



AAHS Backpack Safety Memo

To: Parents, Students, Faculty, and Staff

From: Alabama Aerospace and Aviation High School (AAHS) Administration

Subject: Student Backpack Safety Awareness

Purpose

Alabama Aerospace and Aviation High School (AAHS) is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. In accordance with Alabama Act #2017-19, AAHS provides the following guidance to increase awareness of the potential health risks associated with heavy backpacks and to encourage proactive measures to prevent injury.

Why Backpack Safety Matters

Spinal ligaments and muscles are not fully developed until after the age of 16. Overloaded backpacks may place repeated low-level stress on the neck, shoulders, and back, potentially resulting in chronic pain or injury. Studies referenced by the Alabama Legislature indicate that backpacks may weigh as much as 25 percent of a child's body weight and are often worn incorrectly, increasing the risk of strain.

AAHS Backpack Safety Guidance

AAHS encourages the following best practices consistent with Alabama Act #2017-19:

- Backpacks should weigh no more than 10 percent of a student's body weight whenever possible.
- Students are encouraged to wear backpacks using both shoulder straps and avoid carrying them over one shoulder.
- Ergonomic backpacks with wide, padded, adjustable straps and multiple compartments are recommended.
- When feasible, heavier books should be left at school, and lighter materials such as handouts or digital resources should be used for homework.
- Students and families are encouraged to periodically review backpack contents to remove unnecessary items.

Shared Responsibility

AAHS will continue to work with teachers and families to support reasonable strategies that reduce backpack weight while meeting instructional needs. This guidance is intended to promote awareness and injury prevention and does not impose disciplinary action related to backpack weight. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the AAHS administration.