

FRESHWATER



Education District 6004

Freshwater
Area Learning Center
Handbook
2026-2027



www.fed.k12.mn.us

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement, Vision, and Goals	Page 3
School Calendar	Page 4
Testing Schedule	Page 4
Education Option Qualifiers	Page 5
PSEO	Page 6
Student Policies	Pages 6-19
Transportation	Page 6
Weather	Page 6
Lunch Break	Page 7
Student Groups	Page 7
Fire, Civil Defense & Lockdown Drills	Page 7
Telephone	Page 7
Cell phones	Page 7
Student Pledge of Allegiance	Page 7
Extra-Curricular Activities	Page 7
Attendance	Page 8
Significant Adults	Page 8
School Year Admissions	Page 8
School Store	Page 8
MN Academic Standards	Page 8
Work Experience	Page 9
Clothing	Page 10
Summer School	Page 10
Directory Information	Page 10
Night School	Page 11
Audio/Video Monitoring	Page 11
Classroom and School Ground Rules	Page 11
Hazing Prohibition	Page 11
Bullying	Page 11
Student Fundraising	Page 12
Field Trips	Page 12
Use and Parking of Vehicle: (Inspection/Search)	Page 12
Distribution of Non-School Materials	Page 13
Student Medication	Page 13
Use of the Internet	Page 13
Student Conduct/Student Discipline	Page 15
Student Rights	Page 15
Student Responsibilities	Page 15
Code of Student Conduct/Student Discipline	Page 16
Chemical Health Policy	Page 16
Locker or Student Search	Page 17
Smoking and Tobacco Policy	Page 18
Harassment and Violence	Page 18
Staff background checks	Page 19
Policy on Weapons	Page 19
Weapons Assessment	Page 19
Online Learning Program	Page 20
Retention/destruction of Special Education Records	Page 21
Indoor Air Quality Notice/Photo opt Out Form Info	Page 22
Signature Page	Page 24
Assessments: Parent/Guardian Participation Guide & Refusal	Page 25

Mission Statement

Freshwater Area Learning Center provides a well-rounded educational foundation through non-traditional methods within a respectful, safe, secure environment.

Vision

Assist students in becoming self-fulfilled, responsible, contributing citizens of their community and the global society.

Goals

Provide opportunities for academic success for all students through the use of best education practices and use of current and appropriate materials.

Provide a respectful, safe, and secure environment.

Build healthy relationships through support, trust, honesty, and acceptance.

Recognize and address social/emotional needs and chemical concerns, and provide support and guidance to enhance the learning experience.

Meet a student's learning needs through individualized methods.

Provide opportunities to meet MN Academic Standards and attain a diploma.

Involve family/significant adults in the educational process of the student.

Provide transition planning, follow up and support for career and life skills development.

Provide opportunities for career exploration and vocational experiences.

Schedule 2026-27

You can find our school calendar on our website.

- [Wadena ALC](#)
- [Staples ALC](#)

2026-27 Testing/Screening Schedule

While the Minnesota Department of Education strives to ensure this testing schedule remains unaltered, it is subject to change based on assessment decisions made by the state or federal Legislature.

JANUARY 2027

27th-ACCESS and Alternate Access for ELLs begins

MARCH 2027

3rd Reading, Mathematics, and Science MCA and MTAS begin

21st ACCESS and Alternate Access for ELLs ends

MAY 2027

2nd Reading, Mathematics MCA and Reading, Mathematics and Science MTAS ends

9th Science MCA ends

In addition, students will be academically screened using FastBridge and/or Capti (per Read Act policy)

CRITERIA for State Designated Area Learning Centers (ALCs)

M.S. 124D.68, Sub. 1 (Education Options – Purpose). The legislature finds it is critical to provide options for children to succeed in school. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide incentives for and encourage all Minnesota students who have experienced or are experiencing difficulty in traditional education systems to enroll in alternative programs.

Sub. 2 (Eligible Pupils). (a) A pupil under the age of 21 or who meets the requirements of section 120A.20, subdivision 1, paragraph (c), is eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program if the pupil:

1. Performs substantially below the performance level for pupils of the same age, in a locally determined achievement test; or
2. Is behind in satisfactorily completing coursework or obtaining credits for graduation, or;
3. Is pregnant or is a parent, or;
4. Has been assessed as chemically dependent, or;
5. Has been excluded or expelled according to sections 121A.40 to 121A.56; or
6. Has been referred by a school district for enrollment in an eligible program or a program pursuant to section 124D.69; or
7. Is a victim of physical or sexual abuse; or
8. Has experienced mental health problems; or
9. Has experienced homelessness sometime within the six months before requesting a transfer to an eligible program; or
10. Speaks English as a second language or English Learner; or

11. Has withdrawn from school or has been chronically truant.
 12. Is being treated in a hospital in the seven-county metro area for cancer or other life-threatening illness, or is the sibling of an eligible pupil who is currently being treated, and resides with the pupil's family at least 60 miles beyond the outside boundary of the seven-county metro area.
- B. A pupil otherwise qualifying under paragraph (a) who is at least 21 years of age and not yet 22 years of age, and is an English learner with an interrupted formal education according to section 124D.59, subd. 2a, is eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program under 124D.68 and concurrent enrollment courses offered under section 124D.09, sub. 10.

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)

Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is a program that allows eligible 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students to earn both high school and college credit while still enrolled in high school. Students may take college-level, nonsectarian courses through participating postsecondary institutions.

Most PSEO courses are offered on college campuses, though some are available online. Each college or university sets its own admission requirements for PSEO students.

- **11th and 12th grade students** may enroll in PSEO courses on a full- or part-time basis.
- **10th grade students** may initially enroll in one career or technical education course. If they earn a grade of "C" or higher, they may become eligible to take additional PSEO courses.

There is no cost to students for tuition, required textbooks, or course-related fees. To participate, students must meet residency and eligibility requirements outlined in **Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.09**, and must adhere to program participation limits.

Students who are not on track to graduate may still be eligible to participate in the PSEO program, as determined by the school district. Financial assistance may also be available for qualifying students to help cover transportation costs to college campuses.

Each year, schools are required to provide information about PSEO to all students in grades 8–11 and their families by **March 1**. Students interested in participating in PSEO must notify their school by **May 30** of their intent to enroll for the following school year.

For the most up-to-date information on the PSEO program, please visit the Minnesota Department of Education's Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) webpage.

STUDENT POLICIES

The Freshwater Area Learning Center is a Minnesota public school. All students enrolled at the ALC have the legal right to access academic courses, extracurricular activities, and student services offered by their home district or the ALC's host district.

When a member school district refers a student to the Freshwater ALC Mid-Level Program, that student remains officially enrolled with the referring district. Upon successful completion of the ALC Mid-Level Program—or when the student ages out—they will transition back to their home district for continued education and services.

Transportation

Bus transportation may be available within the district where the ALC site is located. Students have the right to use this service for travel to and from that district's school building.

Students who ride the bus to school are expected to ride the bus home unless prior written permission is provided by a parent or guardian and approved by ALC staff.

Student behavior on the bus is governed by the policies of the district providing the transportation. Disrespectful, unsafe, or disruptive conduct may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of bus privileges. Bus drivers are responsible for reporting any inappropriate behavior to ALC staff for follow-up.

Weather-Related Closures and Schedule Changes

The school district in which the ALC site is located determines all weather-related decisions, including late starts, early dismissals, and school closures. The ALC will follow the schedule set by that district.

- In the event of a schedule change, a mass notification will be sent to families and staff.
- Participating member districts will be notified of any midday closures.

If the host district announces an early dismissal or closure, the ALC will follow that same schedule.

Lunch Break

School lunches are available to all students at the ALC site. Free and reduced-price lunch programs are offered in accordance with state and federal guidelines. All families are encouraged to complete the application to determine eligibility—forms are available in the ALC office. Students may choose to:

- Receive lunch provided by the host district, or
- Bring lunch from home.

Student Groups

The Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs student-based organization is STARS (Success, Team, Achievement, Responsible, and Self-esteem). STARS hosts three events for students to participate in: Fall Leadership Conference, Winter Legislative Day, and Spring Competition/Demonstration Event.

Fire Drills and Civil Defense Drills

Fire drills are held for the purpose of evacuating the students out of the building safely and quickly in case of an emergency. Civil defense drills are conducted to ensure students know the procedure in case of a tornado. Maps are located in each room, indicating where students are to go in case of a fire or civil defense drill.

Lockdown Drills

Lockdown drills are practiced to ensure the safety of students in case of outsider threats and intrusion.

Telephone

Students will only be allowed to use the phone for school-related business.

Cell Phones

There will not be any cell phone use during class time unless approved by the teacher. In the event the cell phone is used inappropriately, the cell phone can be confiscated for the day. Each site may determine that there will be no cell phone use inside the ALC building.

Pledge of Allegiance

All public-school students shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America one or more times each week. Anyone 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.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are allowed to participate in all extracurricular activities within their home district. Minnesota State law provides that it shall be unlawful for a minor to purchase, consume, or have in possession any intoxicating liquor. Minnesota Statute 609.685, sub 3, provides that it is unlawful for a student to use tobacco in any form. In view of State laws, your school districts have adopted the rules and regulations of the State of Minnesota State High School League. Special provisions dictate consequences for violation of these regulations. School attendance may have an impact on your participation in League-sponsored activities. If you have questions regarding the above State Law, consult your home district's handbook. Freshwater Area Learning Center will report violations to your home district.

Attendance (FED Policy 503)

Regular school attendance is essential for academic success. Attending school is both a right and a responsibility for all students. Parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school consistently. Teachers are responsible for taking daily attendance and working collaboratively with students and families to address any attendance concerns. The ALC is responsible for monitoring attendance and reporting truancy as required by law.

At the Area Learning Center (ALC), students are expected to maintain at least **90% attendance**, unless they have an approved individual attendance plan aligned with Minnesota standards. Verified work hours may count toward this attendance requirement.

If a student does not meet the minimum attendance hours per week, the following steps will be taken:

- 1. Initial Intervention**

The student will meet with their teacher, advisor, or lead teacher to identify barriers and create an improvement plan.

- 2. Parent/Guardian Meeting**

If attendance does not improve, a meeting will be scheduled with the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and advisor to discuss next steps.

- 3. Alternative Options**

If attendance remains below the required level, and the student is age 16 or older, alternative educational options may be explored. These may include night school or returning to the student's home district for the remainder of the quarter.

Significant Adult

An ALC student must identify a Significant Adult as a contact. A Significant Adult may be a parent, relative, guardian, teacher, pastor, etc. If the student is without a significant adult, ALC staff will assist. Significant Adult Responsibilities: Support the success of the student in ALC programs by attending staffing and reviewing quarterly reports with students.

School Year Admissions

- A prospective student must have an intake conference prior to admission.
- The student, a significant adult, and an ALC staff member will attend the conference.
- An appointment must be made for an intake conference.
- Students may enroll at the ALC at any point during the school year. It is not necessary to wait for a quarter or semester break.

School Store

Students may purchase items from the store during the time the store is open. Examples may include snacks, beverages, and school supplies. Items will differ from site to site as well as day to day. All proceeds from the store will be used to benefit the students.

MN Academic Standards

To meet the demands of the 21st Century, Freshwater ALC is focusing on both the basics- the 3 R's of reading, writing, and arithmetic – and on the higher levels of information and skills that students need to succeed in the changing world. Standards define what students should *know* or be able to *do* within a particular discipline.

To receive a high school diploma, a student must meet the state-determined testing requirements and meet the credit/standard requirements of the district issuing the diploma.

The minimum State Graduation Requirements for students graduating in 2015 and beyond are 21.5 credits per year in the following subject matter areas:

English/Language Arts	4 credits
Math	3 credits
(Encompassing at least algebra, geometry and statistics, and probability)	
Science	3 credits
(1 credit Physical Science, 1 credit Biology, and 1 credit Physics or Chemistry)	
Social Studies	3.5 credits
(1 credit in U.S. History, 1 credit in Geography. 0.5 credit in World History, 0.5 credit in economics, and 0.5 credit in government/citizenship)	
Electives	8 credits
1 of which must be in the arts (visual arts, music, theater, dance, or media arts)	

Districts determine the configuration of elective credit requirements. Individual districts may have additional requirements. Freshwater Area Learning Center works with the districts in order to help students meet their graduation credit requirements. The student may receive their diploma from their home school district or from the school district in which the ALC is located. Students must meet the requirements of the district issuing the diploma.

Continual learning plans will be developed with students, parents, and an ALC advisor in accordance with State requirements. Academic credit is awarded for on-task work or units of approved independent study equivalent to quarter hours in their resident district.

Work Experience

Not available at all sites. A vocational licensed teacher or the equivalent must be present to supervise this program. Students must be at least 16 years old to participate in the work experience program.

The sites that do offer credit for work experience utilize the following criteria:

Work Experience credits will be based on classroom performance in the work-experience seminar and on job evaluations. Pay stubs must be submitted to receive Work Experience Credit. Students must also be concurrently enrolled in and attend weekly mandatory work experience seminars. Work experience seminars generate additional credit.

Work Experience students must follow safety regulations for the industry in which they are employed, as prescribed by the Freshwater Area Learning Center Work Experience program and OSHA.

	Credits	Minimum School Hours Needed for full W/E Credit
Freshman	Entire Year	Full Week
Sophomore	Semester I Semester II	Full Week 80% of Full Week

STUDENT POLICIES, continued

Junior	Semester I Semester II	80% of Full Week 50% of Full Week
Seniors	Semester I Quarter 3 Quarter 4	50% of Full Week 40% of Full Week 20% of Full Week

Student Responsibilities:

1. Arrange a work/school plan with the school work experience coordinator.
2. A required, signed agreement must be on file at the ALC.
3. Verify work hours to the ALC with pay stubs or some other form of documentation.
4. Attend the work experience seminars or arrange for a work experience class time.
5. Complete the minimum number of school hours indicated in the table above to obtain full work experience credit. If the student fails to meet their minimum school hours, credit is reduced by the percentage of actual attendance.
6. A maximum of (2) credits per session or (3) per quarter can be earned through work experience.

Clothing

The following shall be considered the requirements for dress at the Freshwater Area Learning Center sites:

1. The midriff area (defined as from neck to mid-thigh) shall be covered at all times.
2. No underwear (thongs, panties, bras, boxer shorts, or briefs) shall be exposed in any way.
3. Outer garments shall be of such thickness that the garments referred to in item 2 do not show.
4. Blouses, shirts, or upper apparel cover the width of both shoulders (at least 2 inches in width).
5. Tank tops, spaghetti strap tops, or strapless apparel will not be allowed.
6. Skirts, skorts, and shorts must be at least mid-thigh. Mid-thigh is defined as covering all of the leg and lower body down to no more than 6 inches from the top of the kneecap.

7. No shirt, blouse, etc. shall be worn that allows the exposure of any part of one's cleavage area.
8. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing in school and at all school-sponsored activities. Clothing with alcohol, tobacco, drug, gang-related colors, or sexually explicit messages will not be allowed.

These requirements are to be enforced during all of the hours and days that the school is normally in session. Any student not in compliance with the above dress code is to be denied entrance into any classroom until the student complies. Failure to comply with the requirements will lead to a warning and immediate correction. Noncompliance will lead to the student returning home until compliance is met.

Summer School

Summer school is available at most ALC sites.

Directory Information

In accordance with federal and state regulations, the district may release directory information that is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, typically within one week of a student's enrollment. Directory information may include:

- Student name
- Address
- Phone number
- Participation in school activities

Additionally, the district considers the **names and birthdates** of students receiving special education services to be directory information for the limited purpose of sharing with the **Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)**. This allows DHS to identify students who may be eligible for or currently enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Program.

If a parent or guardian **does not wish** for their student's directory information to be released, they may opt out by calling the school.

Unless a parent/guardian opts out, directory information **may be shared** as described above.

Night School

Night School is available at the Staples, Wadena, Menahga, and Pillager sites.

Audio and Video Monitoring

In order to provide for the safety and security of our students and staff, our sites and vans are equipped with a video and audio monitoring system. Signs stating "Video and audio monitoring on these premises" are posted at each entrance to the ALC and at other locations as deemed appropriate.

Classroom and School Ground Rules

The rights of other students to study and learn in a quiet environment will be respected. To assure this, students will be expected to follow all rules.

Hazing Prohibition (FED Policy 526)

"Hazing" means committing an act against a student or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term "hazing" includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical brutality
- Physical activity that adversely affects mental or physical health or safety
- Intimidation

- Ostracism
- Activity involving the consumption of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or any other food, liquid, or substance adversely affecting physical or mental health or safety
- Performing an illegal act.

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate education district person designated by the district's hazing policy.

Bullying (FED Policy 514) View the policy in its entirety at Fed.k12.mn.us

“Bullying” means any written or verbal expression, physical act, or gesture or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to one or more students and which substantially interferes with another student’s or the students’ educational benefits, opportunities, or performance. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: conduct by a student against another student that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:

- harming a student; physically or emotionally
- damaging a student’s property;
- placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her property; or
- creating a hostile educational environment for a student.

An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, including the use of electronics known as cyberbullying, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. 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.

The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who is found to have bullied.

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately.

Contact:

Wadena ALC and Mid-level ALC - Heidi Heino 218-631-2281

Staples ALC - Leah Bloemendaal 218-629-6055

Pillager ALC will follow the Pillager ISD policy – contact ALC Director

Menahga ALC will follow the Menahga ISD Policy - contact ALC Director

Student Fundraising (FED Policy 511)

View this policy in its entirety on the Freshwater web page at Fed.k12.mn.us

Field Trips

All student trips will be well planned, conducted in an orderly manner, and in a safe environment, and will relate directly to the objectives of the class or activity for which the trip is requested.

Instructional trips may take place during the school day, be related directly to a course of study, and require student participation. Permission for short-distance, class-related trips (i.e. science class) will be granted through the signed admission form. Parents will be notified of these trips. Trips that are of either a longer time (1/2 to full day) or a longer distance require notification and signed permission forms from the parents for each event.

Some trips students may voluntarily participate in and may take place outside of the regular school day. Examples of trips in this category involve student organization activities and other special interest groups. These may include overnight stays. Financial contributions by students may be requested. These will require a signed parent permission slip for the specific activity.

Rules of conduct and discipline for students and staff shall apply to all student trip activities. The law dictates that students must use their seatbelts and remain buckled up for the duration of the trip if a school vehicle is used.

Use and Parking of Vehicles: Inspection/Search

Students are permitted to park at the ALC while attending classes. This is a privilege, not a right. You are expected to drive carefully and obey the law.

Staff may conduct routine patrols of parking lots and routine inspections of the exterior of the vehicles.

The interiors of motor vehicles, including glove or trunk compartments, may be searched when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of a law and/or district policy or rule. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. Such searches may be conducted without notice, without consent, and without a search warrant. You will be subject to the withdrawal of parking privileges and to discipline if you refuse to open a locked motor vehicle or its compartments upon the request of staff.

It shall be a violation of this policy to store or carry contraband in motor vehicles in an ALC location or to interfere with patrols, inspections, searches, and/or seizures as provided by this policy.

If a search yields contraband, the item will be seized and may be turned over to legal authorities for ultimate disposition when appropriate.

Distribution of Non-School-Sponsored Materials on School Property (FED Policy 505)

Students have the right to distribute at reasonable times and places and in a reasonable manner, non-school-sponsored material. Requests for distribution will be reviewed by the administration on a case-by-case basis. The distribution of the following materials is always prohibited. Materials that:

- are obscene;
- have libelous or slanderous language;
- have indecent or vulgar language;
- advertise or promote illegal products and/or services;
- promote violence or illegal conduct;
- contain insulting or fighting words, and/or contain disruptive materials. Distribution of any of the above will result in disciplinary action. The entire policy is available in the ALC office.

Student Medication (FED Policy 516)

The administration of prescription drugs at school requires a completed, signed request from the student's parent/guardian.

An "Administration of Prescription/Non-Prescription Medications" form must be completed annually (once per school year) and/or when a change in the prescription or requirements for administration occurs.

Prescription medication must come to school in the original container labeled for the student by a pharmacist in accordance with law, and must be administered in a manner consistent with the instructions on the label.

Prescription medications are not to be carried by the student, but will be left with the appropriate education district personnel. Exceptions to this requirement are: prescription asthma medications self-administered with an inhaler; and nonprescription medications. Only prescription medications are governed by the policy.

Acceptable Use of Internet (FED Policy 524)

The use of the education district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right.

The ALC provides students with access to the education district computer system, which includes general Internet access. Its use is for classroom activities and educational research. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school's policies. Uses that might be acceptable on a user's private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited-purpose network.

Unacceptable use of the education district system or the internet may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges;
- payment for damages and repairs;
- discipline under other appropriate policies, including suspensions, expulsion, exclusion;
- or civil or criminal liability under applicable laws.

With respect to all technology devices with internet access, the education district will do its best to monitor the online activities of minors and employ technology protection measures during any use of such computers by minors and adults. The technology protection measures utilized will block or filter internet access to any visual depictions that are:

- obscene;
- pornographic; or
- harmful to minors.

Users should expect NO privacy in the contents of personal files on the education district system.

Routine maintenance and monitoring of the education district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another education district policy, or the law. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or education district policy.

Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual account at any time.

The proper use of the internet and the educational value to be gained from proper internet use is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and employees of the education district.

This policy requires the permission and supervision by the education district's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resources to access the internet.

Students are not allowed to access music through the Internet or play music through the computer.

Freshwater Education District's Policy is to monitor the online activities of minors. The Freshwater Education District will also provide educational information to students regarding appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response behaviors.

Students using the Internet at Freshwater Education District will abide by the following agreement:

1. Students will utilize the computer for educational projects.
2. Students will query appropriate topics for their educational projects.
3. Students will agree to all of the above conditions for the use of Freshwater computers.
4. Students are responsible for protecting their passwords and accept responsibility for all actions using that password.

If a student commits an offense against the rules set forth for the use of the computers, they will be subject to the following minimum consequences:

1st Offense – The student will lose Internet privileges for two weeks.

2nd Offense – The student will lose all computer privileges for two weeks.

3rd Offense – The student will lose all computer privileges for the remainder of the quarter or possibly the remainder of the year.

The signature page (page 22) provided for this handbook is inclusive of the Acceptable Internet Use Agreement, and it must be signed by the user before they gain access to the Internet.

Student Conduct/Student Discipline (FED Policy 506)

All students are entitled to learn and develop in a setting that promotes respect for self, others, and property. Proper positive discipline can only result from an environment that provides options and stresses student self-direction, decision-making, and responsibility. Schools can function effectively only with internal discipline based on mutual understanding of rights and responsibilities.

Students must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner that maintains a climate in which learning can take place. Proper student conduct is necessary to facilitate the education process and to create an atmosphere conducive to high student achievement.

Although this policy emphasizes the development of self-discipline, it is recognized that there are instances when it will be necessary to administer disciplinary measures. It is the position of the school district that a fair and equitable district-wide student discipline policy will contribute to the quality of the students' educational experience. This is in accordance with and subject to the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, MN Stat. 121A.40 through 121A.56.

Staff: All teachers shall be responsible for providing a well-planned teaching/learning environment and shall have primary responsibility for student conduct, with appropriate assistance from the administration. All staff shall be responsible for contributing to the atmosphere of mutual respect within the school. All staff shall enforce the Discipline of infractions of the Code of Student Conduct. In exercising lawful authority, staff may use reasonable force when it is necessary under the circumstances to correct or restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another.

Parents or Legal Guardians: Parents and guardians shall be held responsible for the behavior of their children as determined by law and community practice. They are expected to cooperate with school authorities and to participate regarding the behavior of their children.

Students: All students shall be held individually responsible for their behavior and for knowing and obeying the Code of Student Conduct and this policy.

STUDENT RIGHTS

All students have the right to an education and the right to learn.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students have the responsibility:

- for their behavior and for knowing and obeying all school rules, regulations, policies, and procedures;
- to attend school regularly;
- to pursue and attempt to complete the courses of study prescribed by the state and local school authorities;
- to assist the school staff in maintaining a safe school for all students;
- to be aware of and to comply with federal, state, and local laws;
- to volunteer information in disciplinary cases, should they have knowledge relating to such cases, and to cooperate with school staff as appropriate;
- to respect and maintain the school's property and the property of others;
- to dress and groom in a manner which meets standards of safety and health and common standards of decency and which is consistent with applicable school district policy;
- to avoid inaccuracies in student newspapers or publications and refrain from indecent or obscene language;
- to conduct themselves in an appropriate physical or verbal manner; and
- to recognize and respect the rights of others.

Violations of the above student responsibilities or other policies outlined in the handbook are subject to disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE FOR INFRACTIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the general policy of the ALC to utilize progressive discipline to the extent reasonable and appropriate based upon the specific facts and circumstances of student misconduct. The specific form of the discipline chosen in a particular case is solely within the discretion of the ALC. At a minimum, a violation will yield a verbal warning. The ALC shall, however, impose more severe disciplinary sanctions for any violation warranted by the student's misconduct. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- verbal warning;
- parent conference;
- removal from class;
- referrals;
- suspension; or
- expulsion.

Teachers and staff have the responsibility of attempting to modify disruptive student behavior by such means as conferring with the student, using positive reinforcement, or contacting the student's parents. When such measures fail, or when staff determines it is otherwise appropriate based upon the student's conduct, staff have the authority to remove the student from class. "Removal from class" and "removal" mean any actions taken by a teacher or staff person to prohibit a student from attending a class or activity for a period of time not to exceed five (5 days). Students who are removed from class must be removed to a supervised area.

Grounds for removal from class shall include any of the following:

- willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, including conduct that interferes with a teacher's ability to teach or communicate effectively with students in a class or with the ability of other students to learn;

- willful conduct that endangers surrounding persons, including district employees, the student, or other students, or the property of the school; or
- willful violation of any school rules, regulations, policies, or procedures.

A meeting with the student, teacher/staff, and parent/guardian will be held prior to returning to class.

Chemical Health Policy (FED Policy 502)

The Freshwater Area Learning Center's Mission statement states that we will provide an education within a respectful, safe, and secure environment.

Our goal is to help students understand the nature of the problems associated with alcohol and other drug use, abuse, and dependencies. It is also our desire that students explore and assess the extent of their involvement with chemicals.

The possession, use, distribution, or sale of illicit drugs and alcohol is prohibited on school property or as a part of any school activity. The use of illicit drugs and alcohol is illegal for persons under the age of 21. It has been deemed wrong and harmful.

The use, possession, distribution, or sale of illicit drugs and/or paraphernalia and alcohol on school property will be subject to the following consequences. This standard of conduct is mandated by the Minnesota Department of Education: If a student is suspected (by 2 or more individuals) of being under the influence of an illegal chemical, a parent, guardian, or sponsor will be notified and asked to come to the ALC site, and the student will be sent home.

The following will occur:

- Law enforcement will be notified.
- A parent conference will be held with the administration, chemical counselor, and student.
- The student will be involved in an evaluation or assessment with a chemical counselor at the family's expense.
- Expulsion of the student (this option is required for programs receiving Federal Funds).
- If a student has been using drugs or alcohol, they will not be allowed to drive home or return to an unsupervised setting.

Public education has neither the authority nor the responsibility to make medical or health determinations regarding chemical dependency. However, when observed behavior and other information indicate a high probability of a health threat, the school's responsibilities require that a formal chemical dependency diagnostic interview be completed at the family's expense and a conference with parents, and/or guardian be held. Reasonable suspicion can come verbally from another student, teacher, bus driver, or other school personnel who report concerns.

We believe that alcohol and illicit drug use are very dangerous for students; it is also inappropriate for students to openly verbalize about their use. If such behavior should occur, the student will be asked to set up an appointment with the school's Social Worker and write a brief plan of what is to be discussed.

The Freshwater Area Learning Center will provide a referral to a chemical counselor at the request of a student or the student's family. Education about chemicals and alcohol, including prevention behaviors and programs available, will be provided within the school's curriculum and through special activities and programs.

Support groups for students seeking assistance with their own recovery, or the use/recovery of family or friends, may be available on site, or assistance with referrals will be made when possible.

Locker or Student Search

School authorities may inspect the interior of a locker for any reason at any time, without notice or consent, when they have “reasonable suspicion” that a search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. MN Statute 121A.72. School authorities do not need a warrant to search a student if reasonable grounds exist to suspect that the search will uncover evidence that the student has violated the law or school rules.

Smoking and Tobacco Use (FED policy 419)

Use or possession of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes of any type on school grounds by any student, regardless of age, will be governed by Minnesota statute and district rules.

“Electronic cigarette” means any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid and the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking.

Smoking or use of tobacco on public school property is a violation of the Minnesota Clean Air Act and /or the Freedom of Breath Act of 2017.

Use or possession of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes of any type by a minor student is prohibited in all circumstances and will be governed by Minnesota statute and district rules.

School Administrators may call local law enforcement to assist with the enforcement of this policy. Additional consequences may apply depending on the county of residence and decisions made by school personnel.

Harassment and Violence (FED Policy #413)

Religious, racial, and sexual harassment and violence are against the law.

Everyone at Freshwater Education District #6004 has the right to feel respected and safe. Consequently, we want you to know about our policy to prevent religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence of any kind.

A harasser may be a student or any adult. Harassment may include the following when related to religion, race, sex, or gender:

- name-calling, jokes, or rumors
- pulling on clothing
- graffiti
- notes or cartoons
- unwelcome touching of a person or clothing
- offensive or graphic posters, photos, or book covers
- any words or actions that make you feel uncomfortable, embarrass you, hurt your feelings, or make you feel bad.

If any words or actions make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell a teacher, counselor, the principal, or the Human Rights Officer, Sharon Thiel, 218-629-6002.

You may also make a written report. It should be given to a teacher, counselor, or the Human Rights Officer.

Your right to privacy will be respected as much as possible.

Freshwater Education District takes all reports of religious, racial, or sexual harassment or violence seriously and will take appropriate actions based on your report.

The Freshwater Education District will also take action if anyone tries to intimidate you or attempts to harm you because you have reported.

This is a summary of the Freshwater Education District Policy against religious, racial and sexual harassment and violence. Complete policies are available in the Director's office upon request. The Freshwater Board has appointed its Director to manage this policy.

Staff background checks:

In accordance with MN Statute, it is the policy of Freshwater Education District to conduct a criminal history background check on all employees and other individuals who provide services to the district. All staff working with students in the ALC setting must complete and have on file the results of this mandatory check.

Policy on Weapons (FED Policy #501)

It is the intention of the Freshwater Education District to maintain a positive, safe, and secure learning and working environment. The district will not tolerate weapons as defined in this policy at any time on school property, including district-owned buildings and grounds, or school-sponsored activities. Students and visitors may not possess, store, handle, transmit, or use any weapons in any school environment.

Students in possession of a dangerous weapon (see definitions # 1-6 below), whether on their person, in their personal belongings, vehicle, on school grounds, or at school functions, shall be requested to place the weapon in the front office for the remainder of the school day. The student will be requested not to return with the weapon.

If staff feel insecure about a student's response to the request, the student may be asked to leave for the day, and a meeting will be scheduled with the student and guardian.

If the weapon is used in a threatening manner, law enforcement will be called immediately.

If a student is in possession of a gun or firearm (see definition #7 below), law enforcement will be called immediately for legal disposition.

If law enforcement is called, the student will not return to school until obligations regarding the law have been fulfilled and a student-guardian meeting has been held. The student and guardian will develop a plan for further school attendance within the school rules.

Definitions of weapons:

1. Knives, including switchblade or automatically opening blades, butterfly knives, Swiss army knives, hunting knives, daggers, swords, or razors.
2. Artificial knuckles or other similar objects.
3. Blackjacks, clubs, or throwing stars
4. Explosives and/or similar devices with threatened intent to cause an explosion.
5. Poisons, chemical, combustible, or flammable liquids, or substances capable of causing bodily harm.
6. Mace.
7. Gun or firearm (loaded or unloaded, working or not working): pellet, BB, stun, splat, starter pistols, and/or other look-alikes, sawed-off shotgun, revolver, shotgun, machine gun, pistol, rifle, etc...

Weapons Assessment

When a student is involved with the possession of a weapon, the following questions need to be addressed and answered. The responses to the questions will help the school district assess and determine the future of the student.

Student Name:

Address:

Guardian:

Age/Birth Date:

Briefly state the situation:

1. Was there a weapon involved?
2. Did the student follow the request of the staff?
3. Was law enforcement called?
4. Did the student remain in school?
5. Were the guardians notified?
6. What was your perception of the student's mental state at the time?
7. What was the nature of the student's actions (what was observed)?
8. What was the degree of real or potential harm?
9. Is the student in the correct educational program?
10. How should the situation be monitored in the future?

Plan Reporter: _____

ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAM

Important ALC Online Program Information

- Student Schedules may be structured like a traditional high school day, but these are placeholders for time. Learners enrolled in the ALC Online Program have the ability to flex their schedule in a way that allows them to best learn their course material and progress through each class.
 - The school day runs from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm daily.
 - Grades 9 - 12 Schedules will be based on ALC Graduation Requirements and Personal Learning Plans.
 - Grades 9 - 12 experience:
 - Synchronous Learning:** Students attend class on a predetermined day and time for instruction/support.
 - Asynchronous Learning:** Time is flexible; the schedule provides students and parents with an idea of time for student learning. Teachers are available for student and parent support. Teachers may also ask individuals or small groups to meet in a synchronous setting at various points in order to support student learning and course progression.
- All **Curriculum** is aligned to MN standards through an Online Learning Platform. All teachers are MN licensed.
- **Daily Expectations:**
 - Log in to the online learning platform each school day.
 - Check your school email and platform announcements daily.

- Complete all assigned lessons, quizzes, and discussions by the due date listed in the course.
- **Participation in Live Sessions:**
 - Attend all scheduled live Google Meet sessions, unless excused.
 - Mute your microphone unless you're called on to speak.
 - Keep your camera on during live sessions unless prior arrangements have been made with your teacher.
- **Communication:**
 - Respond to teacher messages within **24 hours** on school days.
 - Use respectful language in all written and verbal communication.
 - Ask for help if you're confused about an assignment or a technology issue.
- Students meet virtually on a bi-weekly basis 1:1 with an advisor.
- Attendance is based on log-in and work completion. Students are expected to log in to each class daily with workday flexibility. Teachers may schedule synchronous 1:1, small group, or full group sessions to advance the learning progression.
- Student Support encompasses special education services, 504 services, counselor services, and social work services.
- **Technical Requirements:** It is very important that you have a high-speed Internet connection and are not using dial-up. If you are unsure of whether or not you have high-speed or dial-up, then please contact your Internet provider and ask them. Families are responsible for maintaining their internet connectivity. In the event of an issue with connectivity, Online Program students may use the public library or seek family or friends for connectivity until the issue is resolved. It is required that all students have a Chromebook, Windows, or Mac computer or laptop to complete school work. Freshwater does not provide technology to Online Program students. Devices not supported include mobile devices and tablets.

30 DAY EVALUATION

The first 30 days of a student enrolling in the Area Learning Center Online Program is considered an evaluation of service. If it is believed that the student's needs are beyond what the program offers, or the student is not fully engaging in the program and meeting the work completion and attendance guidelines, a parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss solutions or the appropriateness of the program.

A review will also be conducted at the end of each quarter and semester to determine student progress and success. At these times, the Program staff may also call a parent meeting to discuss solutions or the appropriateness of the program. Meetings will be scheduled with 18-year-old students and may include parents if agreed on by both the student and the parent.

Waiting List

In the event enrollment reaches 30 students per teacher, the Area Learning Center Online Program will advertise for an additional teacher. Until the new teacher is hired and trained, there may be a necessity to create a waiting list for students interested in the program. The list will establish a first-come, first-enrolled order, and every effort will be made to accommodate all prospective students at the beginning of the next Quarter.

PUBLIC NOTICES

RETENTION /DESTRUCTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION RECORDS

According to the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (34.F.R.300.573), school districts must notify parents when the information contained in their child's special education records is no longer needed to provide public educational services to the child. This is the public notification of Freshwater Education District's intent

to destroy all special education records prior to July 1st on the seventh (7) year after graduation. You have the right to request a copy of these records at a reasonable copying fee. Please contact the school for more information on your child's special education record retention/destruction.

Indoor Air Quality Notice

Freshwater Education District is proud to be taking a leadership role in providing a safe, comfortable, and productive environment for our students and staff so that we achieve our core mission – educating students. Our school will follow EPA guidance to improve our indoor air quality (IAQ) by preventing as many IAQ problems as possible and by quickly responding to any IAQ problems that may arise. Good air quality requires an ongoing commitment by everyone in our school because each of us makes decisions and performs activities daily that affect the quality of the air we breathe.

School staff, students, and parents can obtain checklists or self-help information so they can properly evaluate their child's home or other out-of-school situation by contacting the school. Staff and parents can also obtain information about school facility construction, maintenance, and housekeeping practices, chemicals used, mold and HVAC-related information, chemical-producing academic subjects, and pesticide and herbicide applications to determine the extent to which school activities contribute to a child's symptoms by contacting the school.

The Freshwater Education District Indoor Air Quality contact person is the lead custodian. If there are any questions regarding the school's IAQ program, please feel free to call the school.

Pesticide General Notice

A Minnesota state law went into effect in 2000 that requires schools to inform school staff, students, and parents if they apply certain pesticides on school property.

Specifically, this law requires schools that apply these pesticides to maintain an estimated schedule of pesticide applications to make the schedule available to employees and parents for review or copying at the school office.

State law also requires that you be told that the long-term health effects on children from the application of chemicals to which they belong, may not be fully understood.

If there are any questions regarding the Freshwater Education District Pest Management program or you would like more information on the pesticide application schedule, please feel free to call the district at 218-631-3505.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

As a result of federal legislation (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act – AHERA), each primary and secondary school in the nation is required to complete a stringent inspection for asbestos and to develop a plan of management for all asbestos-containing building materials. The Freshwater Education District has a goal to be in full compliance with this law and is following the spirit, as well as the letter of the law. As a matter of policy, the district shall continue to maintain a safe and healthful environment for our community's youth and employees.

In keeping with this legislation, all buildings (including portables and support buildings) owned by the Freshwater Education District were inspected by an EPA-accredited inspector, and an independent laboratory analyzed samples. Based on the inspection, the school prepared and the state approved a comprehensive management plan for handling the asbestos located within its building safely and responsibly.

Federal law requires a periodic walk-through (called "surveillance") every six months of each area containing asbestos. Lakes Country Cooperative will accomplish this under contract.

Short-term workers (outside contractors – i.e. telephone repair workers, electricians, and exterminators) must be provided information regarding the location of asbestos in which they may come into contact. All short-term workers shall contact the lead maintenance person before commencing work to be given this information.

The Freshwater Education District has a list of the location(s); types(s) of asbestos-containing materials found in that school building, and a description and timetable for their proper management. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available for review in the school office. Copies are available at 25 cents per page. Questions related to the plan should be directed to Freshwater Education District at 218-631-3505.

This is a summary of selected Freshwater Education District Policies. Complete policies are available at each site. The Freshwater Board has appointed its Director to manage this policy.

Photo Opt Out Form Information

Freshwater Education District Program may take video footage and/or photographs of students and employees for informational and promotional purposes. Sometimes these images are posted to school social media, the school website, or publications. The parent(s) of the student have the option to opt-out of allowing Freshwater Education District to publicize photographic and video images. To opt-out, parents and employees will need to submit a "photo opt-out form," which can be found in the appendix on the Freshwater Education District website.

Acceptable Internet Policy Agreement

Dear Student and Significant Adult,

The Student Handbook is provided to help you and your student have an enjoyable and successful school year at the Freshwater Area Learning Center. You will find such information as class schedules, the school calendar, and various student policies.

You will also find Freshwater Education District's **Acceptable Internet Policy Agreement** on pages 15 and 16.

Signing **this** form indicates that you understand and agree to abide by this policy, which will then provide you with the permission to be assigned a password and access to the Freshwater Education District Internet.

Please sign and return this page to the school, indicating that you have read and understand the information provided in the handbook, including the Acceptable Internet Use Policy.

Please feel free to call at any time:

Long Prairie site 320-732-6638

Menahga site 218-564-6115

Pillager site 218-746-2164

Staples site 218-629-6055

Wadena site 218-631-2281

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Significant Adult Signature: _____ Date _____

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 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 (MCA)

MCA and the alternate assessments (Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate MCA) 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 WIDA Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The 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 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 Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) in grade 10.
- 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.

English learners who take the ACCESS or WIDA 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 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 form below. 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 WIDA 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.

Explore the
[Statewide
Testing page](#)
for more
information.

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

([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 the beginning of each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

Statewide Assessment: 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.

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) you are opting your student out of this school year:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ MCA/MTAS Reading | ☐ MCA/Alternate MCA Science |
| ☐ MCA/MTAS Mathematics | ☐ ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS |

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

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

Updated March 2024