the school in an effort to minimize the spread of the virus and only required visits will be allowed.

**Messages and Deliveries**

General deliveries to students can be a disruption to the educational process. To reduce this disruption, students are prohibited from having items, including purchased food from outside commercial establishments, delivered to them at school. Messages or forgotten items can be left with the main office.
Emergency Closing Information
In the event District 129 finds it necessary to close or implement a late start or early dismissal at one or more of its school buildings due to inclement weather, a health emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances, parents/guardians will be notified through multiple media formats. These can include automated phone, email and/or text messaging. Information can also be found on the West Aurora School District 129 website, SD129 social media pages, and local radio.

Building Crisis Response
District 129 works with a broad-based team representing law enforcement, emergency services, community agencies, and others to continually improve responding to emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, communication will be broadcast to parents/guardians via automated phone, email, text messaging, and social media. Please follow the instructions communicated in those communications to help our school staff mitigate the emergency.

School safety drills will be scheduled at times established by the school’s administration. A minimum of the following will occur each school year:
- 3 evacuation drills
- 2 severe weather drills
- 1 law enforcement drill
- 1 bus evacuation drill

It is the belief of the district’s school safety team that regular opportunities to practice safety measures are in the best interest of students, staff, and the school community. This being said, all school safety drills will be announced to students before the exercise and at no time will any look-alike weapons or scary tactics be used.

DAILY STUDENT PROCEDURES
Hours of attendance for SUCCESS Academy and Connections are 10:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Students must enter through Door 2 and will also be dismissed at the end of the school day through Door 2. At arrival, doors will open at 10 a.m. and students will wait in the vestibule area. A student first undergoes a non-tactile search by assigned Blackhawk Academy staff members. The administration and/or security team 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 their pockets, jackets, bags, purses, etc. for examination. Students may additionally be searched in the office.

Students should bring their Chromebook, charger, and headphones/earbuds daily. Students may bring supplies (pencil/notebook) but may also leave these in their classrooms. Students who attend Blackhawk full time do not have a need to bring a backpack and so these should remain at home. 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 their assigned classroom/area at all times and may not leave the school building without permission from parent/guardian and administrative clearance.
Students are 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.

**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 meet the assigned uniform criteria every day. Parental support is required in upholding the dress code and guidelines of the campus. The Blackhawk Academy uniform includes:

- **Blackhawk Academy Shirt** - A student will be provided with a Blackhawk Academy t-shirt and sweatshirt at the orientation/enrollment meeting. Clothing that covers the shirt (i.e.; jackets, sweaters, hoodies, etc) is prohibited. Laundering of the uniform is the student's responsibility.
- **Khaki pants** must be worn with the Blackhawk Academy shirt. Pants must 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.
- **Face Coverings** - At this time, face coverings are required for all persons inside the building. Face coverings must fully cover the mouth and nose, fitting snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps. Laundering of the covering is the student’s responsibility. Non-compliance with wearing an appropriate face covering will result in disciplinary action. If this changes, updates will be communicated in multiple media formats.
- Admittance into a Blackhawk Academy classroom without the appropriate uniform (including a face covering) is prohibited. Uniform rental may be available.

A student in violation of the Blackhawk Academy dress code (including face covering) 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 Blackhawk 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 failure to abide by these policies may result in disciplinary action.

Blackhawk Academy provides the educational technology students need; students do not need to bring their own. Students are also required to bring their device to school daily. In a traditional school year, school provided devices (i.e. Chromebooks) can remain at school but students may also take devices home to extend their learning. Upon exit of the program, any device provided by Blackhawk must be returned to the office. Fees will be issued for unreturned items.

A student is permitted to maintain their electronic device during the school day. All electronic devices, however, must be kept out-of-sight and remain silenced during the school day. Any
disruption caused by an electronic device can result in confiscation and disciplinary action. Blackhawk Academy/District 129 does not accept responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken electronic items brought to school. Students and parents/guardians should understand the risk and assume responsibility for personal devices.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Health Services
Blackhawk Academy has a full time certified school nurse who can be reached at 630-301-5367. Student medication must be delivered to the health office by a parent/guardian with appropriate medical documentation. Students may not carry medication (over-the-counter or prescription) to or at school. If a student becomes ill, they must notify a staff member who will contact the nurse to provide appropriate assistance. School accidents must be reported immediately.

Social Work Services
Blackhawk Academy has social workers on staff who are available to work with students as defined by their Student Success Plan (SSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP). 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 identified students who would benefit from participating in this service.

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

School Counseling Services
A school counselor meets with Blackhawk Academy high school students on an as-needed basis. The counselor supports them in course selection (Edgenuity) and understanding graduation requirements, but also offers a variety of information including post-secondary education and career pathway options. The school counselor also supports classrooms with the Naviance platform. A student may request to meet with the school counselor at any time.

Community Partners
Blackhawk Academy collaborates with community partners to provide students with educational, social emotional, post secondary and career planning support. Students benefit from instruction, support and experiences in areas that include (but are not limited to) job search/applications, interviewing, soft skills, making positive life choices, and social skill development. Services facilitated by community partners provide intervention and skill acquisition which foster academic re-engagement and motivation to plan for post-secondary career and educational choices.

Extracurricular Activities
While enrolled at Blackhawk Academy, students may be initially placed on social probation, which means that they should not be attending any events, activities, extracurriculars, etc. at their home school. When appropriate, students are able to access extracurricular activities at their home
schools through a team based decision making process. Students must demonstrate ongoing progress on their individual goals (SSP/IEP) and exhibit ongoing responsible decision making to be considered for involvement in district events, activities, extracurriculars etc.

Students may have opportunities to participate in exploratory learning at Blackhawk Academy, depending on schedules, interest, and availability.

COMMUNICATION
Parent/Guardian Communication
Blackhawk Academy believes that parents/guardians are integral members of their child’s education team. As a contributing member of their child’s educational team, parents/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, Schoology, and the online curricular program (Edgenuity).

Home School Communication
Communication with students’ home school buildings occurs throughout the school year. Reasons for home school communication may include:

- to communicate a student’s progress at Blackhawk Academy.
- 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.

Team members, typically school administrators, from students’ home buildings also check in with students in person/virtually during the year as appropriate.

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.

Blackhawk Academy 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.

**Discipline**
SUCCESS and Connections strive to provide an engaging program that focuses on academic, social-emotional, and behavioral support to promote student success. A student enrolled at Blackhawk Academy is required to read and abide by both the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities Code and the Blackhawk Academy expectations. The Blackhawk Academy handbook is distributed to each student upon enrollment and can be found on the website.

A student’s failure to abide by the guidelines of the District 129 Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or the Blackhawk Academy expectations 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, as well as eligibility to transition back to the home school.

To assist in maintaining the safety and security of the students and staff on campus at Blackhawk Academy, District 129 has positioned numerous video cameras and monitoring devices in public areas of the school. These public areas include, but are not limited to, hallways, stairwells, lunchrooms and school buses. Any misconduct seen on video surveillance will be assigned appropriate disciplinary action.

**Academic Dishonesty**
At Blackhawk Academy, the learning domain is primarily provided through an online provider for grades 6-12, with supplemental academics offered through direct instruction. Engaging in any academic dishonesty, whether electronic or otherwise, may have academic and/or disciplinary consequences assigned by the classroom teacher or building administration. These include but are not limited to: cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.

**PROGRESS REVIEW AND TRANSITION**
*SUCCESS Academy:* 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 their individual goals are evaluated routinely using formal and informal measures, which include student conferencing.

A student who begins to exhibit signs of declining academic, social emotional or behavioral performance may require a more intensive system of support. When this occurs, a problem solving meeting is scheduled with parent/guardian participation encouraged as they are an essential member of their child’s educational team. Problem solving meetings seek to identify areas of concern, brainstorm solutions and specify an intervention plan to address needed supports. The student’s SSP may be 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 plan (2) fading of
the intensive interventions outlined in the plan (3) the need for a joint home-school/Blackhawk Academy 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 their 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 Blackhawk Academy program and whether the student’s continued participation in the program is recommended.

**Connections:** Similarly, a student enrolled in Connections has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that identifies their appropriate goals. Each student’s progress towards their individual goals are evaluated routinely using formal and informal measures. A student who begins to exhibit signs of declining academic, social emotional, or behavioral performance may require a more intensive system of support. When this occurs, a problem solving meeting is scheduled with parent/guardian participation encouraged as they are an essential member of their child’s educational team. Problem solving meetings seek to identify areas of concern, brainstorm solutions and specify an intervention plan to address needed supports. The student’s IEP may be updated as a result of a problem solving meeting to reflect the newest level of intensive interventions. Student progress continues to be evaluated at routine intervals to identify progress and/or needs.

**Transition to Home School Process**

**SUCCESS Academy:** The ultimate goal of Blackhawk Academy is to teach a student the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral skills that will allow the student to return to their home school and maintain a level of success that leads to a grade level promotion, graduation, or post-secondary plan success.

When a student meets the following eligibility criteria, they may be considered for a transition back to their home school:

- **School Attendance:** student will consistently attend school and not be considered truant according to state 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 by the SUCCESS Academy team, considering all factors mentioned above, including academics/credits earned, attendance and discipline history during the student’s stay at the SUCCESS Academy Program. Open communication is maintained with the student, parents/guardians and home school administration.

When a student has met eligibility for a transition back to their home school, a meeting is scheduled with the parent/guardian, student, teacher, the Blackhawk Academy administrator, and a 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. Transitions may be gradual.

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. Blackhawk Academy staff work with the student to identify reasons goals were not met and address those reasons that adversely impacted the student’s ability to transition back to their home school.

Once a student transitions back to his/her home school, the Blackhawk Academy Program administrator and the home school administration monitor the student's performance for approximately 2 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 meet with the social worker and the principal in these instances and these meetings do not guarantee that it will be granted. Each student’s request is evaluated on an individual basis.

A student who is granted an extension must continue to meet the academic, attendance, and behavioral goals indicated in their 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.

**Connections**: Connections supports a return to the home school through a very similar process, but is individualized to each student, with focus on their IEP, progress, goals and needs.
TRANSITION PROGRAM

School Hours and Yearly Calendar
School hours for Transition are 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The late start Monday model is not applicable at Blackhawk Academy. The District 129 school board approved calendar depicts legal holidays, student attendance and student non-attendance days. Parent-teacher conferences and curriculum nights align to West Aurora High School and are held at Blackhawk Academy for all Blackhawk Academy Program students and their parents/guardians.

Lunch
Students are responsible for their own lunches. Options for lunch include bringing lunch from home each day, participating in group lunch cooking activities on scheduled days, or by purchasing groceries to prepare lunch at school on a pre-planned community trip.

Transportation
Students are provided door to door transportation through the district. Questions regarding transportation, including routing and bus stop locations, should be directed to the District 129 Transportation department at 630-301-5620. Parents choosing to provide their own transportation, must drop off and pick up at Door 5. If a student has a license, insurance and wants to drive to school, they must meet with the Blackhawk Academy Principal for approval.

Any student arriving late will need to check into the main office, through Door 2.

Financial Responsibilities
Students will be expected to bring $15 each week on Monday to cover the cost of weekly expenses (community trip activities, personal purchases, group lunch, etc.). Students will keep a balance sheet of their finances and any money that is left at the end of the week will go into a classroom savings account for their long-term expense planning. Money left over at the end of the semester will be sent home. If this is a challenge, the student or parent/guardian may speak with the case manager to develop a supportive plan.

Community Based Instruction Trips
Students in the Transition program are expected to participate in local community based instructional trips. For community trips, students will use public transportation in the form of PACE or Ride in Kane. SD129 provides Ventra cards for students to use the public bus and cash to use Ride in Kane for school community trips. Trips are focused around independent living skills and age appropriate recreation.

Vocational Training
All students in the Transition program will participate in a type of vocational training. These can include classroom microbusinesses, in building PAES Lab training, volunteer opportunities, and community vocational training sites. For most students new to the Transition program, vocational training will begin in the school building in classroom microbusinesses and the PAES lab and build into appropriate community training sites when available.
Although the goal is for all students to have community employment when they exit Transition, it is not guaranteed. The Vocational team works with many community sites and continues to establish relationships with employers in Aurora and nearby towns. The team will do their best, based on student and family needs and expectations to find students opportunities to feel productive in the future.

**Weekly Schedule**

It is expected that students attend school all days they are scheduled. Schedules are developed by the IEP team and for the majority of students, that will be 5 days per week. Students will bring home a copy of their weekly schedule each Friday for the upcoming week. It is the expectation that families will support students as needed to be prepared for the daily/weekly activities.

Accommodations to the weekly schedule can be made for the following reasons:

- If a student takes a class at WCC.
  - The student will need to bring a copy of their schedule verifying enrollment in a class. They will be excused from the Transition Program on a WCC class day.
- If a student has competitive employment and works during the week.
  - The expectation with competitive employment is that the student will arrange to set days to work with the employer so they will attend Transition on regularly scheduled days. They will be excused from the Transition Program to work.
- If a student is planning to exit the Transition Program.
  - A part time schedule may begin at the recommendation of the case manager; the family must gradually take over support that was previously provided by school staff.

As classroom schedules and activities vary from week to week and require substantial planning to ensure supervision and support for all students, students cannot change planned attendance days. If more explanation is needed, parents/guardians should contact the case manager or transition and vocational coordinator.

**Vaughan Athletic Center**

Students may have the option to purchase a VAC pass at a reduced rate as a Transition Program student. With a VAC pass, students have access to the track, fitness room, and field house group during the school day. Students that have a VAC pass typically attend 3 afternoons per week during the school day. They also have access to the group fitness classes and the pool to use outside of school hours. The cost is $60 and covers 3 months of VAC participation. Fees are due in September, December and March. For students that opt out of the VAC pass, they will still go to the facility one time per week paying $2 out of their weekly budget to use the track.

**Progress Monitoring**

In the Transition Program, students have met all high school graduation requirements. Traditional grades and reports cards will not be sent home quarterly. You will receive goal updates as you have previously. High school diplomas will be released once the student has exited the Transition program.
Student Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement (SUCCESS)

I,_________________________________, a current student enrolled in the SUCCESS Academy Program at Blackhawk Academy, have been given a copy of the Blackhawk Academy Program Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code, and my Student Success Plan. 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 ____________________________, have been given a copy of the SUCCESS Academy Program Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code, and the Student Success Plan. I have read and fully understand the information contained in these documents. I understand that any and all services and resources are provided to me for my child’s benefit and that I am an essential part of their educational team. 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
Student Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement (Connections)

I,___________________________________, a current student enrolled in the Connections Academy Program at Blackhawk Academy, have been given a copy of the Blackhawk Academy Program Student Handbook and Rights and Responsibilities Code. 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 Connections 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 Connections Academy Program and District 129 requirements.

I,___________________________________, parent/guardian of ___________________________, have been given a copy of the Blackhawk Academy Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code, and my student’s IEP. I have read and fully understand the information contained in these documents. I understand that any and all services and resources are provided to me for my child’s benefit and that I am an essential part of their educational team. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered by a staff member of the Connections Academy Program. If I have any questions, I understand that I may contact either my child's classroom teacher, or the Blackhawk Academy administrator.

____________________________________  ______________________
Student Signature                        Date

____________________________________  ______________________
Parent/Guardian Signature                Date