Willmar Public Schools

Independent School District 347

2026-2027 Elementary Student/Parent Handbook

www.willmar.k12.mn.us

Your Partner In Learning

FORWARD - Superintendent Dr. Adams

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This handbook has been created to ensure that students, staff, and families understand the processes and procedures for effective school operations. It is important for you to review this information carefully and to discuss it with your child(ren). Please contact your student's Elementary School Office for any questions or concerns.

The staff at Willmar Public Schools is committed to providing a well-rounded education. Our staff works tirelessly to ensure your children have a world-class education and achieve their full potential in a safe and welcoming environment. Additionally, our team works diligently to ensure students receive their education in an environment that promotes the five levels of high-reliability schools:

Level 1 is ensuring a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture. To achieve this, we have established procedures and routines for building access. Parents are welcome to visit our elementary buildings, but we ask that you make arrangements before visiting. On the day of your visit, please stop by the school office to obtain an identification badge before entering other areas of the school building.

Having visited our three elementary buildings myself several times, I am confident you will have a positive experience with our staff and students. Thank you for sharing your children with us!

Our Mission

The mission statement of the Willmar Public Schools is:
Inspiring and preparing all learners for their future in our community and the world.
Our core values are:

- High Expectations - committing to excellence
- Respect - working hard for self and being nice to others
- Perseverance - overcoming challenges
- Responsibility - doing the right thing, in the right way
- Relationships - caring and connecting with others
- Unity - valuing our differences with shared goals

District Strategic Plan Goals

- Strengthening Family and Stakeholder Engagement
- Aligning Academic Curriculum, Assessments, and Delivery
- Strengthening Instructional Design and Delivery
- Strengthening School Climate and Relationships
- Refining Our Systems to Better Meet Student Needs
- Managing Our Resources Responsibly and Innovatively

School Board Members

- Mike Reynolds
- Jay Lawton
- Randy Frederickson
- Justin Bos
- Scott Thaden
- Tammy Barnes
- Mary Amon

Administrative Directory
Willmar Education and Arts Center, 611 5th Street SW, Phone.320-231-8500; Fax. 320-231-8504
Dr. Adams, Superintendent; adamsb@willmar.k12.mn.us

Kennedy Elementary……..…..(320) 214-6688
Attendance Line ……...(320) 214-6681
Fax…….....(320) 235-9536
Health/Nurse's Office……...(320) 214-6682
Principal……....(320) 214-6688
Assistant Principal……..…..(320) 214-6685
Kennedy Elementary
824 7th Street SW
Willmar, MN 56201

Lakeland Elementary……...……(320) 263-5020
Attendance Line……....(320) 263-5021
Fax…….....(320) 263-5030
Health/Nurse's Office……...(320) 263-5014
Principal……....(320) 263-5010
Assistant Principal…….....(320) 263-5011
Lakeland Elementary
1001 Lakeland Drive SE
Willmar, MN 56201

Roosevelt Elementary……...…(320) 231-8470
Attendance Line……..…..(320) 231-8481
Fax……..…...(320) 231-1170
Health/Nurse's Office…….(320) 231-8482
Principal…….....(320) 231-8470 ext. 8474
Assistant Principal……....(320) 231-8470 ext. 7514
Roosevelt Elementary
1800 19th Ave. SW
Willmar, MN 56201

School Day/Hours

The elementary school faculty would like to have the cooperation of the parents in establishing a suitable arrival time for the pupils at school. **The school day officially begins at 8:30 am and ends at 3:20 pm.** We appreciate all efforts to refrain from dropping children off any earlier than 8:15 am. There is no supervision for students who arrive before 8:15 am. If you must drop your child off before 8:15 am, please look into Cardinal Place child care.

If you need to leave a message for your child, please call the main office. This is to prevent classroom disruptions during learning times. If you need to speak with your child's teacher we would be happy to set up an appointment for you.

Welcome to Our Elementary Schools!

Cardinal Place

Cardinal Place Child Care is a fee-based program through Willmar Community Education. Child care is available at all three schools from 6:30am until the beginning of the school day, and reopens again at the end of the student day until 6:00pm. Please call Cardinal Place at (320) 214-6680 for more information.

Student Registration

Students who currently attend the Willmar Elementary Schools are pre-registered in the spring for the following school year. Children, who during the summer months have changed addresses within the City, and those students new in the Willmar School system, will begin the registration process at the Willmar Education and Arts Center - 611 5th Street SW, Willmar, MN or online at www.willmar.k12.mn.us then click Registration in the toolbar where you can access Willmar Schools online registration.

After the initial registration, you will be directed to the respective building to complete the registration process. This registration will take place prior to the start of school in the fall through the *Parent Portal. New students in grades K-5 are asked to bring the address of their previous school at the time of registration. Kindergarten registration is held at Kennedy, Lakeland, and Roosevelt Elementary Schools in April. A copy of the birth certificate, immunization records and pre-school screening are required.

* Parent Portal is an application where parents/guardians can complete registration (new and yearly) online and access student records such as grades, attendance, schedules, online payments and much more. If newly enrolling your student, you will receive an activation code to the email used to register your student(s) once the registration has been processed. If your students are currently enrolled and you do not have a parent portal or do not remember your login credentials, please email the district office at parentportal@willmar.k12.mn.us.

Crossing Guards

Crossing guards have been set up before and after school to help the elementary children at parent pick-up. In sending your children to school, please direct them to one of the crosswalks and encourage them to use the safety lights.

Bicycle Safety

For the safety of the Kindergarten children attending the Willmar Public Schools, we would like to request that they not be allowed to ride their bicycles to school. Older students riding bikes to school are asked to place them in the bike rack and secure them with a bike lock. The school cannot be held liable for misplaced or stolen bicycles.

Tardy

It is important for students to be on time for the start of the school day. A letter will be sent after fifteen (15) tardies. A plan may be developed to improve the student's on-time arrival.

School Attendance

In order for students to take advantage of our excellent elementary program, it is vital that they be in attendance. When a child is absent because of illness or other times that a parent/guardian deems necessary, the parent/guardian must contact the child's school office in order to arrange for an excused absence.
Any child under the age of 16 is compelled by Minnesota law to attend school. Children who have three unexcused absences will have a letter sent to their parent/guardian asking for an explanation for the absences. After 5 unexcused absences, a referral is made to the Kandiyohi County Truancy Mediation Program. Families will be encouraged to attend a Truancy Intervention Meeting (TIM) in order to promote consistent attendance. After 7 unexcused absences, a referral will be made to Kandiyohi County Truancy for Child Educational Neglect and a Child Protective Services report will be made by the school.
Some important points about truancy are:

- The school reserves the right to determine if an absence is excusable
- Valid excuses from attendance at school are limited by the State of Minnesota to the following:
- Illness, verified by the parent or guardian. A physician's verification will be needed after the tenth absence due to illness.
- Health appointments, verified by a note from the visited professional, stating the date and time of the visit.
- An extreme family emergency is at the discretion of the school administrator.
- Religious observance i.e. funeral, wedding, etc.
- Appearance in court, verified with proper documentation.
- Missed bus, weather, oversleeping, working at home, lacking private transportation, and shopping with a parent are some examples of excuses that are not valid and will be dealt with on a truancy basis.

Refer to WPS Policy 503 - Student Attendance

When your child is absent, it is very important that you notify the school so that the reason for the absence can be properly recorded. In order to make it as convenient as possible, you may use one of the following methods to notify the school:

- Calling the attendance answering service which is available 24 hours a day.

- Kennedy - (320) 214-6682
- Lakeland - (320) 263-5021
- Roosevelt - (320) 231-8481

- Sending a signed note with your child when he/she returns to school.
- Coming directly to the school attendance office to report the absence.

When reporting an absence, please include the following information:

- Child's Name
- Date of absence
- Reason for absence
- Name of person reporting if by phone and signature if by note
- Phone number where parent or guardian can be reached
- A homework request prior to 12:00pm may be picked up from the main office between 2:45pm and 3:45pm

Parents or guardians who choose to have their child absent from school for an extended period of time must make prior arrangements with school administration.

New for 2025-2026:

- Families can call into the school excusing their child 10 times stating personal reasons. After the 10th absence, these days will be unexcused and count towards truancy.
- Families can call into the school excusing their child 10 times stating illness, without documentation. After the 10th illness day without documentation, those days will be unexcused and count towards truancy.

Building Security

In an effort to promote building safety, only the main entrances to school buildings are open from the outside throughout the school day. **In addition, all visitors are required to show ID entering the building, then report to the main office immediately upon entering the building.** At the main office, visitors will sign in and be given a visitor identification badge to wear while on site. Parents are asked to come to the school office to sign all children out of the building if he/she leaves before the end of the school day. Children are released **ONLY** to legal parents or guardians. Grandparents, friends, or relatives must have written permission from the parent and a valid photo ID to pick up children from school. If there are custody issues within the family, a court order is required to identify parental rights and access to the child.

Willmar Public School employees wear employee identification badges while on duty to designate to students and visitors their status as a school employee.

Parent/Guardian Volunteers

To ensure the safety of our students, we require criminal background checks on the following:

- Any volunteer who accompanies students off campus (i.e.. chaperones for field trips).
- Any volunteer who is responsible for working with students on campus, but outside of the regular classroom structure.
- Any volunteer who is responsible for working with students in the classroom or on a regular basis.

Volunteer background checks do not need to be done every year. Volunteers are required to complete a background check every 5 years. Once you have been approved through our volunteer background check process, you will be cleared to volunteer within the next 5 years . To inquire whether you already have a cleared volunteer background check on file, please contact Human Resources at 320-231-8514. To complete the requirements to volunteer, visit the school district website.

Discipline

Misbehavior by one student can disrupt the learning process for many other students. In addition, students must learn to practice good safety habits, value academic honesty, respect the rights of others, and obey the law. For detailed information on the Student Code of Conduct and consequences for violations, see the "Student Discipline" school district policy 506.

Bullying Prohibition

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 school district 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 the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, the school 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 the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior. (Please refer to Policy 514 on the District Website for more details).

Harassment and Violence Prohibition

The school district strives to maintain a learning and working environment free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. (Please refer to Policy 413 on the district website for more details.)

Hazing Prohibition

Hazing is prohibited. No student will plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in hazing. Students who violate this rule will be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the school district's "Student Discipline" policy 506.

Notice of Violent Behavior by Students

The school district will give notice to teachers and other appropriate school district staff before students with a history of violent behavior are placed in their classrooms. Prior to giving this notice, district officials will inform the student's parent or guardian that the notice will be given. The student's parents/guardians have the right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

Weapons Policy

No student or nonstudent, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. Employees are restricted from carrying or possessing firearms while acting in the course and scope of employment. The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.
Definition: "Weapon" means any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nunchucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. No person shall possess, objects, devices or instruments shall be treated as weapons including, but not limited to, weapons listed above which are broken or nonfunctional, look-alike guns; toy guns; and any object that is a facsimile of a real weapon. No person shall use articles designed for other purposes (i.e. lasers or laser pointers, belts, combs, pencils, files, scissors, etc.) to inflict bodily harm and or intimidate and such use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure and Process

The school district is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, or age in its programs and activities.
The school district does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities, and it is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The school district is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

Any student, parent, or guardian having questions regarding the application of Title IX and its regulations and/or this policy and grievance process should discuss them with the Title IX Coordinator. The school district's Title IX Coordinator(s) is:

Elizabeth Windingstad, Human Resources Director
(320) 231-8520, windingstade@willmar.k12.mn.us
Willmar District Office 611 5th Street SW, Willmar

Questions relating solely to Title IX and its regulations may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator(s), the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or both.

Clothing and Personal Items

While there is no specific dress code, we hope that students will use good judgment in choosing proper school attire, especially during extreme cold and hot weather. Caps, hats, scarves, or bandanas cannot be

worn inside the school building. We believe that neat and proper dress contributes to desirable attitudes and behavior.

Articles of clothing promoting drug/tobacco use, violence, suggestive or exploitive language, profanity, or symbolism reflecting gang affiliation are not allowed. Dress should never distract students from their learning, therefore undergarments and midriffs must be covered. Students wearing any of the above-mentioned clothing will either be asked to find an alternate clothing item from the nurse's office or call home for a more appropriate garment item to be brought in.

Under Minnesota law, school lockers are school district property. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for students' convenience. School officials may inspect the interior of lockers for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

Students' personal possessions within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials will provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched, unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

Footwear in Physical Education is a safety issue. **ALL CHILDREN ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR TENNIS SHOE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION.** Platform shoes, clogs, shoes without backs or toes and roller blade shoes are examples of inappropriate footwear.

When students bring things to school, especially if they are attractive, they can get broken or lost. Therefore, we ask that you not let children bring toys, portable electronic games/equipment, expensive jewelry or clothing, money, and items highly valued by a child or family to school. It is also very important that children not "trade" items. The school cannot monitor these items or actions closely enough to avoid disappointment and hard feelings if they should be lost, broken, or stolen.

Cold Weather Policy

Students will go outside for recess unless the air temperature is below 0°, or the wind-chill creates a temperature below -5° F. **Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing for cold weather; including jackets, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants, and scarves.**

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

If you insist on your child having a cell phone/electronic device at school, they must be turned off prior to entering the building and be kept in their backpack/locker during the school day. Willmar Schools are not responsible for the theft or loss of any electronic device brought to school. This is to ensure the privacy and safety of all students and to eliminate disruptions in the classroom setting. Consequences for not following school procedures will be handled as follows:

1. 1st offense - cell phone/electronic device will be kept in the office and returned to the student at the end of the day.
2. 2nd offense - cell phone/electronic device will be kept in the office until a parent comes to pick it up.

Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their school supplies. They can be found on the building website. If a student needs assistance with supplies please contact the office/teacher. Students could be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact the office.

Report Cards

Student progress is reported to parents at the conclusion of each TERM in Grades K-5.

Student Records

Student records are classified as public, private, or confidential. State and federal laws protect student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents/guardians and eligible students with certain rights. For the purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. For detailed information, see the school district's "Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records" policy 515.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are conducted twice a year for all students, grades K-5. An appointed time is sent home just prior to the Parent/Teacher conferences. The purpose of the conference is to:

- Cooperatively set academic and social goals for each child

- Review the student's progress
- Share with one another expectations, accomplishments, and problems

Parents may request a conference with school personnel at any time during the school year when they may have questions or concerns about their child's academics, programs, behavior, etc. Please contact the school to schedule these conferences.

Non School-Sponsored Materials on School Premises

The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes distributing nonschool-sponsored material, subject to school district regulations and procedures, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner. For detailed information, see the complete "Distribution of Nonschool-Sponsored Materials on School Premises by Students and Employees" school district policy 505.

Homeroom Placement

The placement of students in the appropriate learning environment begins in the spring of the year and is completed in the summer after new student registration. Placement information is received from teachers, parents, social workers, special education staff, and administration. Class size, cultural diversity, and gender ratios are considered. With the student's special abilities and needs in mind, an assignment is made with a teacher. Parents are welcome to provide information about the best learning environment for their child or special needs that should be considered, but requesting the names of specific teachers is not allowed.

Pledge of Allegiance

Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America weekly. Any person who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice. Students will also receive instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag.

Retention of Students

The Willmar Public Schools recognizes that each child develops and grows in a unique pattern and that pupils should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their social, emotional, physical and academic needs. The promotion or retention of a student comes through a recommendation to the building principal by the homeroom teacher. Every effort shall be made to remediate a pupil's deficiencies before retention is recommended. If retention of a child is going to be considered, the following steps will take place:

1. Parents or legal guardians will be notified of the possibility of the pupil's retention no later than parent teacher conferences that are held in February. Interventions that have been tried will be discussed and instructional strategies going forward will be reviewed.
2. Retention decisions will be made before the end of the year. A consensus must be reached on what is best for the student by educators and parents.

Curriculum

Please refer to the District Website for curriculum information.

1. www.willmar.k12.mn.us
2. Click on "Academics" at the top
3. Click on "Academics and Curriculum"

Title I

Please refer to the district website for information about Title I, including the district Parent Engagement Plan- Title 1-Willmar Public Schools

Student Support

Please refer to the District Website for student support service information.

1. www.willmar.k12.mn.us
2. Click on "Departments" at the top

For more information please contact your child's Building Administration.

Assessments

Willmar Public Schools uses a variety of tools to measure and determine a student's academic growth, progress toward meeting state academic standards, and English Language development including:

- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) (Grades 3-5)
- ACCESS for English Language Learners (Grades K-5)
- FAST Reading and Math Assessments (Grades K-5)
- CogAT Assessment (Grade 2)
- Classroom assessment and more

For more information about assessments, school testing calendars, and how results are shared with families please visit Assessments/Testing-Willmar Public Schools.

Parents Rights to Know

Each school year school districts must notify parents/guardians of children attending Title I schools that they can request information regarding the professional qualification of their child's teacher(s) or

paraprofessional(s). A paraprofessional provides academic or other support for students under the direct supervision of a teacher. If a student receives instruction from a teacher who is not highly qualified, parents/guardians must be notified. If you would like to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s), please contact your child's school.

Community Ed. Early Childhood Family Ed.

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) is to help parents provide for their children's learning and development and to help young children to develop their physical, cognitive, and social potentials. Community Education School Readiness programs are available for three, four- and five-year-old children not yet in Kindergarten. School Readiness provides children with a variety of opportunities to participate in early childhood programs that enable them to enter school with the skills and behaviors needed for them to progress and flourish.

For more information, contact Abby Zylstra the Early Childhood Program Coordinator at 231-7250.

Food and Nutrition Services School Meal Programs

Willmar Elementary School has a closed lunch period. Students must have a student Personal Identification Number (PIN Number) to eat in the cafeteria. Breakfast and Lunch Menus are planned by the Director of Food and Nutrition Services, Assistant Director, and Head Cooks at each site. Input for menus is received from students, parents and school staff. Menus are planned to meet the Meal Pattern Requirements for Breakfast and Lunch established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Our goal is to serve quality, nutritious meals to all students and to encourage healthy eating habits. **Please let us know by calling 231-231-8560 if your child has any special dietary needs.**

PIN Numbers

Each Student has their own PIN Number that they are given at the start of their school career. Your student will use the same PIN number every school year. Students enter their PIN Number into a keypad, which is matched with a student photo.
Your PIN Number is confidential – please do not share this number with other students.

Lunch Guests

If a Guest wants to have Lunch with a student, we ask that you call the school office the morning of the visit so we can add you to our Lunch total for the day. The cost for an Adult Lunch is $5.00 (may change for the 2025-2026 school year per state requirements). We encourage you to eat a school meal with your child rather than bring in food purchased outside of the school.

2026-2027 Pricing:

Breakfast and lunch meals will be free for enrolled K-12 students this upcoming school year. This covers ONE breakfast and ONE lunch. Any additional items or second entrees will be charged based on our ala carte price lists.

Pricing:	
Student Breakfast	FREE
Student Lunch	FREE
Milk (Extra)	$0.75
Adult Price Meals	$2.50 - Breakfast $5.15 - Lunch *(May Change Based on MDE Requirements)*
Ala Carte Pricing	Price Range $0.25-$2.50

Applications for Educational Benefits:

Even though meals are free for the 2026-2027 school year, we encourage all households, who do not qualify directly with the state and did not receive a letter confirming so from the district, to apply for educational benefits.

If your family qualifies, your family may be eligible for these additional benefits: reduced testing fees, reduced athletic fees, scholarships, and the SUN bucks program.

You can get an application from your school office, District Office (WEAC) or online at **www.willmar.k12.mn.us.**
You can also complete the Application for Educational Benefits (Free and Reduced Meal Application) online through your Parent Portal Account.

Meal Account Balances

We operate on a pre-paid system, meaning that meal charging is not allowed by School Board Policy. Second meals and ala carte items must be paid for by depositing money into the student's meal account or the student having cash in hand before meals are

served. It is very important to stay current on your meal account. With meals being free this school year, we are still encouraging households to put money on their child(rens) account so they are able to purchase ala carte items or second meals. Accounts will not be allowed to be charged unless funds are available.

Parent Portal – You will need access to Parent Portal in order to make on-line payments. By signing up for Parent Portal, you will be able to view the balance, check the activity of your student's meal account and make on-line payments. If you do not have access to Parent Portal, please pick up an application at your student's school office or print one off from the District Website, under the Parents section, select Campus Portal, then scroll down to select the Parent Portal Activation Request.

WEAC (District Office) – You may drop off payments at our District Office anytime between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday at 611 5th Street SW, Willmar, MN. In most cases, this payment is applied immediately, but it can take up to 24 hours to be applied.

WEAC (District Office) Drop Box – We have a drop box located at the front of the building where you can drop off meal payments anytime. In most cases, all payments received by 9:30 a.m. will be on your student's account before Lunch, but it can take up to 24 hours to be applied so please plan accordingly.

Student's School Office – You may send money with your student to school. These funds need to be brought to the office before 9:00 a.m. in order to be entered on your student's account the same day. If your payment is received after 9:00 a.m., it will take up to 24 hours to be applied.

Auto Withdrawal – We offer Automatic Withdrawal from a checking or savings account. You may choose to have money withdrawn once or twice a month. **Please be sure to fill out a new form each school year and include a voided check or voided withdrawal slip.**

Meals from Home

The School District encourages parents, if you want to send a meal from home, to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value per the District's Wellness Policy. The Policy can be found on the District Website under Policies. If a Fast Food meal is brought in, the parent/guardian and child will eat in a designated area outside of the Cafeteria. If you bring a meal from home, you may purchase milk for $0.65 per carton.

Special Dietary Needs

If your child has any special diet needs, please have your medical provider fill out a special diet form and review our special Dietary Needs Policy found on the district website under our Food and Nutrition page. Special diet forms do not need to be renewed annually unless something has changed.
Lactose Reduced Milk, Soy, or Almond Milk will be provided upon receiving a written request from parents and/or guardians.
Contact the Assistant Director of Food and Nutrition Services at 320-231-8560 with any questions.

Lunch Site Options:

We offer a hot lunch option daily along with a cold alternate lunch meal. Students will be able to select their choice with their teacher each day. We encourage you to read through the printed menus with your children to help them make a decision. Students may purchase a second meal at the current adult meal price or additional Ala Carte item price (prices vary). There must be money in hand or on their account before charging extra items or entrees.

Breakfast Option:

Students and staff can access Breakfast in the hallways or in their classroom (depending on the site and the option available) each morning.

School Meals Policy #534:

The United States Department of Agriculture and Minnesota Department of Education, who oversee the School Nutrition Programs, require a copy of the school district's School Meals Policy #534 be shared with you for your reference. Please find a copy on the following three pages. The School District's School Meals Policy can also be found on the District's Website under Food and Nutrition Services, then Policies.

For more information regarding School Nutrition Programs and forms you might need, please call the Food and Nutrition Services office at 320-231-8526, or email the district at wpsfns@willmar.k12.mn.us.

Home Prepared Food

Willmar Public Schools abides by State Health Department recommendations and regulations regarding the serving of food in school:

This department requires that food which is served in a food establishment as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 157, shall be obtained from sources which are approved and inspected by either the federal, state, or local regulatory authority.

Accordingly, if a regulatory inspecting agency observes the practice of serving food obtained from

sources which do not conform with the requirements discussed herein, this situation would be construed as a violation of Minnesota Department of Health Rules, chapter 4625.3201, subpart 1, and appropriate remedial action would be required to be taken.

Willmar Public Schools prohibits the distribution and service of food items including treats which are prepared in individual homes. Food for classroom parties, birthday celebrations, or any occasion food that is served in school, must be purchased from a store which is subject to state food inspection regulations. **All food to be shared with students must be commercially prepared, prepackaged, unopened, and when possible, individually wrapped.** This action is needed in order to take a firm preventative stand against the spread of germs and disease.

Tobacco-Free Schools

School district students and staff have the right to learn and work in an environment that is tobacco-free. School policy is violated by any individual's use of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or carrying or using activated electronic delivery devices in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Students may not possess any type of tobacco,tobacco-related devices, or electronic delivery devices in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Any student who violates this policy is subject to school district discipline. For more detailed information, see school district policy 419.

Health Services

Health Office Student Handbook K-12

The model of health services in Willmar Public Schools uses a combination of Licensed School Nurses (LSN), Registered Nurses (RN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), health assistants, paraprofessionals, and office staff.

- School nurses provide a variety of services including health screening for vision and hearing, administration of daily medications to students, and providing first aid and episodic care. The Licensed School Nurse or RN develops individualized health plans for those students who have specific medical needs and who may require medical attention during the school day.
- Minnesota State Law requires schools to maintain a permanent health record for every child registered in the district showing immunizations and health conditions. Health information pertinent to the student's safety and ability to learn in school is requested upon entrance to the Willmar School system. Parents are encouraged to notify the school of health problems, updated vaccines, or diagnosis of infectious disease. Information is considered confidential and shared with school personnel only as needed.

Parents need to inform their Bus Company or after-school programs including sports of any health concerns for their child.

- Palmer Bus Service (Kandiyohi): (320) 382-6421
- Willmar Bus Service: (320) 235-2110
- Cardinal Place: (320) 214-6680
- Community Education.: (320) 231-8490

Immunizations

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 121A requires that all children who are enrolled in a Minnesota school be immunized before starting school. These requirements can be waived only for medical reasons or if you are conscientiously opposed to a particular immunization. For more information, contact the Minnesota Department of Health website: www.health.state.mn.us/immunize. All students are expected to be in compliance on the first day of school. A student is considered compliant once we have documentation of the required immunizations or a valid medical or conscientious exemption on file.

Illness and Communicable Diseases

General Guidelines are listed below; however, exceptions may occur when there are attendance concerns or special health conditions. A child should not come to school (and will be sent home from school) for the following reasons:

- If your child has a fever of 100°F or more, the child should stay home for at least 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal, without fever-reducing medication.
- If your child has vomited or has diarrhea, the child should not return to school until at least 24 hours after the last episode.
- If your child has an undiagnosed rash, please contact your healthcare **provider before sending the child to school.**
- **If your child feels ill enough that it interferes with their learning process and they would not benefit from being at school, consider keeping them home.**
- **If you have questions or concerns about sending your child to school due to illness,**

please contact the health office at your child's school.

When your child is ill, please call the school daily to report the illness. If we call because your child is ill, please make arrangements for your child to be picked up within an hour.
A physician's note is needed to be excused from gym class. Teachers can allow a written parent note for 1 day, but subsequent days will need a note from a physician. This also applies to students who stay indoors at recess time.

Administration of Medication in Schools

If it's necessary for prescription or over-the-counter medications to be given during the school day, please provide the following:

- A completed Medication Consent Form. This form MUST be completed and signed by the licensed health care provider and signed by the parent/guardian.
- A new form is required annually and for all changes in medication.
- All medication MUST be supplied by the family in the fully-labeled original container.
- All medication MUST be picked up at the end of the school year or it will be disposed of by the district; no medications are kept on site over the summer break.
- Review the District Student Medication Policy.

Latex Products

Students are NOT to bring products containing Latex to the school sites.

Student Injury

1. Parents are not notified by school officials of minor injuries (cuts, scratches, scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc.). Students are instructed to report these to parents when they return home.
2. Parents are notified of more serious injuries so they can make a decision on whether or not to seek medical care. School personnel can give guidance but the decision to obtain medical care depends on individual preference of parent or guardian.
3. Parents are expected to come to school and take the child home or to a healthcare provider.
4. It is the responsibility of the family to pay medical bills. Families may choose to purchase an accident insurance policy. Participation in this insurance plan is voluntary. Brochures are available at school and the Willmar Education and Arts Center (WEAC)

School Bus Rules and Regulations

The Willmar Public School System provides bus transportation to and from school for eligible elementary children living one mile or more from the school of attendance. It is necessary to have certain rules and regulations in order to protect the welfare of the child. Misconduct and carelessness can cause injury to themselves or their fellow passengers. Please review with your school-age children the safety regulations listed below.

1. Only pupils assigned to the bus by school authorities may be transported.
2. Students will be allowed to get off the bus only at their home, childcare provider, or school. The only exception to this would be with written permission or notification from the student's parent, guardian, or school district:
    a. Board the bus only at the assigned pick-up points
    b. Stay back from the curb until the bus has come to a complete stop before entering. The 8-way system (red lights and stop sign) will be on when the bus comes to a complete stop. When stopped the bus door will be opened for entering.
    c. Willmar Public Schools does not provide supervision at the bus stop

On the bus:

- Immediately follow the directions of the driver
- Sit in your seat facing forward
- Talk quietly and use appropriate language
- Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself
- No fighting, harassment, intimidation or horseplay
- Do not throw any object
- No eating, drinking, smoking or use of tobacco or drugs
- Do not bring any weapon or dangerous objects on the school bus
- Keep all parts of your body inside the bus. Windows are not to be lowered below the black safety line indicated in each bus
- Bus seats are to be shared
- No gang-related behaviors

When unloading, students are to exit the doorway and move directly **AWAY FROM THE BUS**. If crossing the roadway is necessary, walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus. If multiple students have unloaded, wait as a group and cross when the driver gives the signal. Make sure you can see the bus

driver and the driver can see you. Always watch for traffic to know it is safe to cross. Continue to watch for traffic while crossing. A 'sounding of the bus horn' is usually a signal of danger. Once the student is safely across the roadway, the bus driver will extinguish the red lights and retract the stop arm of the bus.

The bus company will issue a written transportation report when unacceptable behavior occurs. Administrators will determine consequences for unacceptable bus behavior and will communicate with families. The bus safety guidelines may be enforced as follows:

- First Offense - Warning
- Second Offense - 3 school-day suspension from riding the bus
- Third Offense - 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
- Fourth Offense - 10 school-day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent/School Bus Discipline Contract
- Further offense - individually considered. Students may be suspended for a longer period of time, including the remainder of the school year.

Parents are always notified if the student is to lose bus privileges.

Palmer Bus: (320) 382-6421
Willmar Bus: (320) 235-2110

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Independent School District #347, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) declares the following is "directory information" as provided in said act and that information relating to students may be made public if said information is in any of the following categories:

- Student name, address, telephone number, parent name, email address
- Date and place of birth
- Sex
- Participation in school-sponsored activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance
- Grade Level
- Enrollment status
- Photograph

Directory information does not include identifying data which references religion, race, color, social position, or nationality.

Any parent or student in the district may notify the district of their desires that some or none of the above information is to be released without their consent by contacting the building principal in which said student attends and completing the form; (FERPA) - Annual Notice for Disclosure of School

Directory Information. The notification must be given to the district in writing by September 2024. Copies of the FERPA - Annual Notice for Disclosure form are available at building sites or the district office upon request.

Language Access Plan (LAP)

WPS Language Access Plan

Willmar Public Schools is committed to ensuring equitable access to all school programs, services, and communications for students and families who speak languages other than English or who require additional assistance due to a disability. In alignment with Minnesota Statute § 123B.32 and federal civil rights laws, this Language Access Plan outlines the tools and procedures in place to render effective language assistance to our community.

Cardinal S.T.A.R.S.

Behavior Matrix

Cardinal S.T.A.R.S. are successful learners who practice teamwork, acceptance, respect, and safety.

	Hallway	Bathroom	Lunchroom	Playground
Successful Learner(s)	* Keep your eyes on the leaders * Arrive on time	* Be quick and return to learning	* Eat to energize your body and mind * Eat first and talk later	* Line up quickly and quietly when you hear the whistle * Respect equipment and return it to its place
Teamwork	* Walk in a straight line	* Throw paper towels in garbage	* Wait your turn * Encourage others to clean up	* Be a good sport * Share equipment * Be nice and take turns
Accepting	* Smile	* Respect others' privacy	* Appropriate Manners * Welcome all friends	* Include everyone * Invite others to play
Respectful	* Silent voices	* Silent Voices * Appropriate use of toilet paper, paper towels, and soap	* Quiet Voices * Clean up after yourself	* Listen to playground supervisors * Use kind words when speaking to others
Safe	* Keep hands and feet to yourself * Keep eyes forward *Walk	* Walk * Keep hands and feet to yourself * Wash hands	* Stay seated *Hands and Feet to self * Walk * Enjoy your own food	* Keep hands and feet to yourself * Use equipment safely

2026-2027 DISTRICT CALENDAR

AUGUST 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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OCTOBER 2026						
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NOVEMBER 2026						
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DECEMBER 2026						
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JANUARY 2027						
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FEBRUARY 2027						
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MARCH 2027						
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APRIL 2027						
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MAY 2027						
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JUNE 2027						
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JULY 2027						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

KEY DATES

Aug. 18-20	New Teacher Induction
Aug. 24-27	Teacher Workshop (PreK-12)
Aug. 31	1st Day of School (6-12)
Sept. 2	1st Day of School (K-5)
Sept. 7	Labor Day - Holiday (NO SCHOOL)
Oct. 14	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL) Required PD day for hourly staff
Oct. 15-16	MEA Break (NO SCHOOL)
Oct. 30	End of Term 1
Nov. 2	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL) Required PD day for hourly staff
Nov. 25	Teacher Conference Comp Day (NO SCHOOL)
Nov. 26-27	Thanksgiving Holiday (NO SCHOOL)
Dec. 23-Jan. 1	Winter Break (NO SCHOOL)
Jan. 4	School Resumes
Jan. 15	End of Term 2
Jan. 18	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL) Required PD day for hourly staff
Feb. 15	President's Day (NO SCHOOL)
Mar. 10	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL) Required PD day for hourly staff
Mar. 19	End of Term 3
Mar. 22-26	Spring Break (NO SCHOOL)
Mar. 29	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL)
Mar. 30	School Resumes
Apr. 30	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice (NO SCHOOL)
May 17	Teacher Conference Comp Day (NO SCHOOL)
May 28	End of Term 4
May 28	Graduation
May 31	Memorial Day - Holiday
June 1	PreK-12 Teacher Inservice
June 2	Teacher Workshop (PreK-12)

NO SCHOOL
END OF TERM

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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. When all students participate in statewide assessments, schools and educators have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools continuously improve the education they provide and 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 districts and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments give educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs)
MCA and the alternate assessments (Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate MCA) are annual assessments in reading, mathematics, and science that provide a snapshot of student learning aligned to the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
The WIDA ACCESS and WIDA 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 gives families a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students may use MCA results for:

- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) enrollment eligibility in grade 10.
- 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.

English learners who take the WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from EL services.

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 on 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 following page. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

Updated March 2026

Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the student will not have the opportunity to exit from EL services.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Certain statewide assessment calculations include all eligible students, including those who do not participate. Non-participation impacts accountability results, which 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 additional consequences for not participating.

Explore the Statewide Testing page for more information.

(education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing)

Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1% 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 October 1 each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

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 submitted to your student's school or district office prior to testing.**

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

Date of Birth: _____ Current Grade in School: ____ Student ID Number (if known): _____

School: _____ District: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Reason for Refusal: _____

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) your student will not participate in this school year:

☐ Reading MCA/Alternate MCA ☐ Science MCA/Alternate MCA

☐ Mathematics MCA/MTAS ☐ WIDA ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on participation decisions for local assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20____ to 20____ school year.)