

Academy for Sciences and Agriculture

Elementary Student and Family Handbook

For Parent/Guardians and Students in Grades PreKindergarten - 6

2025-2026



**Public Charter School District 4074
2925 Country Drive
Little Canada, MN 55117**

Main Office: 612-260-2662 Fax: 651-209-3911

www.afsak12.com

The Academy for Sciences & Agriculture, a public charter school for grades PreK-12, engages learners in academically rigorous, student-centered, hands-on experiences and leadership opportunities within a science, environmental education, and agricultural context.

This handbook and its contents were approved by the AFSA school board at its meeting on August 19, 2025. This handbook may be changed or amended during the school year. Changes will be posted in the main office and posted on the school website. If you have any questions about the provisions in this handbook, please contact the school director.

AFSA Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including employment.

Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year!

We are so excited to have you as part of our community. We have so many exciting things planned for you to learn and do this year.

Mission Statement:

The Academy for Sciences & Agriculture, a public charter school for grades PreK-12, engages learners in academically rigorous, student-centered, hands-on experiences and leadership opportunities within a science, environmental education, and agricultural context.

AFSA will develop lifelong learners who are curious, care for others and have high skill levels in applied sciences, and will be prepared for a future in a diverse, global and changing society.

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All policies are available in the District or Elementary School Office as well as online at www.afsak12.com

IMPORTANT: *Once parent/guardians review this handbook with their AFSA student, please sign and return the signature page found at the back of the handbook. Signatures are due before students can participate in off-site activities, but no later than September 30, 2025.*

Who to Contact with Questions:

Liz Burkwald lburkwald@afsak12.com 651-209-3922	Scheduling Special Education Coordination Teacher/Instructional Concerns Volunteer requests Curriculum Accountability Reports Statewide & District testing Discipline
Kate Bald kbald@afsak12.com 651-209-3924	Positive Behavior supports 504 Plans Academic and Behavior Interventions Title I / RTI
Sam Wakefield swakefield@afsak12.com 651-209-3927	Human Resources Administrative concerns Bus concerns
Janelle Hamilton jhamilton@afsak12.com 612-260-2662	Transportation concerns for Elementary students Health/Medication updates Attendance Enrollment Forms, general info Background Check info
Ris Ma rma@afsak12.com	Title I Math Interventions
Casey Orr corr@afsak12.com	Title I Reading Interventions
Faith Holewa-Kvigne fholewakvigne@afsak12.com 651-370-1391	Social Skills Supports Mental Health concerns Social Emotional Lessons
Classroom Teachers	Classroom behavior, grading, or instructional concerns

Attendance

Regular attendance is very important for successful schoolwork. While a student is enrolled in school, their number one job is attending classes regularly and fulfilling all class requirements. Regular and prompt attendance is a habit and should be cultivated as such. Minnesota State Law governs the attendance of pupils and obligates schools to ensure regular attendance. Students are expected to attend school on all scheduled school days unless there is a valid excuse.

Arrival/Dismissal Time AFSA school hours are between 8:00 and 3:00. Students should not arrive at school before 7:30 a.m. as there is no supervision available for those students. Breakfast is served starting at 7:30 a.m. Students eating breakfast should report immediately to the cafeteria and will be released to their classrooms at 7:55 a.m.

Attendance Line The attendance line for the AFSA Elementary building is **612-260-2664**.

Parent/Guardian(s) must notify the school if their child will be absent for the day. The attendance line is available 24 hours a day. Calls must be received before 9:00 a.m. for an absence on that day. Failure to call will result in an unexcused absence. When calling the attendance line, please be sure to include the following:

1. First and Last name of the student
2. Grade
3. Date(s) of absence
4. Reason for absence
5. Daytime contact phone number

If no contact has been made, Parent/Guardian(s) are to send a signed note with their child when that child returns to school following an absence or tardy. The signed note should state the child's name (First and Last), grade, date(s) of absence, and reason(s) for the absence and a daytime contact phone number. The note must be presented to the main office before 8:10am. Failure to bring a note will result in an unexcused absence.

Excused Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness • Doctor's visit • Religious holiday • Extreme family emergencies (i.e. death in the family, hospitalization of a family member, house fire, etc.)
Unexcused Absences (may include, but are not limited to)	Missing the bus, Transportation problems, Oversleeping, Personal reasons, Staying home to babysit, Work or rest because of work, Needed at home, Keeping a lonely Parent/Guardian company, Travel not previously approved by the Director, Lack of required immunizations, Absences in which the student failed to provide documentation that would establish a valid reason for absence, Leaving the school at any time without notifying the main office, Any absence the Administrator believes would be clearly detrimental to the continued education of the student.

Attendance Policies (Policy 503) /School Hours Appointments

If a student does not attend school and no communication is made by parents/guardians, the school will contact parents/guardians concerning the absence.

If at all possible, doctor and dental appointments should be arranged outside of the school day. We request Parents/Guardian(s) report the appointment to the Attendance Office (612-260-2664) at least 24 hours prior to the appointment. Verification of the appointment from the doctor's office, dentist's office, etc must be presented upon return to school to excuse the absence. Most medical offices have official forms available by request for appointments during the school day.

If a student becomes ill during the day, or if they must leave school for any reason, they must receive permission from administration. If a student is being picked up during the school day, the responsible adult must report to the main office. Office staff will notify the student. Students are not allowed to sign themselves out of school. If a student leaves school for any reason without notifying the main office, the absence will be considered unexcused. If a student becomes ill at school, it is expected that a parent/guardian or designee will pick the student up within 30 minutes of notification.

Tardiness Students who are not in their assigned area at the beginning of the school day (8:00 a.m.) will be considered tardy.

Truancy

- **Excessive Tardies and Absences** The school district may require a health care provider's note for each absence due to illness in excess of 10 days during the school year. If the school has not been properly notified of an absence, the absence is considered unexcused.

- After three (3) unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to the student's parent/guardian(s) notifying them their child is considered truant. The school's administration will work with the family to develop a contract to improve attendance. If a student's attendance does not improve, the matter will be referred to the respective County Attorney's Office for intervention.
- **Excessive Tardiness to School** A child who is tardy to school three (3) days in a twelve (12) week period without a valid excuse is considered excessively tardy. If a child meets the above criteria, or at any point tardiness begins to impact the child's academic achievement, then it will constitute excessive tardiness.
 - Students are considered truant when they are tardy to school five (5) times in a 12 week period.

What Do I Do When I Know I Will Miss School? Absences for reasons other than illness should be anticipated. The main office should be notified in advance. Arrangements should be made far enough in advance so that students can collect any work that they may miss and complete it prior to leaving or while they are gone.

Behavior Expectations

Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Safe
Be Your Best
#BeAFSA

Backpacks Backpacks are not allowed in classrooms. Backpacks are to remain in student lockers during the school day. 5th - 6th graders may carry a zippered binder to class. Backpacks in the classroom may be taken from the student and are subject to disciplinary action under the Nuisance Items policy.

Students should not bring valuables to school. *AFSA cannot be responsible for lost or stolen property.*

Classroom Culture and Community: The AFSA K-6 building uses a variety of strategies to approach classroom management. We recognize that teaching social and emotional skills is as equally important as teaching academic content. Students are not able to focus on their learning until they feel safe, welcome and included in their learning community. At AFSA we recognize that each student is unique and we aim to create an inclusive learning environment for all.

K-6 Practices:

- Recognizing positive behavior through the use of Soar Slips.
- Morning Meeting designed to build community.
- End of day circles to help students learn self-reflection.
- Student-Led conferences.
- Student-led goal setting.
- Schoolwide PALS system to foster partnerships and mentoring opportunities with older students.

Classroom Recording Prohibition (Policy 527)

In regulating when a student may take photographs or make video or audio recordings of teachers, school employees, or other students in class, the school district considers the free speech rights of its students, including the extent to which it may lawfully restrict student speech. During class periods, a classroom or another location where a class is being held is not a public forum. This policy is designed to place reasonable prohibitions on the creation of photographs or recordings in classrooms for the purpose of ensuring teachers and other school employees are able to maintain order and decorum during classroom instructional time and to protect the privacy rights of individual students while they are in the classroom.

Disciplinary Policies (Policy 506) AFSA strives to provide learning opportunities for student infractions. Non-exclusionary practices such as counseling, restorative circles, peer mediation, student/staff mediation, “fix it plans,” or student/guardian/staff conferences may be utilized to prevent exclusion from school activities. Exceptions would include instances where students are a direct threat to themselves or others. Specific policies for some infractions are outlined below. This is not an all-inclusive list. Additional policies and actions may be incorporated into the rules of conduct as approved by the School Board in accordance with state law.

Alcohol Policy Minnesota law prohibits the introduction, possession, use, and/or distribution of any alcoholic beverage, liquor, intoxicating beverage, or any controlled substance; or the unauthorized possession, use, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages in any form on school property or at sites where school activities are held. The student or any visitors in violation may be referred to law enforcement.

Controlled Substance/Cannabis Policy Minnesota law prohibits the introduction, possession, use, and/or distribution of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, inhalant, intoxicating beverage, or any controlled substance; or the unauthorized possession, use, sale or distribution of prescription drugs; in any form on school property or at sites where school activities are held. The student or any visitor in violation may be remanded to law enforcement.

Defiance/Persistent Lack of Cooperation Students may be suspended for defiance, persistent lack of cooperation, or failure to comply with a request or direction from an authorized adult.

Fighting/Assault Policy It is the policy of Independent School District 4074 to maintain a learning environment that is safe and free from fear and violence. The School district prohibits any form of violence including fighting and/or assaults. The student or any visitor in violation may be referred to law enforcement.

Nuisance Items: AFSA reserves the right to ban nuisance items which have a disruptive effect. Examples are items such as toys, fidgets used as toys, shoes with wheels, headphones/earbuds, cell phones or handheld gaming systems. We ask that students leave all toys (stuffed animals, cars, electronic games, trading cards, etc) at home.

Cell phones (Policy 525):

- Cell phones or “related technology devices” are allowed at school
- Students who need to be in contact with their family during the academic day are to ask permission to use one of our school phones
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with AFSA via phone to the elementary main office if messages need to be shared with the student
- Cell phones and “related technology devices” kept in backpacks while on campus.
- Cell phone use of any kind is not permitted in locker rooms or bathrooms
- Phone usage during lockdown and fire drills is prohibited

STUDENT CONSEQUENCE OF NOT FOLLOWING CELL PHONE POLICY

First Offense: the devices will remain in the office until the end of the school day. It will be returned to the student at the end of the school day (3:00pm).

Second Offense: the devices will remain in the office until the end of the school day (3:00pm). It will be returned to the parent/guardian only, and not the student. The parent/guardian has until 3:30pm to pick up the devices from the front offices.

Third Offense: the devices will remain in the office until the end of the school day (3:00pm). It will be returned to the parent/guardian only, and not the student. The parent/guardian has until 3:30pm to pick up the devices from the front offices. A “technology contract” will be implemented for the student.

Non-compliance: If the student and/or parent/guardian refuse to turn over the cell phone or “related technology device” during any part of the procedure process, then the student will earn in-school suspension until the concern is resolved (can include a parent/guardian meeting with administration, creating a technology agreement/contracts, etc.) with a re-entry meeting with student, parents/guardians, and administration.

Verbal Abuse and Disrespect of School Staff Members and Students Students may be suspended for refusing to comply with reasonable requests from school authorities, directing profanity and verbal abuse towards adults and/or students, displaying behavior which is intended to be demeaning, derogatory or confrontational. Some examples include: name-calling, vulgar gestures, racial epithets, refusal to identify oneself, gang signals, profanity and the like.

Public Displays of Affection Students may be suspended for repeated inappropriate and excessive displays of affection. Examples of behaviors that are not appropriate at school include kissing, extended hugs and sitting on laps. Hand holding and quick hugs may be appropriate at certain times, but are not appropriate during instruction and study time.

Substantive Threat Substantive threats are statements, either verbal or written, that express a continuing intent to harm someone. Substantive threats may express emotion like transient threats, but they also indicate a desire to harm someone that extends beyond the immediate incident or argument when the threat was made. A substantive threat is a serious intent to harm others that involves a detailed plan and means (MN Statute 609.713). Substantive threats will be reported to law enforcement and may result in suspension or expulsion.

Tobacco Policy It is unlawful in Minnesota to smoke, chew, or otherwise ingest tobacco or a tobacco product, or inhale or exhale vapor from an electronic delivery device on school property, school-owned or controlled vehicles, or at sites where school activities are held.

Transient Threat Transient threats are statements, either verbal or written, that do not express a lasting intent to harm someone. Transient threats either are intended as figures of speech or reflect feelings that dissipate in a short period when the student thinks about the meaning of what they have said.

Vandalism/Theft Policy Minnesota law prohibits violations against property, including tampering with, unauthorized use of, damage to, or destruction of school property or the property of school personnel and/or others; vandalism, trespassing; arson; theft or robbery. Violators may be remanded to law enforcement and held responsible for restitution.

Weapons Policy (Policy 501) Students and non-students, including adults and visiting youths, are forbidden to knowingly or voluntarily possess, store in an area subject to one's control, handle, transmit, or use any instrument that is considered a weapon or a "look-alike" weapon in school, on school grounds, at school activities on or off school grounds, at bus stops, on school buses or school vehicles, or entering upon or departing from school premises, property or events. Weapons violations may result in suspension of the student and possible expulsion. The student may be referred to law enforcement.

No Tolerance The District takes a position of "No Tolerance" on the following objects:

1. All firearms (whether loaded or not) and/or ammunition
2. Other guns of all types including pellet or B-B
3. Lead pipes
4. Crossbows, bows and arrows (except authorized instructional)
5. Knives with a blade of three (3) or more inches
6. Switch blades or automatically opening knives with blades of any length
7. Black jacks, clubs, nunchucks, throwing stars, daggers or like objects
8. Metal knuckles
9. Explosives
10. Stun guns or tasers
11. Mace or pepper spray

No tolerance will also be the position of the District when any object (whether real or "look-alike") is used to injure, strike terror or threaten personal injury on school grounds or at authorized school events away from school grounds. Weapons violations by students may result in suspension of the student and possible expulsion. Weapons violations by other youth and adults (including Academy staff) will result in immediate law enforcement involvement.

Possession of Objects that May or May Not be Considered Weapons The weapons policy represents a firm "no tolerance" position on weapons and/or look-alike weapons, but there are several questionable objects which may or may not be considered weapons and whether the presence of these objects requires activation and enforcement of this policy. School administration may use their discretion when interpreting use and intent in regards to such objects. Such objects may include but are not limited to: 1. Pocket knives and edged weapons or other knives with blades of less than 3" 2. Fireworks, firecrackers and smoke bombs 3. Throwing darts 4. Nuisance items and unauthorized tools 5. Possession of any of the above objects by students on school grounds may result in suspension of the student and possible expulsion. The student may be referred to law enforcement.

Hazing Prohibition (Policy 526)

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times.

General Statement of Policy

- No Student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
- No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.
- Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
- The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

Law Enforcement (Policy 532)

The school district is committed to promoting learning environments that are safe for all members of the school community. It further believes that students are the first priority and that they should be reasonably protected from physical or emotional harm at all school locations and during all school activities. All students, including those with IEPs, are subject to the terms of the school district's discipline policy. Building level administrators have the leadership responsibility to maintain a safe, secure, and orderly educational environment within which learning can occur. Corrective action to discipline a student and/or modify a student's behavior will be taken by staff when a student's behavior violates the school district's discipline policy. If a student with an IEP engages in conduct which, in the judgment of school personnel, endangers or may endanger the health, safety, or property of the student, other students, staff members, or school property, that student may be removed from school grounds in accordance with this policy.

Law enforcement officers are permitted to meet with students during the school day, without parental permission. Unless explicitly instructed not to by law enforcement, parents/guardians will be notified of such meetings. Parents/guardians may be notified by law enforcement if such contact occurs. AFSA K12 will cooperate with law enforcement agencies.

Plagiarism/Student Cheating It is AFSA's policy to help guide students in recognizing, developing, and maintaining good mental and physical health, intellectual growth, and wholesome character traits.

Plagiarism is a dishonest scholarly act and will result in a penalty primarily determined by the instructor of the offended course or the school Administrator. Cheating is defined as and may involve: copying from another student's assignment or test; using another person's idea, expression, or words without giving credit; preparing to cheat in advance by possessing a copy of a test, using notes during a test; or talking while taking a test.

In most cases a student may automatically fail any assignment in which plagiarism or cheating is evident or other disciplinary sanctions may be imposed. Repeated acts of plagiarism or cheating may result in failure of the course

Pledge of Allegiance (Policy 531) All public and charter school students in Minnesota are required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance one or more times each week. Any person who does not wish to participate in reciting the pledge may respectfully elect not to do so and staff members and students must respect another person's right to that choice.

Sales/Fundraisers (Policy 735) School administration must approve any solicitations or selling of merchandise by students or outside non-school affiliated organizations.

Technology/Textbook Usage (Policy 524) Technology is provided to our students to use at school at no additional fee. Students are expected to take good care of the computers and books and will be held responsible for any damage(s) incurred while under their care. A student who is assigned to a specific book must pay for a lost book(s). Damage to a book or computer beyond normal wear and tear will result in a fine. No stickers, duct tape or other glued items may be placed on school property including, but not limited to, furniture, equipment or textbooks.

Students are personally responsible for appropriate behavior using technology and on the network throughout the school. Access to network services is given to students who act in a considerate and responsible manner and is a privilege, not a right. The school will use appropriate staff members and technology to help students follow these expectations and help protect students from harmful materials. Network and computer storage systems may be reviewed by school staff to ensure responsible use of the internet. This applies to both school owned and personal technology during school hours.

Students are expected to use technology and other resources in a safe and responsible manner. Students must not make, produce or distribute videos, images, sound recording or other mediums that show behavior prohibited by the Student Academic and Behavior Handbook on school property or at school events, including using school-owned or personal electronic devices (i.e. laptops, Chromebooks, iPads, tablets, e-readers, cellphones, video or still cameras). Depictions of such conduct on social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok or any other similar websites are prohibited. Any representations of prohibited behavior must be immediately reported to the administration. Reproduction and distribution of these items may result in disciplinary action.

Birthday Celebrations

If your child is having a birthday party, please mail the invitations or phone their Parents/Guardian(s). Students will not be allowed to pass out invitations at school. **We would like to encourage students to bring non-food items (books, games, pencils, etc.) to share for their birthday celebration treats.** If you choose to send a food treat, contact your child's teacher at least 1 week in advance. All food must be purchased from a commercial source and have the original label. Minnesota state law states that all food served in schools must be obtained from sources that are inspected by federal, state or local regulatory authorities. Please take into consideration food allergies/sensitivities that students in your child's class may have.

Calendar

The school calendar is adopted annually by the school board. A copy of the school calendar can be found in the district office and on the school district's website at www.afsak12.com

Communications

Blackboard Notification System AFSA uses Blackboard Connect to send out mass communications via phone calls, emails and text messages; Blackboard is our automated calling system used to send notices to multiple families at a time. Parent/Guardian(s) do not need to subscribe to this service. School staff rely on this as a means of communication for reminders or invitations to events, or to share urgent messages with all families within the school. Whenever possible, calls are programmed to be made during evening hours. This system can call all AFSA families if there is an emergency. The system will leave a voicemail if you do not answer the call - please listen to the voicemail before calling the school's office.

Classroom Newsletters Teachers will provide a weekly newsletter to keep parents updated with general units, field trip information, upcoming events, and other important classroom information.

Conferences We encourage regular communication between home and school. When concerns arise please contact your child's teacher as soon as possible. You do not need to wait until conference time. AFSA conducts formal Parent/Guardian/teacher conferences every trimester. Conferences are student led and a time to celebrate your child's learning. Student report cards are mailed home at the end of each trimester.

Emergency School Closings On a rare occasion it may be necessary to close school on a scheduled learning day. In the event this occurs, because of inclement weather or emergency, announcements will be made on WCCO Radio and Television, KSTP Television and KMSP 9 Television. AFSA will also send out an email notification to all parties on our listserv. School closing announcements start at approximately 6:30 a.m. each morning. Several of these stations have websites where Parent/Guardian(s) and/or students may sign up to be notified of school closures. School does not close in cold or snowy weather as long as the buses can safely operate.

Parent/Guardian Communication AFSA will send out a weekly newsletter via email. AFSA also maintains a Facebook page and Twitter/X account that is updated regularly with exciting things that are happening at our school.

Powerschool is a student information service utilized by AFSA. Powerschool manages attendance, grades, schedules and other information about each student. Parent/Guardian(s) should create an account to access their student's information. This can be done by either accessing an account through the Powerschool website or phone app.

Data Privacy (Policy 515)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act requires school districts to notify parents and students that certain information from student records will be released and made public without the written consent of parents or students 18 years or older. See School Board Policy 515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records.

MN Statutes 13.32 Subd. 1 - Modifies student data privacy protections by defining a "school-issued device", and "technology provider", the requirements on schools to notify parents and students of any programs or contracts with technology providers that deal with student data; the rules that technology providers must follow regarding student data, and what student data government agencies, and service providers cannot access or monitor.

Directory Information Information that can be made public without Parent/Guardians consent includes student's name, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members as needed by MSHSL, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received.

Parents/Guardians or eligible students (i.e., students who have turned 18) may request that their student's directory information not be disclosed and/or that it be removed from mailing lists and directories that are sold or provided to community organizations. This request must be made in writing to: Director, AFSA K12 at 100 Vadnais Blvd., Vadnais Heights, MN 55127. Requests for the present school year must be made by November 1.

Federal law requires that a student's name, address, and telephone number must be made available to military recruiters or institutions of higher education upon request. Parents or eligible students (ie. students who have turned 18) may request that this information not be disclosed by making a written

request to the Director, AFSA K12 at 100 Vadnais Blvd., Vadnais Heights, MN 55127. Requests for the present school year must be made by November 1.

Student Surveys Parents or guardians will be notified if any student surveys which use personal student information are to be conducted. Parents or guardians will have the opportunity to review the survey and opt out from participating in a student survey. No academic or other penalty will be imposed upon a student who opts out of participating. MN Statute 121A.065

Photography Policy AFSA frequently takes photos of our students to post on our website and Facebook page and to use in promotional materials. Students will not be photographed or videotaped for district promotional purposes without a signed media release form.

Video and Audio Recording Students are prohibited from photographing, recording or making any electronic record of other students, staff, or visitors without express consent of the individual that is the subject of the recording, photograph, or electronic record. This applies to students during the school day (instructional and non-instructional time) or while participating in school events.

All school buses used by AFSA K12 may be equipped with a video camera. A notice will be posted informing students that their conversations or actions may be recorded. Information from these videos may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action for student misconduct on the bus.

Dress Code

Students are expected to be clean, neatly groomed and fully clothed. The health, safety and well-being of the students are of utmost importance. Please help us focus on our educational environment by discussing clothing expectations with your child

- Students should be dressed for the weather. That includes, during cold weather, that students are required to provide and wear hats, mittens or gloves, coats, and boots.
- Health regulations require that shoes must be worn at all times.
- Students may not wear clothing that presents language or images unsuitable for a school setting (ex: hate speech, violence, profanity, or pornography)

If a student's clothing is determined to be in violation of the dress code, the student may either wear an alternative piece of clothing provided by the office or Parent/Guardian(s) will be called to bring in appropriate clothing.

- Students may not wear clothing that covers the face (masks, face paint, hats with screen material in front of the face, etc.)

The school Administrator may grant exceptions. In the case of any appeal or dispute of the dress code, the Administrator has the final decision.

Field Trips

Field trips are an integral part of the learning experience for our students in grades K-6. Parent/Guardian(s) will be notified of field trip experiences in advance so that students can plan to be dressed accordingly and either order a lunch through the school or provide their own. Field trip experiences tie in with the learning standards and are graded experiences. At times, chaperones will be needed and all chaperones must have completed a background check at their own expense prior to volunteering. Volunteers must abide by the guidelines set forth in the volunteer handbook.

Gifts to Employees (Policy 421)

No gifts over \$25.00 may be accepted by an employee for services rendered as a part of their district job function or responsibilities.

No fee may be charged or gifts over \$25.00 accepted by an employee for services rendered as a part of their District job function or responsibilities. Employees who are members of the Board, Administration, or otherwise in a capacity to make decisions on behalf of the District may not accept gifts from or on behalf of any interested person who has a direct financial interest in a decision the employee is authorized to make.

Health Services

AFSA has an assigned Licensed School Nurse (LSN). The LSN is responsible for the overall management of the health office. Responsibilities of the LSN include immunization compliance, health assessments and

planning, including special education, identification and reporting of communicable disease, health screening, implementing district policies and procedures in the health office, and health, safety and emergency planning. If a student becomes ill during the school day, they must see the school nurse or assistant. Health services are always available to students who become ill during the school day.

Chronic Conditions or Extended Illnesses AFSA will authorize absences resulting from a chronic medical condition or extended illness once a Chronic Condition Form is on file with the Nurse's office. AFSA will work with the healthcare provider regarding the student's chronic health issue and its impact on school attendance.

Communicable Diseases The health service personnel follow the communicable disease guidelines consistent with the Minnesota Department of Health. If a student is diagnosed with, or suspected of having a communicable disease, the LSN will contact the Parent/Guardian(s) to assure that appropriate treatment and follow-up are completed. At times, it may be necessary to exclude a student from school, according to school health policy.

Emergency Health Form To ensure the safety and well-being of each student, an Emergency Health Form must be completed each school year. Parent/Guardian(s) are responsible for informing school staff of any changes that occur during the school year, such as address, phone number, emergency contact persons, or significant health changes. All information is kept confidential and will be shared only with appropriate school staff, the bus personnel, emergency responders, and others on a need-to-know basis.

Health Care Plans Students with specific health conditions may require special care or monitoring during the school day. The LSN will determine the need for an individual health or emergency care plan, and develop a plan with information provided by the Parent/Guardian(s) and the student's physician. Physician's orders may be required for certain procedures and to ensure the appropriateness of care. The health care plan may be shared with other school staff where applicable to the student's safety and well-being.

Illness/Injury If a student becomes ill or is injured during the school day, a staff member will contact the LSN. If it is determined that the student needs to go home, the nurse or staff member will contact the Parent/Guardian(s), or in their absence, the designated emergency contact person. It is expected that Parent/Guardian(s) will attend to their child's illness/emergency in a reasonably timely fashion. The Parent/Guardian/designee will be expected to sign the student out at the office. Proper identification may be requested of individuals not recognized by the office staff.

Immunizations All students entering AFSA K-12 must show evidence of immunizations as required by Minnesota State Law. All students must clear their immunization records through the health office. The required immunization records are:

KINDERGARTEN: DTaP (5); Polio (4); Hepatitis B (3); MMR (2); Varicella (2 or actual date of the disease. If the disease occurred after 2010, the child's doctor must sign a form confirming the disease.)

AGE 7 through 6th GRADE: DTaP (3); Polio (3); Hepatitis B (3); MMR (2); Varicella (2)

Keeping Students Home from School In order to help Parent/Guardian(s) decide whether or not to send a child to school, please use the following guidelines:

1. If your student has a fever of 100 degrees or more, the student should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal.
2. If your student has vomited or had diarrhea, the student should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
3. If your student has had a rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown, check with the family health care provider before sending your student back to school.
4. If your student has any symptoms of a communicable disease such as; live head lice, chicken pox, measles, pink eye, ringworm, fifth disease, etc., We suggest you contact your family physician or the school nurse for verification of disease.

Medications and Treatments (Policy 516) Individual students may require medically necessary procedures or prescribed medication during the school day. Students may not carry over the counter or prescription medications on their person during the school day, unless the carrying of such medication is authorized by law and the legal requirements are met (asthma inhalers and epinephrine auto-

injectors). **This includes cough drops, allergy medication, ointments, and insect repellent.** A new state “SUNucated” statute allows students to possess and apply sunscreen without a physician’s note. All medications must be stored in the school office. Physician’s orders are required for all prescribed medications and treatments. The orders must be complete and specific, and signed by the physician/licensed practitioner and the Parent/Guardian(s) before any medication or treatment will be dispensed. Authorization forms for medications and procedures are available from the health office. Medication must be supplied in the original, properly labeled pharmacy container. Orders expire at the end of the school year. All medications must be picked up by the student’s Parent/Guardian at the end of the school year.

No over the counter medication will be supplied from the health office.

On occasion an individual student may be allowed to carry an asthma inhaler with Parent/Guardian(s) permission and after demonstrating proper usage to the LSN. Any student who violates this policy and carries unapproved medications on their person may be subject to the discipline policy regarding controlled substances.

Nutrition Services

Breakfast and Lunch Program Healthy bodies promote healthy minds. AFSA food services strives to provide a wide variety of healthy meals to our students. In keeping with our #BeAFSA behavior expectations, students are responsible for cleaning up the area where they eat. All trash must be disposed of properly. Students will not be allowed to leave the cafeteria during lunch. Students should take special care NOT to throw away utensils and dishes used in the lunch program. Consequences may be applied if students are not following procedures in the lunchroom.

Meal Prices: One serving of each school provided breakfast and lunch will be free to all students this year. Students must indicate that they are eating school lunch during Morning Meeting to order the food each day. If a student arrives after 8:00am, parents will need to sign them in and indicate their lunch option for the day. After 10:30, new orders cannot be processed for the day. ***All families must complete the free or reduced lunch form by September 30, 2025, regardless of eligibility.***

Snacks Students in grades K-6 will have a healthy snack time incorporated into their daily schedule. The MN Department of Education considers “Smart Snacks” to be minimally processed foods such as fruits and vegetables and foods that are nutritious. Avoid candy, sugary foods, caffeinated items, or items with sauce or flavoring dust (cheese flavoring on chips, for example.) Classrooms with allergy risks will send a notice to families of additional items to avoid.

Payments

Payments for damaged school materials, lunch balances for milk, term or field trip fees, fundraisers, etc. can be paid to the front desk by check or cash, or online through SchoolPay. Any cash payments should be placed in a sealed envelope with the student’s name and purpose for payment on the envelope.

SchoolPay The district uses SchoolPay, a computerized payment system, to keep track of student accounts. To pay electronically, please visit the SchoolPay site on the AFSA school website. It can be located under the Parent/Guardians/Alumni tab in the payments/donations section.

Safe Schools

Anti-Bullying Policy (Policy 514) Bullying is defined as objectively offensive, intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct directed by a student toward one or more students when either (1) there is a real or perceived imbalance of power between those involved and the conduct re-occurs or forms a pattern or (2) the conduct materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities, performance, or ability to participate in school functions, activities, or programs. Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which is bullying that occurs through the use of an electronic device (e.g., computer, cell phone, etc.).

Any act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions on or off school grounds. Bullying that occurs outside of school or school related functions is also prohibited if the consequences of the bullying carry over into the school environment. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. A report of bullying will be taken seriously and there may be actions taken against any student who violates the anti-bullying policy.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

Parents/Guardians, students, employees, or others who witness bullying or suspect that bullying has occurred must report such conduct to the building administrator or Sam Wakefield (Executive Director). All complaints of bullying will be investigated within three days, will take necessary protective measures and make necessary disclosures or referrals for services, and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy. The alleged bully will have the right to present a defense, obtain access to data related to the incident, and to contest the accuracy and completeness of the data as permitted by law.

Malicious and Sadistic Conduct "malicious and sadistic conduct" means creating a hostile learning environment by acting with the intent to cause harm by intentionally injuring another without just cause or reason or engaging in extreme or excessive cruelty or delighting in cruelty and/or sexual exploitation. Malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A is prohibited. This prohibition applies to students, independent contractors, teachers, administrators, and other AFSA personnel.

Anonymous form: Students, caregivers, or family members are able to submit anonymous information to be investigated by school administrators for any concern throughout the year.

<https://www.afsahighschool.com/school-board/policies-procedures/complaint-report-form>

Before and After School Procedures Students should not arrive at school before 7:30 a.m. There is no adult supervision until 7:30. Buses will begin to arrive at the Elementary building starting at 7:35. Once students arrive they should go directly to the cafeteria or remain on the playground. Students will be dismissed to their classrooms from the cafeteria/playground by grade level by 7:55.

All school doors are locked during the school day. Parents/Guardians/visitors must be buzzed in at the south door and come to the office to sign their child in and out of the building.

At the end of the day, do not block the buses from entering the parking lot in order to facilitate students exiting the building. Buses will pick students up on the north side of the building. Students can only be picked up by the person(s) listed on the student's emergency card. If someone other than the person(s) listed on the emergency contacts is picking up the student, please send a note or call the office in order for your child to be released to that individual. For the safety of our students, anyone who is picking up a child may be asked to show identification.

Criminal Background Check (Policy 404)

All new employees are required to sign a release authorizing the District to conduct a criminal background check. State law requires a criminal background check to be completed on all persons who are offered employment in the District. Potential employees are required to remit a check in the amount of \$8.00 payable to "MN-BCA" to cover the cost of the background check. Employment may be terminated based upon the results of the background check. The District may conduct criminal background checks on current employees as it deems necessary. The District also will seek criminal

history background checks for all volunteers, except enrolled student volunteers, who are in contact with students during school or at school-related events or activities.

Employee/Student Relationships (Policy 423)

This policy applies to all school district employees at all times, whether on or off duty and on or off of school district locations.

At all times, students will be treated by teachers and other school district employees with respect, courtesy and consideration and in a professional manner. Each school district employee is expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Such relationships must be and remain on a teacher-student basis or an employee-student basis.

Teachers must be mindful of their inherent positions of authority and influence over students.

Similarly, other school district employees also may hold positions of authority over students of the school district and must be mindful of their authority and influence over students.

Sexual relationships between school district employees and students, without regard to the age of the student, are strictly forbidden and may subject the employee to disciplinary action and criminal liability.

Other actions that violate this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Dating students.
2. Having an interaction/activity of a sexual nature with a student.
3. Committing or attempting to induce students or others to commit an illegal act or act of immoral conduct which may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the school district.
4. Supplying alcohol or any illegal substance to a student, allowing a student access to such substances, or failing to take reasonable steps to prevent such access from occurring.
5. Excessive personal interactions with students.

School district employees shall, whenever possible, employ safeguards against improper relationships with students and/or claims of such improper relationships.

Excessive informal and social involvement with individual students is unprofessional, is not compatible with employee-student relationships and is inappropriate. Excessive personal interactions between district employees or volunteers and students are prohibited.

School district employees will adhere to applicable standards of ethics and professional conduct in Minnesota law.

Harassment (Policy 413)

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

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

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

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

Because there are multiple, overlapping laws governing the District's response to allegations of sexual harassment, all allegations of sexual harassment are subject to Policy 522.

Anonymous form: Students, caregivers, or family members are able to submit anonymous information to be investigated by school administrators for any concern throughout the year.

<https://www.afsahighschool.com/school-board/policies-procedures/complaint-report-form>

Nondiscrimination (Policy 102)

AFSA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. All people who interact with the school district, including employees, students, parents, volunteers, and other third parties, have a right to be free from sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment, and such conduct is strictly prohibited. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Sam Wakefield, swakefield@afsahighschool, 651-209-3910.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit

<http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Elevator Use The elevator is for persons who have difficulty navigating the stairs or for moving heavy objects between floors. The elevator is not to be used by students without permission. The elevator may be used in case of an emergency, except in case of fire (use the stairs for exit in case of a fire).

Food In accordance with state law, foods served in schools must be obtained from sources which are approved and inspected by federal, state, or local regulatory authorities. Due to many students having food allergies, we ask that students not share food with one another, unless approved by administration. Parent/Guardian(s) will be notified if their child is in a classroom where severe allergies are present.

Gender Inclusion

It is the school district's policy to respect all students' gender identity and gender expression by honoring the right of students to be identified and addressed by their preferred name and pronoun.

Parking Lot Safety The south side of the parking lot is for Parent/Guardian drop-off of students. Parents/Guardians with children in kindergarten to third grade should park and accompany their children inside the building. The north side of the building is for bus traffic only. Please follow the designated traffic flow signs. With hundreds of children needing to get to school safely, please allow enough time for dropping off and picking up your child.

Pesticide Application Notice

Minnesota state law requires schools to inform parents and guardians if they apply certain pesticides on school property. Specifically, schools that apply these pesticides must maintain an estimated schedule of pesticide applications and make the schedule available to parents and guardians for review or copying at each school office.

No pesticides are used on the school lawn or property during the school year.

Pesticide application is limited to parking lots and sidewalks during summer months when no students will be present for at least five days from the time of application. The only pesticide used is Round Up.

In the case of an infestation of pests, a qualified professional will be contacted and use only approved methods. Families will be notified if any chemicals would need to be used and when.

Policy Against Religious, Racial, and Sexual Harassment and Violence (Policy 413) Everyone at AFSA Schools has a right to feel respected and safe. The following is a summary of the policy. To maintain learning and work environments that are free from harassment and violence, AFSA School prohibits any form of religious, racial and sexual harassment and violence. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Religious and racial harassment and violence consist of physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's religion or race. Any student or employee of AFSA School who harasses or commits violence toward another student or employee through conduct or communication of a Religious, Racial, and Sexual nature will be subject to the consequences described in the harassment/ violence policy. All complaints, whether verbal or written, will be investigated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. All verbal and written complaints should be submitted to AFSA School's Human Rights Officer, Director Sam Wakefield. Retaliation is prohibited against any individual who reports harassment or violence or participates in an investigation. Confidentiality of all persons involved will be respected to the fullest extent possible. The school district will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees. A statement that a violation of this policy will result in discipline, up to and including termination, shall be contained in the employee handbook and posted in an area of the school district's facilities where employee notices are typically posted.

Recess All students in grades PreK - 6 will have a 30 minute recess period every day. Students will be expected to go outside unless it is raining or the air temperature/wind chill is below 0. Please make sure that your student comes to school every day with the necessary clothing to be comfortable and safe outdoors. Coats are recommended for temperatures below 40 degrees.

Safety Drills

AFSA will be following the new Standard Response Protocols adopted by state and local authorities. Some verbiage and language has changed with this adoption. When overhead announcements are made for emergencies, the following directives will be used:



Hold is followed by the Directive: "In Your Room or Area" and is the protocol used when hallways need to be kept clear of occupants.



Secure is followed by the Directive: "Get Inside. Lock Outside Doors" and is the protocol used to safeguard people within the building.



Lockdown is followed by "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight" and is the protocol used to secure individual rooms and keep occupants quiet and in place.



Evacuate and may be followed by a location, and is used to move people from one location to a different location in or out of the building.



Shelter State the Hazard and Safety Strategy for group and self protection.

Evacuation Drills:

Evacuation drills are used mostly for fire, but can be used in the case of an intruder in the building as well if the intruder is not in the area where evacuation would take place. Students and staff exit the buildings and meet at a predetermined location outside the buildings. Once in the safety location, students line up by advisory to ensure that a quick attendance can be taken. Any students not with their group will be a priority for emergency personnel. Students must remain in the evacuation site until the “All Clear” signal is given. In the case of a real emergency, students would be transported by bus from the safety location near the North Shed off-site (typically to the High School, unless it is also affected by the emergency) and parents would be contacted via email, phone, and text to be given instructions for student pick-up.

Fire drill procedure:

When the alarm sounds, teachers instruct students to quickly file out of the classroom. If a second adult is in the classroom, they will lead students out. If only 1 adult is in the classroom, they follow students out, ensuring the room is empty and they take the emergency list from their room with them. Students and staff gather in the grassy area past the North garage building, quickly line up by homeroom and take a headcount. Any students not with classes should be reported to office staff out at the safety site who will verify absences or report missing students to emergency personnel in real emergency situations.

Tornado Drills:

Students quickly report to a designated area in the building and kneel on the floor with their head protected. The area used is an interior area of the building with no windows. Students remain in this position until the “All Clear” signal is given. In the event of a tornado warning in the area of a school building, students would follow this procedure until the warning is cleared by officials. Students would not be dismissed if there is a warning in effect, and parents would receive updates by email, text, and phone call through our parent contact system.

Lockdown drills:

1. **Hold:** Hold lockdowns are used mainly for medical emergencies or other private matters that happen during the school day. Hold lockdowns protect the privacy of the students involved in the emergency situation, and typically last a few minutes. This allows emergency personnel to provide services as needed without an audience or crowd and maintain the privacy of the person(s) involved. During a hold lockdown, students remain in the classroom with the door locked, and no hall passes are given. Students in the bathroom or other common areas will return to the classroom as quickly as possible, and staff ensure that all students are accounted for, but continue lessons as planned.
2. **Lockdown:** Lockdowns are used in the event that an unknown person is in the building. Students remain in the room they are in; if in common areas when the announcement is sounded, students will quickly move to the nearest classroom. Staff will shut and lock the classroom door, shut off the lights, and assist students in remaining calm and quiet during the lockdown. Students remain in this position until the “all clear” signal is given. Updates will be given over the loudspeaker system during an event requiring the use of this type of lockdown, keeping all staff and students informed of developments. Parents will be contacted in a timely manner to let them know about the situation through email, phone, and text messages. In

addition, the school would notify 911 and secure the building, then work with police and emergency personnel until the situation is resolved. In the event of a real emergency, students would be offered support upon returning to school including crisis response procedures and mental health support as needed.

Searches of Student Lockers/Personal Possessions (Policy 502)

Students must place books, backpack, coats and other personal items in their locker or designated cubby each day. Students are responsible for the items in their lockers. Any items of value should be stored in these areas when the student is not present. Students should not bring large amounts of money or valuable items to school.

PreK-6 students are provided a designated, unlocked cubby or locker. School lockers are the property of the school. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspections of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school authorities for any reason at any time, without notice, without students consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school authorities must provide a notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials. AFSA staff members will work in cooperation with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department to investigate any violation of law.

Suicide Prevention: If you or someone you know needs assistance with suicide thoughts or ideation, contact one of these supports:

- Dial 988 from any phone or through text message to access Suicide and Crisis lifeline 24 hrs/day
- Text HOME to 741741 to access the Crisis Helpline 24 hrs/day
- Call 651-266-7878 for the Ramsey County Mobile Crisis response 24/7

Visitors/Volunteers (Policy 814) Parent/Guardian(s) of students and community members are welcome visitors to the school. **All visitors must sign in at the main office upon arrival.**

Parent/Guardian(s) must sign in as visitors at the front desk. Parent/Guardian(s) are required to make arrangements with classroom teachers prior to visiting to avoid disrupting learning time. Meetings with teachers may be scheduled during the teacher's prep time, before or after school, but may not exceed their employment agreement hours of 7:30-3:30 except on designated days such as Conferences. To ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the school does not permit visitors not enrolled at AFSA unless permission is given ahead of time and approved by the administration. Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the Director. Parent/guardians wishing to visit, have lunch with, or observe their child in the classroom must make arrangements with the Director at least 1 week in advance of the visit. All visits are subject to consideration of scheduling conflicts such as field trips, special events, staffing changes, etc. and could be canceled day-of if a conflict arises.

Parent/Guardian involvement in the education of their children is encouraged and valued at AFSA. Parent/Guardian(s) may become involved by: serving on a number of Parent/Guardian advisory committees at AFSA, attending Parent/Guardian conferences and presentation nights, and volunteering to support/enhance a variety of programs and activities for the school. Please call the Administrator or the Volunteer Coordinator for further information. **All volunteers must register with the office and complete a background check.**

Water Testing Lead testing is conducted annually to ensure the safety of student drinking water. The latest water test results can be found on the AFSA website under "School Board" ->"Policies and Procedures" and are consistently well below the parts per billion safety threshold at both AFSA buildings.

Special Services

AFSA is open to all who believe in and support the philosophy and mission of the school. Working in collaboration with resident school districts and other agencies or districts, AFSA provides for or arranges for comprehensive special education services for all eligible students. It is the responsibility and the goal of AFSA to ensure appropriate placement and services in order that each student's special needs are met.

RTI at AFSA

AFSA uses a Response to Intervention model to provide support to all students. This 4-tiered approach allows staff to support all aspects of educational needs during the school day.

Tier Zero: What you Can Expect for ALL students at AFSA

- Extra time to complete work when requested by the student
- Preferential Seating in the classroom
- Research –based instructional practices will be utilized in every classroom
- All students will have access to the Guidance Counselor.
- Placement testing to determine an instructional baseline for all students

Tier 1: Interventions for all students may include:

- Provide a quiet workspace when requested
- Regular check-ins with staff member
- Alternate response options for assignments
- Peer-tutoring or mentoring
- Participation in Social Skills groups

Tier 2: Students not making adequate progress in a subject area with Tier Zero and Tier 1 interventions will receive additional pull-out small group instruction in the area. This may include:

- Small group tutoring with an instructor
- Small group Social /Emotional Skills
- Small group Organization Training
- Regular parent contact/updates

Tier 3: Students who continue to struggle after attempting at least 3 different interventions will be referred to Special Education or to the 504 Coordinators for an Evaluation.

Section 504 Plans: The purpose of a 504 plan is to provide accommodations for those with a health-related disability that substantially limits one or more major life functions. There must be evidence of a negative impact on the education of the student in order to qualify.

Special Education Services: The purpose of Special Education Services is to identify potential areas of struggle and create an Individualized Education Plan that meets the needs of each specific child with a disability recognized by IDEA . Students with an IEP have annual goals that encourage and promote age-appropriate functioning. In order to receive these services, students must undergo a comprehensive evaluation to determine if needs exist.

Alternate Programming: Some students may be best served through alternate programming which may include referral to an area ALC or online education options.

Special Education Referral Steps

AFSA has adopted a Five-Phase, School-Wide Support Model that consists of

1. Early identification
2. Intervention planning and implementation
3. Referral for special education consideration
4. Special education evaluation
5. Eligibility determination

In order to meet the needs of students who require more involved and intensive services, AFSA partners with resident school districts, other agencies or districts, and each family to identify appropriate programs and place students in them. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the special education office at 651-209-3922.

SECTION 504

Section 504 prohibits discrimination based on an individual's disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides that "no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of a disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives or benefits from federal financial assistance." The district recognizes its responsibility to identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of Section 504, need special accommodations or program change to ensure that the student is provided a free and appropriate public education. The 504 coordinator for the AFSA K-6 building is Kate Bald (kbald@afsak12.com).

TITLE I Support Program

AFSA Participates in a Title I Schoolwide Support program. Students are identified by teacher recommendation, parent or student advocacy, student work samples, or District testing (DIBELS or STAR) Support is provided through the RTI framework detailed above.

Transportation (Policy 710)

AFSA provides transportation for students to and from school. These policies have been created to serve as a guide for families to facilitate transportation for your students to and from school in a safe manner. Information about bus stop location and time is mailed to families in August. If your child is taking the bus to and from daycare, make sure that AFSA has the current information as soon as possible. Routes and stops may be adjusted in the first weeks of school. There is a \$25 fee for this service for students outside of the White Bear Lake and Roseville school districts.

Minnesota Statute §123.801 states that transportation services are a privilege, not a right. Students who do not follow expected bus safety and/or conduct policies may have their privileges to ride the bus suspended or revoked. Parent/Guardian(s) are responsible for their children up until the time they board the bus in the morning and after the student is dropped off at their stop at the end of the school day.

To help your student have a positive experience and reduce incidents on the bus, please review the AFSA transportation procedures with your students. Minnesota state law requires that all students in grades K-10 receive training in bus safety. Students must show their understanding of the proper bus protocols in order to be eligible to ride the bus. **Bus Safety training** is provided twice per year for PreK-6 students.

Bus Stop Procedures

At the Bus Stop:

In order to ensure that your child arrives to school safely and on time, please make sure that:

1. Students should arrive at the bus stop five minutes before your scheduled stop.
Children in grades kindergarten through 2nd grade should be accompanied to and picked up from the stop. Please be aware that weather and traffic conditions may cause delays in pick-up times. Drivers make every attempt to maintain the bus schedule, but the safety of the students they are transporting is their primary concern.
2. Students should wait at the stop in a safe location, such as a driveway or on a sidewalk.
3. Be respectful of other people and their property.
4. Use appropriate language.
5. Use appropriate behavior. Do not throw items. Keep all body parts to yourself at all times. No fighting, harassment, intimidation or horse-play.
6. Report any suspicious individuals or activity to the driver or school office.
7. Wait away from the road until the bus has come to a complete stop and the door has opened. Moving to get on the bus before it has come to a complete stop is unsafe due to the higher likelihood of students slipping and falling in the path of the oncoming bus.

On the Bus:

1. Once aboard the bus, quickly find a seat and stay seated. Each grade level will have designated rows for them to sit. As a general guideline, students in grades PreK-4 should sit in the first three rows. Students in grades 5-8 should sit in rows 5-8 and students in grades 9-12 should sit in rows 9-13. Designated areas will be adjusted by the number of students in each grade level on each bus route.

2. Minnesota law requires that students stay seated while the bus is moving. Sit facing forward. Keep all body parts inside the bus and to yourself. Keep items out of the aisles.
3. Be respectful of others and use a quiet voice and appropriate language.
4. Keep the school bus clean. Refrain from any behavior that could cause damage to the bus.
5. Do not distract the driver. Any distractions to the driver puts students aboard the bus at risk.
6. Cooperate immediately with the driver's directions. Our bus drivers are a valuable part of our staff. Students will give them the same respect and are responsible to the requests of the drivers in the same way that they would be to the teaching staff.
7. Do not tamper with any of the bus's safety equipment.
8. No lighters, matches, drugs, alcohol, weapons or other dangerous items are permitted on the bus. Students who are in possession of these items may result in losing their privilege of riding the bus.

At the End of the Day:

1. Students will not be allowed to board another bus other than the one that they are assigned unless arrangements have been made through the school office. Parent/Guardian(s) must call, email or send a note to the school office in order to get off at a stop other than the one they have been assigned. For students in grades PreK-6, the Parent/Guardian(s) of both students must notify the office that they are aware of the changes in stops. These arrangements should be made 24 hours in advance. All arrangements require administration approval.
2. When exiting the bus, make sure to take all of your belongings with you.
3. Once students have gotten off of the bus, they need to move to a spot outside the bus danger zone (10 feet away from the bus). If a student needs to cross the road, they should wait until the driver waves them across, and cross 10 feet in front of the bus.
4. Students in grades PreK-2 must be met by an approved Parent/Guardian or adult (18 or older). If no adult is present, the driver will keep the child on the bus and an attempt will be made to contact a Parent/Guardian. If we are not able to reach a Parent/Guardian, the child will be returned to school.

Responsibilities

Parent/Guardian responsibilities:

- Make sure that the school has accurate information
 - Home address, telephone numbers, emergency contacts, day care information.
- Make sure that your student arrives at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled time
- Wait with younger students in the morning and be at the stop in the afternoon.
- Be aware of any conditions that may affect pick-up and drop-off times (weather, traffic, construction, etc.) Parent/Guardian(s) will be notified of any major delays through Blackboard Connect.
- Make sure your student is dressed for the weather. Unexpected delays can expose children to cold temperatures and wind chills during the winter months.
- Get to know your child's bus driver, they are a major part of your child's day.

Student Responsibilities:

- Follow all bus safety procedures and conduct guidelines.
- Be courteous to your bus driver and fellow bus riders.
- Maintain a clean bus environment.

School Responsibilities:

- Ensure safe transportation for students to and from school.
- Provide Parent/Guardian(s) and students with transportation policies and procedures.

Bus Referral Protocol:

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. The drivers will attempt to work with a student to change their behavior on the bus. If the student continues to have difficulty with behavior on the bus, the driver will then refer them to the school administration.

Students may be assigned seats due to student needs or for conduct reasons.

Consequences for not following expectations on the bus may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Assigned seat on the bus
- 2) Communication with the student and/or Parent/Guardians
- 3) A second referral for any violation of bus regulations may result in the student forfeiting their right to transportation for up to two (2) weeks.
- 4) A subsequent referral may result in another suspension from bus service for up to two (2) weeks.
- 5) Any further violations could result in forfeiture of busing service for the remainder of the school year.
- 6) Other disciplinary actions may apply according to policy.

Vandalism, unauthorized use of the emergency door, or other major disruptions may result in immediate forfeiture of busing services for the rest of the year. Complaints or questions about bus behavior

guidelines should be directed to Sam Wakefield (swakefield@afsak12.com), Executive Director.

Testing Information

Students at AFSA will take a variety of tests throughout the school year. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) are tests that measure a student's performance on the state's standards in the areas of reading, math and science. Students in grades 3-6 are administered MCA Reading and Math assessments, students in grade 5 are administered the MCA Science assessment. AFSA also uses data from STAR testing and DIBELS to measure student growth and meet individual needs in reading and math.

Opt Out

Any questions about opting out of state testing, please refer to the Minnesota Department of Education Statewide Testing page or contact Liz Burkwald (lburkwald@afsahighschool.com). Opt-out information is included in the appendixes of this handbook.

Parent Right to Know

If requested by a parent or guardian, the school district will provide educational information and the level of achievement in each of the state academic assessments.

Wellness (Policy 533)

This policy outlines AFSA's approach to ensuring environments and opportunities for all students to practice healthy eating and physical activity behaviors throughout the school day while minimizing commercial distractions. Specifically, this policy establishes goals and procedures to ensure that:

Students in AFSA High School have access to healthy foods throughout the school day – both through reimbursable school meals and other foods available throughout the school campus– in accordance with Federal and state nutrition standards;

Students receive quality nutrition education that helps them develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors;

Students have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school;

Schools engage in nutrition and physical activity promotion and other activities that promote student wellness;

The community is engaged in supporting the work of AFSA in creating continuity between school and other settings for students and staff to practice lifelong healthy habits; and

AFSA establishes and maintains an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.

Lead Testing

The Academy for Sciences & Agriculture (AFSA) is committed to providing a safe and healthful learning and work environment for all students and staff. We recognize the importance of protecting our students and staff from potential lead exposure. AFSA Elementary School was built in 2002, AFSA High School was built in 2004. Minnesota Statute 121A.335 requires public school buildings to test for lead in water in potable water sources (consumable water) every 5 years. The MDH and MDE have published "Reducing Lead in Drinking Water: A Technical Guidance and Model Plan for Minnesota's Public Schools," Minnesota Statute 121A.335 requires lead concentration to be under 5 ppb in any tap that could be used as a drinking or cooking water source in a public school.

A school district or charter school must send parents an annual notice that includes the district's or charter school's annual testing and remediation plan, information about how to find test results, and a description of remediation efforts on the district website. The district or charter school must update the lead testing and remediation information on its website at least annually.

More information of how AFSA meets the requirements of lead testing can be found on our website:

<https://www.afsahighschool.com/school-board/policies-procedures/lead-water-testing>

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Executive Director.

Asbestos Reporting/Plan

AFSA Schools **DO NOT** contain any asbestos due to when the buildings were built. All schools are required to follow the procedure set by AHERA. AHERA regulates ACM in K-12 public and non-profit private schools, including charter schools and schools with religious affiliations. For schools that are renting or leasing space, it is their responsibility to inspect ACM and implement a management plan, not the building owners. Schools must follow:

- Perform an initial inspection of ACM in all school facilities and to re-inspect these facilities every three years.
- Develop and maintain an asbestos management plan and keep a readily available copy at the school.
- Provide yearly notification to parent, teacher, and employee organizations regarding the the school's asbestos management plan and any asbestos abatement actions taken or planned in the school.
- Designate a contact person to ensure the responsibilities of the school district or school are properly implemented.
- Visually inspect known or suspected ACM every six months.
- Ensure that Minnesota certified individuals perform inspections, prepare management plans and conduct asbestos abatement.
- Ensure that whenever greater than 3 linear feet or 3 square feet of ACM is disturbed the proper abatement action is carried out.
- Provide custodial staff with asbestos-awareness training.

Appendices

A: MDE Parent/guardian test information
B: District Policy 514

Statewide Assessments:

Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) or the [WIDA English Language Development Standards](#). These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 public and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments gives educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

MCA and MTAS are the annual assessments in reading, mathematics and science that measure a snapshot of student learning of the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards.

ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments helps families see a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students can use MCA results:

- For course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.
- For Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and College in the Schools programs.

English learners who take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from English learner programs.

Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions about how to use money and resources to support all students.

Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the form. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

The student will not receive an individual score. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the student would not have the opportunity to exit their English learner program.

School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning. Since all eligible students are included in some calculations even when they do not participate, school and district accountability results are impacted. This may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any other consequences for not participating.

Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1 percent of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by the beginning of each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 2025 to 2026 school year.)



By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. This form must be returned to your student's school before the applicable test administration.

Statewide Assessment: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

Student Information

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Current Grade in School: _____

School: _____ District: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reason for Refusal: _____

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

- MCA/MTAS Reading
- MCA/MTAS Science
- MCA/MTAS Mathematics
- ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on how to opt out of local assessments.

**AFSA HIGH SCHOOL
BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY**

Adopted: January 17, 2006

Revised: January 22, 2008

Revised: August 26, 2014

Revised: July 25, 2023

District 4074

I. PURPOSE

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

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school premises, on school property, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying or other prohibited conduct that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student or other students, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. This policy also applies to an act of cyberbullying regardless of whether such act is committed on or off school property and/or with or without the use of school resources.
- B. Malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes,

chapter 363A is prohibited. This prohibition applies to students, independent contractors, teachers, administrators, and other AFSA personnel.

Malicious and sadistic conduct and sexual exploitation by a school district or AFSA staff member, independent contractor, or enrolled student against a staff member, independent contractor, or student that occurs as described in Article II.A above is prohibited.

- C. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.
- D. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen or negate the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- E. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- F. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.
- G. A student who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation, or knowingly making a false report of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with AFSA's policies and procedures, including AFSA's discipline policy. A teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school who permits, condones, or tolerates bullying or engages in an act of reprisal, retaliation, or knowingly making a false report of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action. AFSA may take into account the following factors:
 - 1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved;
 - 2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
 - 3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
 - 4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
 - 5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying or other prohibited conduct may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. AFSA shall employ research-based developmentally appropriate best practices that include preventative and remedial measures and effective discipline for deterring violations of this policy, apply throughout AFSA, and foster student, parent, and community participation.

Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge.

Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school property and events.

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

III. DEFINITIONS

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

- A. “Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:
 - 1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
 - 2. materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

The term “bullying” specifically includes cyberbullying, malicious and sadistic conduct, and sexual exploitation.

- B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.
- C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.
- D. “Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct” means, but is not limited to, conduct that does the following:

1. Causes physical harm to a student or a student's property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property;
 2. Under Minnesota common law, violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; or
 3. Is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA). However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.
- E. "Malicious and sadistic conduct" means creating a hostile learning environment by acting with the intent to cause harm by intentionally injuring another without just cause or reason or engaging in extreme or excessive cruelty or delighting in cruelty.
- F. "On school premises, on school property, at school functions or activities, or on school transportation" means all school buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. School property also may mean a student's walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, AFSA does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.
- G. "Prohibited conduct" means bullying or cyberbullying, malicious and sadistic conduct, sexual exploitation, or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about prohibited conduct.
- H. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.
- I. "Student" means a student enrolled in the school.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. A person may report bullying anonymously. However, AFSA may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.
- B. AFSA encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor of each building or available in the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.
- C. The building principal, the principal's designee, or the building supervisor (hereinafter the "building report taker") is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to an AFSA human rights officer or the Executive Director. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the Executive Director or the AFSA human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant.

The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the school shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.

- D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct or who fail to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.
- E. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law. The building report taker, in conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.

- F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.
- G. AFSA will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. AFSA ACTION

- A. Within three school days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, AFSA shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by AFSA.
- B. The building report taker or other appropriate school officials may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the complainant, the reporter, and students or others, pending completion of an investigation of the bullying or other prohibited conduct, consistent with applicable law.
- C. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.
- D. Upon completion of an investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, AFSA will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy. Action taken by AFSA for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; the student discipline policy and other applicable AFSA policies; and applicable regulations.
- E. AFSA is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of AFSA. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are targets of bullying or other prohibited conduct and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of alleged perpetrators of bullying or other prohibited conduct who have been involved in a reported and confirmed bullying incident of the remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.

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

VI. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL

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

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- A. AFSA shall discuss this policy with school personnel and volunteers and provide appropriate training to school personnel regarding this policy. AFSA shall establish a training cycle for school personnel to occur during a period not to exceed every three school years. Newly employed school personnel must receive the training within the first year of their employment with the AFSA. AFSA or a school administrator may accelerate the training cycle or provide additional training based on a particular need or circumstance. This policy shall be included in employee handbooks, training materials, and publications on school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct, which materials shall also be used to publicize this policy.
- B. AFSA shall require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address bullying and other prohibited conduct. Such professional development includes, but is not limited to, the following:
1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct;
 2. The complex dynamics affecting a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct;

3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for perpetrating or being the target or victim of bullying or other prohibited conduct in school;
 4. The incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
 5. Internet safety and cyberbullying.
- C. AFSA annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying and other prohibited conduct.
- D. The administration of AFSA is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the target or victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to targets or victims of bullying.
- E. The administration is encouraged to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and is directed to review programmatic instruction to determine if adjustments are necessary to help students identify and prevent or reduce bullying and other prohibited conduct, to value diversity in school and society, to develop and improve students' knowledge and skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying or other prohibited conduct, and to make effective prevention and intervention programs available to students.
- The administration must establish strategies for creating a positive school climate and use evidence-based social-emotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct.
- F. AFSA may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent or reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.
- G. Affected students and their parents may have rights under state and federal data practices laws to obtain access to data related to an incident and to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data.

VIII. NOTICE

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

- B. This policy or a summary thereof must be conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the school district and the office of each school.
- C. This policy must be given to each school employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment with the school.
- D. Notice of the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents under this policy must be included in the student discipline policy distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.
- E. This policy shall be available to all parents and other school community members in an electronic format in the language appearing on the school's website.
- F. AFSA shall provide an electronic copy of its most recently amended policy to the Commissioner of Education.

IX. POLICY REVIEW

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

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

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

Minn. Stat. 121A.0312 (Malicious and Sadistic Conduct)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.0311 (Notice of the Rights and Responsibilities of Students and Parents under the Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act)

Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)

Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)

Minn. Stat. Ch. 124E (Charter Schools)

Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)

20 U.S.C. § 1232g *et seq.* (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

34 C.F.R. §§ 99.1 - 99.67 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy)

****RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Teacher _____

STUDENT / PARENT STATEMENT 2024-2025

We have read and understand the policies in AFSA High School Student/Parent Handbook regarding school policies and Minnesota law pertaining to attendance and participation in school activities. We have read and understand the AFSA K-12 Charter School Acceptable Internet Technology Use Agreement. We also understand that any violation of this policy may result in the loss of computer use privileges throughout the school. We understand that it would then be the student's responsibility to find other ways to complete assignments requiring computer use outside of school.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Email Address (Parent / Guardian)

Student Signature

Date

Note: Failure to sign and return this form will result in loss of school privileges until it is returned.

Please complete this page and remove it from the Student Handbook. This signed page must be returned to the K-6 front desk no later than September 30, 2025.

Please call the school at 612-260-2662 if you have any questions.