



2024-2025
BLACKHAWK ACADEMY

Student Handbook



Blackhawk Academy
SUCCESS
Connections
Transition

2024 - 2025



West Aurora Learning Center
Blackhawk Academy
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WELCOME TO THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

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 handbooks and Student Rights and Responsibilities 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.

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

9-8-8

Suicide Prevention Services (Batavia)

630-482-9699

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 interactions. We provide a safe, structured, and quality educational environment that fosters responsibility, achievement, self-confidence, and mutual respect. Blackhawk Academy proudly serves students within three types of programming: SUCCESS Academy, Connections, and Transition (*Transition program information is detailed on page 16*).

Philosophy

Through a student-centered, strengths-based approach, academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs are identified and addressed. Interventions targeting students' needs promote success and educational engagement. With ongoing support and encouragement, students 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 behavioral choices.
- To create a transition plan to support the student's return to his/her home school or entry into post-secondary life, as appropriate.
- 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 programmatically aligns with the 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 alternative learning opportunities program (ALOP), is designed to serve students in grades 6-12 who 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.

- At the request of a parent/guardian.
- The student demonstrates serious truant or school avoidance behaviors, even after ongoing, supportive interventions.
- 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 to District 129.
- The student was referred to the program in lieu of a recommendation for possible expulsion (RSSP).

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 can begin 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

- Home school supports/interventions
- Current credits, grades, coursework summary
- Discipline Summary
- Development of a Student Success Plan
- Review of the program practices and protocols (*i.e. hours, security measures, breakfast/lunch, curriculum, social/emotional supports, pick up/drop off, etc.*)
- Student handbook review and signature
- Social work consent
- Uniform distribution
- Tour

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 with 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's 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 will be greeted by the office staff and may need to wait until security is available for search. Once available, they will be searched and walked to class, where they should enter quietly so as to not disrupt the learning environment of others. Students who are late are not allowed to enter the classroom with outside food/beverages.
- 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.

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**.

If a student is going to be absent or miss the bus, transportation should be notified at **630-301-5620**. If a student misses the bus 3 days in a row **without** transportation being notified, they will be at risk of being dropped from the bus route. It is the responsibility of the student or parent/guardian to contact transportation to get the student's route reinstated.

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 should be demonstrating consistent, positive school behaviors (including attendance)
2. Students must hold and show a valid driver's license.
3. Students must hold and show proof of valid insurance.
4. Parent/Guardian written consent must be given.
5. Students must have consent from the Blackhawk Academy Principal

Students must park in the designated student parking area (parking lot near Downer) and hang their permits on their mirrors. 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.

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 response 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
- 4 accountability drills
- 2 severe weather drills
- 4 ALICE drills (1 with law enforcement present)
- 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 scare tactics be used.

Student Health

Concussions

Students who have experienced concussions will be supported by the District in accordance with the school's Return-to-Play and Return-to-Learn protocols. Parents/guardians should notify the building principal and nurse if they are aware that their student has suffered a concussion.

Food Allergies

Parents of students with known life-threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis should provide the school with written instructions from the student's healthcare provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student-specific order on an annual basis.

District 129 participates in the National School Lunch/School Breakfast program. According to the USDA's Food and Nutrition Services Instruction 783-2 Revision 2, a medical statement from a physician detailing food allergies must be provided before the school can make any restrictions or substitutions for students. If your student has any dietary restrictions, please contact the School Nurse at your student's school.

Head Lice

Students with live head lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun. When lice/nits are found on a student at school, the student's parent/guardian will be informed. Any household contacts that attend school in West Aurora School District will be called to the health office to be checked. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to take their child(ren) home for treatment.

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. Upon 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, before 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 so these should remain at home. Middle school students may not have cell phones or similar devices during the day and must turn them in at the office. High School students are permitted to maintain an electronic device on their person during the school day, as long as they are not interfering with their learning or the learning of others. *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 short-sleeve t-shirt, long-sleeve 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.
- The uniform shirt must be visible at all times.
- **Khaki pants** must be worn with the Blackhawk Academy shirt. Pants must be full-length, plain (no designs), free of holes and tears, and worn at the waist.
- Gang-related insignias/colors including clothing items, shoe color(s), tattoos, and hairstyles are strictly prohibited.
- All undergarments and midriffs must be covered at all times.
- Outerwear is not permitted during the school day.
- Headwear of any kind is not permitted during the school day. Ski Masks must be checked into the school office upon arrival and will be returned at dismissal.
- Admittance into a Blackhawk Academy classroom without the appropriate uniform is prohibited. Uniform rental may be available.

A student's uniform must not create a disruption to the learning environment. Therefore, keeping the uniform freshly laundered is essential. Any offensive or disruptive smell that impacts the learning of others may be reported to the Administration. Mitigating measures may be offered or disciplinary measures may be required.

A student in violation of the Blackhawk Academy dress code will be allowed 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 devices 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.

Students in grade 9 and above are permitted to maintain their electronic devices 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. Students in grades 6-8 are encouraged to leave all personal electronic devices at home. If they do bring them to school, they will be kept in a safe location in the office.

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 school nurse who can be reached at **(630) 301-5367**. All student medications must be delivered to the health office by a parent/guardian with the appropriate medical documentation. See Board Policy 7.270, *Administering Medication to Students*, for additional information. All school accidents must be reported immediately to a school official. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he or she must report to the nurse for assistance. The health office will follow District *Guidelines for Returning to School after an Illness*. Additional criteria for exclusion due to communicable disease will follow Health Department guidance based on physician confirmation of disease/illness.

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 identify 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 three 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

Blackhawk Academy has a high school counselor who meets with all high school students and 8th-grade students. The counselor supports them in course selection and understanding graduation requirements, but also offers a variety of information and opportunities regarding post-secondary education and career pathway options. The school counselor also supports classrooms with college and career planning through 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) coping skills, job search/applications, interviewing, soft skills, making positive life choices, social skill development, and even drug/alcohol counseling. 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, some 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 who wish to participate in extracurricular activities need to meet with the Blackhawk Principal so they can inform the home school.

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

COMMUNICATION

Parent/Guardian Communication

Blackhawk Academy believes that parents/guardians are integral members of their child's education team. Teachers are accessible via email, phone, or by appointment. As a contributing member of their child's educational team, parents/guardians can receive a weekly progress update through the online curriculum parent portal. In addition to weekly updates, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their student's progress via eSchool, the online curricular program (Edgenuity), and regular check-ins with their student's teacher.

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 toward 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 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, and 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 expected 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 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,

entryways, common rooms, 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 support. 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) the 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 is 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 support. 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:** Students 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:** The student will make ongoing progress toward meeting his/her Student Success Plan goals.
- **Academic Achievement:** student must pass all courses with a 70% (grade of C) or higher
- **Life Skills:** The 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 support a return to the home school through a very similar process, but is individualized to each student, with a 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 with 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 should be directed to the District 129 Transportation Department at **(630) 301-5620**. If a student is going to be absent or miss the bus, transportation should be notified. If a student misses the bus 3 days in a row **without** transportation being notified, they will be at risk of being dropped from the bus route. It is the responsibility of the student or parent/guardian to contact transportation to get the student's route reinstated.

Parents choosing to provide their own transportation, must drop off and pick up at Door 5. If a student has a license, or 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 lunches, 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 on 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 micro businesses 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 the 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 who 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 who 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 report 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

I, _____, a current student enrolled at Blackhawk Academy, have been given a copy of the Blackhawk Academy Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code (online) 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 Blackhawk Academy staff member. 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 Program and District 129 requirements.

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____, have been given a copy of the Blackhawk Academy Student Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities Code (online), 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 Blackhawk Academy staff member. If I have any questions, I understand that I may contact either my child's classroom teacher, or the Program administrator.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date