



AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL ADDENDUM

Revised April 2025

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WELCOME TO THE AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

Austin High School is a learning environment for 9th-12th grade students including the Area Learning Center and Austin Online Academy. It is critical that we provide consistent expectations and procedures for high school students.

This handbook provides specific information pertaining to Austin High School that is important for parents and students to review and understand. We would like to thank parents in advance for their support in helping us make Austin High School a respectful, responsible, and safe environment for learning.

Please refer to the [APS Student Handbook](#), the [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) document, and the [School Board Policies](#) for additional information.

PART I – INFORMATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

General Information:	460-1800	
Activities/Athletics:	460-1825	
Attendance:	460-1806	(ahs.attendance@austin.k12.mn.us)
Principal Office	460-1802	
Assistant Principals	460-1805	
Counseling Office:	460-1812	
Health Services:	460-1811	

Teacher email addresses are available on the web at <https://ahs.austin.k12.mn.us/staff-directory>.

SUCCESS COACHES

Spanish	460-1815
Anuak	460-1215
Dinka, Arabic	460-1108
Karen, Burmese	460-1113
Karenni/Burmese	460-1514
French	460-1537
All other languages	460-1107

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements to students concerning activities, meetings, sports events, etc. will be given at appropriate times during the school day. Listen carefully to these announcements. If any student wishes to have announcements read, he/she must obtain permission from the Principal's Office. Announcements to families will be communicated through the monthly newsletter.

BACKPACKS & LOCKERS

Backpacks can be used by students to carry their books, electronic devices and school related items throughout the day. If a student would like a locker, they will need to speak to the attendance secretary in the high school office. All backpacks should be stored under student desks/tables while in the classroom to ensure movement within the classroom is not restricted.

Any message on the outside of the locker must be approved by a building administrator.

State of Minnesota school locker policy states that: "School lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its' exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search

will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as possible after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.”

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles may be in the high school office. Items may be disposed of after thirty days.

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is open Monday-Friday from 8:15am-3:40pm. The media center is a quiet space for students to study, take a brain break, or use the Makerspace. The IMC has many books available for check out. Books can be checked out for three weeks. The Tech Cafe is located in the IMC and available to support student tech needs. All students using the Media Center need to have a pass from their teacher and sign in for attendance purposes.

STUDENT ID CARD

Each student will be issued one card with their picture on it. The card will identify AHS students and serves as a bus pass, lunch card, event pass, and library card. Students are required to show their identification card upon request of any staff member or bus driver. If you lose your card, you may go to the student services office during advisory to order a new card at the cost of \$5.00. If you do not have \$5.00, your parent/guardian will be billed.

PART II - ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

ADMITS AND EXCUSE

Students entering the building after 8:30 must check in at the attendance office. Parents should call or email the Attendance Office before 8:30 a.m. each day that the student is absent or provide a note from home. Attendance Office: 460-1806 or ahs.attendance@austin.k12.mn.us.

If the student leaves prior to the end of the school day, the attendance office must be notified.

It is the student's responsibility to check with teachers regarding missing work. Failure to make up the work will affect your learning and could also be reflected in your grade.

TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive at school and to class on time. Students who arrive at school late are to report to the Attendance Office upon arrival. Students tardy to classes other than first period will report directly to class without stopping for an admit slip. Teachers will record all tardiness. Tardies will accumulate throughout the semester. A student that arrives to class within 10 minutes after the bell will be considered tardy for that period. If a student is absent for more than 10 minutes of class, that is considered a full "cut". There will be consequences for excessive tardiness and for cutting class.

UNEXCUSED AND EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Without a note, phone call or e-mail from a parent or guardian, an absence will be unexcused. Excessive absences will be reviewed on a regular basis and may result in a truancy petition and mandatory court appearance for the student and parent/guardian.

Letters will be sent after 3 and 7 excused or unexcused days of school missed. These letters will contain further directions regarding attendance procedures. These procedures may include the need for a doctor's note for further absences. The school reserves the right to file truancy against any student meeting the definition of truant based on Minnesota Statute Chapter 260A Truancy.

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUILDING

- If you arrive at school early, you must use the ramp door near door one and have a pass from their teacher to gain access to the building.

- All students are to leave the building immediately after school. No one should be in the building unless under teacher supervision. Athletics, clubs, other school activities, and detention are among the accepted reasons for staying beyond dismissal.
- All visitors to Austin High must enter through the main office to receive a VISITOR'S PASS. It is not allowed for students to let anyone in the building without permission or to "wedge" a door open for later access. Students opening doors for other students could face further consequences.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- It is strongly suggested that all electronic devices be turned off and kept in a locker or out of sight during school hours. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged devices.
- It is required that students follow classroom and school cell phone procedures.
- Laser pens and lights are both a safety and nuisance concern. They are not allowed in school, at school activities, or on buses.

HALLWAYS

All students will have a pass while in the hallway unless it is during passing time. Take care of restroom and drink needs at designated breaks or passing times. Students without a designated pass will be sent back to class.

LUNCHROOM

Cafeteria Privilege and Loss

Students eat in the cafeteria during their lunch period. Some students may lose this privilege for specified periods of time because of infractions at lunchtime. Excessive infractions will result in the notification of parents and additional disciplinary actions.

Lunch Procedures

- Students will be assigned to a specific lunch period. 11th graders and 12th graders are allowed to eat lunch off campus. 9th and 10th grade students must eat lunch on campus in the cafeteria. Students eating in an area other than the lunchroom must be supervised and have a pass.
- It is expected that students will keep their proper place in the food lines, observe good table manners, and clean up after themselves. If you sit down at your table and notice that the table or the floor around it is dirty, please notify a lunchroom supervisor; if you don't, you will be expected to clean up the mess.
- After eating, place all papers and scraps in containers; return all dishes and trays to the proper places. Food, drinks and utensils may not be taken out of the cafeteria. Minnesota State Law forbids the bringing of food prepared at home to school to be distributed to other people.
- Restroom passes must be obtained from lunchroom supervisors. Students remain in the cafeteria for their entire lunch period unless other areas are designated. Supervisors will dismiss students.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Medical Excuses

For physical education a medical excuse must be obtained from your doctor and delivered to the school nurse. If you have not had a chance to see a doctor, a note from your parent or guardian should be taken to your PE teacher to request an excuse for that day. Such notes will allow students to be excused for up to three consecutive school days from PE class. Requests to be excused for more than three consecutive school days must be approved by your doctor.

Physical Education Clothing

The recommended clothing for physical education consists of athletic shorts (which follows the school dress code policy) and/or sweatpants, required shirt, socks, and athletic shoes. Other clothing may be approved in advance by the physical education teacher. For cleanliness, it is important to change clothes for the day's activity; therefore, clothing worn to school should not be worn to PE. Gym clothes should be washed regularly.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Please refer to school board policy 504 for details regarding student dress: <https://www.austin.k12.mn.us/district-offices/school-board/district-policies-posts/policy-detail/~board/school-board-policies/post/policy-504-student-dress-and-appearance>

PART III – ACADEMICS

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student’s educational experience. It is necessary to devise a written policy on academic honesty that is fair and involves a procedure that can be clearly understood and followed in the interest of justice and due process.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty (cheating)

Presenting, as your own work, material that is not a true or valid representation of your own ideas or helping others to do the same.

Some forms of Academic Dishonesty are as follows:

- Working with other student(s) on an assignment (without teacher permission)
- Using written material on an assessment without the teacher’s permission
- Copying another person’s work/practice
- Copying from a published work
- Knowingly allowing others to copy your work
- False score reporting

Determination of Academic Dishonesty

Any staff member who has reason to suspect that a student has participated in academic dishonesty will follow the steps outlined below:

- Meet with the student involved, provide evidence of suspected academic dishonesty, discuss and determine whether it has occurred.
- If there is evidence of academic dishonesty, the student will meet with administration. The goal of this meeting will be to discuss strategies to help the student make better academic choices in the future.

Potential Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

- Warning
- Discipline referral
- Parent contact by the teacher
- Redo the assignment/assessment
- Receive a zero for the assignment/assessment

GRADING AND REPORTING

The following grading practices in APS are a culmination of the district grading and reporting committee work from the 22-23 and 23-24 school years. This work consisted of a review of the current context, 5-12 staff surveys in 22-23, and collaboration in professional learning by the student and staff grading and reporting committees in 23-24.

These grading practices apply to students in grades 5-12.

Parameters for Student Grades

Teachers will utilize the following parameters for grading and reporting for students. School leadership teams will develop procedures for staff to follow in implementing these parameters. The procedures will be shared with staff, students and families at the beginning of the school year.

Graded Categories

- **Summative & Performance Assessments:** In Austin Public Schools, Summative & Performance Assessments are defined as the evaluation aligned to standards or benchmarks that takes place after the learning has been completed. Examples of Summative & Performance Assessments include chapter or unit tests, final tests, final projects, final papers, final performances.

Student performance on Summative & Performance Assessments will count for the following % of the student's grade.

- IJ Holton: 60%
- Ellis Middle School: 70%
- Austin High School: 70%

- **Practice Work & Formative Evidence:** In Austin Public Schools, Practice Work & Formative Evidence is defined as student learning and practice work that is used by teachers and students to inform, respond, and adjust learning experiences to enhance learning and understanding. Examples of Practice Work & Formative Evidence include quizzes, observations, exit tickets, practice problems, written responses, and learning activities.

Student performance and engagement with Practice Work & Formative Evidence will count for % of the student grade.

- IJ Holton: 40%
- Ellis Middle School: 30%
- Austin High School: 30%

Non-Graded Parameters

- **Student Participation:** In Austin Public Schools, student participation is defined as students actively engaged in their learning by listening, speaking, reading, and writing to support their comprehension of the learning targets. Teachers will provide small group activities, performances, discussions, and presentations that create opportunities for students to work on the skills imperative to the learning process.
- **Reassessments:** In Austin Public Schools, reassessment is another opportunity for students to learn and demonstrate their knowledge. Reassessments will be provided to students and are a component of the Summative & Performance Assessments category. When Practice Work & Formative Evidence assignments are completed prior to the original summative assessment, student wanting to reassess will work with the teacher to do additional learning to prepare for the reassessment. Teachers have the option to give students flexibility if there are extenuating circumstances.

School Leadership Teams will design procedures for staff and students in alignment with the grading parameters.

PART IV: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

- Athletic activities are open to boys and girls, and every student is encouraged to take part. With the large selection of activities available, every student should find one in which he/she can participate and enjoy.
- Students are reminded that homework, make-up work, and detentions take priority over athletic activities.
- During the appropriate season for these activities, announcements will be made to inform students of starting times and meeting places. Students are not allowed to participate while suspended or truant.
- Student athlete grades will be checked on a weekly basis during their respective sport season. Any athlete failing 2 or more classes will be required to participate in practices but will not be eligible to participate in the games (including traveling) until the student has one failing grade or less. An athlete failing 2 or more classes is required to attend Packer Study Table after school.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

There are many clubs and organizations to be involved in at Austin High School. If interested, students should contact club advisors, the office, or visit the web site for more information.

BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

Students who receive a half day or more of ISS or OSS will not be allowed to participate in the next contest/activity.

Students assigned to ISS/OSS are not eligible to attend school sponsored events during the day of suspension. Chemical violations and student code of conduct will follow MSHSL policy and guidelines.

CLASS RANK/ACADEMIC STANDING

For information on Class Rank and Academic Standing, please contact the Austin High School Counseling Office at 507-460-1812.

EARLY GRADUATION

Students may be considered for early graduation after meeting the conditions provided in [school district policy 613](#).

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must meet all course credit requirements and graduation standards, as established by the state and the school board, in order to graduate from Austin High School. Parents may opt out of the statewide assessments for their student(s) by completing the Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments form and returning it to the school district office.

Course Credits Required

To receive a diploma, students must successfully complete at least 24 course credits and comply with the following high school level course requirements:

High School Level Courses Required for Graduation for students graduating 2027 or before	
Subject Area	Credits
Language Arts	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	4
Physical Education	1
Health	0.5
Visual and Performing Arts	1
Elective Courses	7.5

High School Level Courses Required for Graduation for students graduating 2028 or after	
Subject Area	Credits

Language Arts	4
Mathematics	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3.5
Physical Education	1
Health	0.5
Visual and Performing Arts	1
Elective Courses*	7.5
Personal Finance	0.5

*Packer Profile Seminar will be taken in 9th grade.

*Portfolio will be required prior to graduation.

Students with an individualized education program, Section 504 accommodation plan, or limited English proficiency needs may be eligible for testing accommodations, modifications, and/or exemption. For additional information, contact the Special Service Department at 507-460-1916.

HIGH DISTINCTION AND DISTINCTION

High Distinction graduates must have a cumulative GPA of 3.9 and above. Distinction graduates must have a 3.600 to 3.899 GPA. To determine student GPAs for both high distinction and distinction, AHS will utilize students' non-weighted GPA.

Determination of High Distinction and Distinction status will be made at the end of first semester of the student's senior year. Students whose cumulative GPA did not qualify for the honors at the end of first semester but does so by the end of their completed senior year will have notation made in their transcript and diploma.

Students who are at their second offense for cheating will lose their eligibility for High Distinction and Distinction at Austin High School for a period of one academic year.

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT OPTIONS

Students who choose to take a college course in place of the high school course will receive both college and high school credit for the class. Austin High School is responsible for purchasing student textbooks for college courses (no cost to student) for these courses. Students may be charged for equipment that becomes their property when the course or program is completed. Concurrent PSEO classes: attendance and grading follow the same requirements and policies as regular high school courses. Students taking college courses at AHS need to have a full academic schedule. Student Aide and Study Hall are not in the academic category. To qualify for college courses, students must meet the following criteria: the "Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program Notice of Student Registration" Form needs to be obtained and completed from the Counseling Office. PSEO law requires public students notify their district or charter school of their intent to enroll in PSEO courses during the following school year by May 30. Students must meet the following minimum criteria to qualify:

1. Seniors must be in the upper 1/2 of their unweighted class rank of full-time students or score at or above the 50th percentile on a nationally standardized, norm-referenced test.

2. Juniors must be in the upper 1/3 of their non-weighted class rank of full-time students or score at or above the 70th percentile on a nationally standardized, norm-referenced test.

3. Sophomores may take one career/technical course. In order to be eligible, a 10th grade student must have met the proficiency level of “meets or exceeds” on the 8th grade MCA reading test. Students may also need to take the Accuplacer and meet program requirements to do PSEO at Riverland Community College.

4. Students may retake the Accuplacer. Retakes should be arranged with the College and Career Center at AHS or at Riverland Community College.

PSEO information can be found at the following links:

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/dual/pseo/>

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/PROD069924>

<https://www.riverland.edu/admissions/college-credit-in-high-school/>