

2026-2027

Willmar Alternative Programs

Student Handbook



Programs Include:

**Willmar Area Learning Center, Prairie Lakes Education Center,
Lake Park School, Lakeview School, Focus House, & Willmar
Online**

School Contact Information

Willmar Area Learning Center

512 8th St. SW Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-214-6692
Fax: 320-235-5352

Lakeview School

2301 Transportation Rd, Willmar, MN 56201
Contact Willmar School District Office
Phone: 320-231-8500
Fax: 320-231-8504

Prairie Lakes Education Center

1808 Civic Center Drive, Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-214-6696
Fax: 320-235-3654

Focus House

3rd Floor of the Willmar Education and Arts Center
2611 5th St SW, Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-231-8570
Fax: 320-231-8504

Lake Park School

768 North Creek Drive, Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-214-6696
Fax: 320-235-3654

Willmar Online

512 8th St. SW Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: 320-214-6692
Fax: 320-235-5352

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2026-2027 Willmar District Calendar

AUGUST 2026						
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JULY 2027						
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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

Note: Inclement weather days will be made up in June (if additional days are needed after using e-learning days)

Schedules for Alternative Programs

Area Learning Center

Regular Schedule

Students have regularly scheduled classes Monday - Friday from 8:00-2:35. Altered schedules are based on student need.

2 Hour Late Start

If school is 2 hours late, classes will start at 10:00am.

2 Hour Early Out

If school closes early due to inclement weather, classes will continue as normal until the announced dismissal time.

Prairie Lakes Education Center, Lake Park School, and Focus House

Regular Schedule

Students have regularly scheduled classes Monday - Friday from 8:00-2:45.

2 Hour Late Start

If school is 2 hours late, classes will start at 10:00am.

2 Hour Early Out

If school closes early due to inclement weather, classes will continue as normal until the announced dismissal time.

Lakeview School

Regular Schedule

Students have regularly scheduled classes Monday - Friday for approximately one half day split between the morning and afternoon.

2 Hour Late Start

Students will have their normally scheduled courses.

2 Hour Early Out

If school is closed early due to inclement weather. Classes will continue as normal until the announced dismissal time.

STUDENT SERVICES

School Counselor and Social Worker

These services offer social, emotional, academic, and career counseling and guidance. The counselor and social worker can assist in referrals to other agencies. Students wishing to see the counselor or social worker are encouraged to stop by their offices.

Suicide Prevention Information

National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:

Call or text 988 or chat online at 988lifeline.org

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States.

Mobile Crisis Response from Woodland Centers:

320-231-9158 or 1-800-432-8781

Mental health crisis response team that responds to adults, youth, and families in their homes or community locations. They respond to urgent crisis situations 24/7/365. The goal is to have a trained crisis staff member arrive within 45 minutes of your phone call. <http://www.crisismobile.com>

Health Services

Health Services vary by school site. Please use the links below:

- [Willmar Area Learning Center and Focus House](#)
- [Prairie Lakes Education Center, Lake Park School, and Lakeview](#)

ACADEMIC INFORMATION & GRADING

Graduation Requirements

Students graduating in 2026-27 and desiring a diploma from Willmar Public Schools must meet the requirements as listed on the following page.

Students attending Willmar Alternative Programs may elect to receive a diploma from Willmar Public Schools or from their district of residence. A diploma will be issued when the necessary requirements are met.

Grade Placement

Students will be assigned to a grade level based on credits earned toward graduation as follows:

- 10th** Must have **10** or more credits and at least **6** required core credits
- 11th** Must have at least **26** credits and at least **14** required core credits
- 12th** Must have at least **42** credits and at least **22** required core credits

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduating classes 2027 and Earlier

Students must meet the Minnesota Graduation Assessment Requirements. [Click here for more information](#)

Students must earn a minimum of 58 credits** in grades 9-12 that include 33 credits in the subjects listed below:

English

8 credits (2 credits at each grade level are required)

Social Studies

8 credits (2 credits at each grade level are required including American History/Government, American History 2 and World Geography, World History, Economics, & US Geography or other social elective for Juniors and Seniors)

Mathematics

6 credits (Algebra 1B or Algebra 1.3, Probability and Statistics, Geometry, and Algebra 2 or Adv. Algebra 3)

Science

6 credits (Physical Science 9 or Earth & Space Science, Biology, and Chemistry or Physics)

Physical Education / Health

3 credits (2 Physical Education & 1 Health are required)

Performing and Visual Arts

2 credits (anytime in 9th-12th grade)

**The remaining 25 credits will be earned in elective areas.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduating class of 2028 and Beyond

Students must meet the Minnesota Graduation Assessment Requirements. [Click here for more information](#)

Students must earn a minimum of 58 credits** in grades 9-12 that include 34 credits in the subjects listed below:

English

8 credits (2 credits at each grade level are required)

Social Studies

8 credits (2 credits at each grade level are required)

Grades 9 and 10 - World History, American History & American History 2

Grades 11 and 12 - World Geography, Economics, Government and Citizenship, & US Geography or other social elective

Mathematics

6 credits (Algebra 1B or Algebra 1.3, Probability and Statistics, Geometry, and Algebra 2 or Adv. Algebra 3)

Science

6 credits (Earth & Space, Biology, and Chemistry or Physics)

Physical Education / Health

3 credits (2 Physical Education & 1 Health are required)

Performing and Visual Arts

2 credits (anytime in 9th-12th grade)

Personal Finance

1 credit (anytime in 10th-12th grade)

**The remaining 24 credits will be earned in elective areas.

Earning Credits

Earning credits is determined by the student's performance, use of time, and desire to graduate. Credits accumulate faster when students attend regularly and stay on task.

Willmar ALC & Willmar Online: All credit earned credits will be recorded on the transcript as A-F, NG and P.

Prairie Lakes Education Center and Lake Park School: All Credits will be based on an A, B, C, and F scale, with the minimum passing score of 70%.

Focus House: Students do not earn credits. Instead, progress toward meeting IEP goals determines successful completion of the program and is communicated to families through the IEP process..

Lakeview: Students receive credit hours toward graduation by attending school and participating in activities on the unit. Credits earned are summarized on an exit report upon discharge.

Progress Reports

Progress reports for students attending any day program will be distributed during the school year.

Graduation Ceremonies

Any student in Willmar Alternative programs who plans to walk at the high school ceremony must be enrolled at one of the buildings during term 4 and notify their designated counselor by the last day of term 2 (January) to arrange for cap and gown measurements.

All credits earned at an alternative program by students planning to walk at the Willmar Senior High School graduation ceremony must be completed by the second Thursday in May, so that a transcript can be sent to WHS and the student's name can be placed in the graduation program.

Students MUST be within 2 credits of graduating to walk at any graduation ceremony.

Willmar Area Learning Center: Any student graduating from Willmar ALC may participate in the Willmar Alternatives graduation and Willmar Senior High if they meet the necessary guidelines from above.

Focus House: There is no graduation ceremony for FOCUS House students. When students complete transition goals, there is a celebration.

Lake Park: Recognition for graduation will be individually determined and coordinated at the designated location. Students may walk at Willmar Alternatives graduation or Willmar Senior High if they meet the necessary guidelines from above.

Prairie Lakes and Lakeview: Recognition for graduation will be individually determined and coordinated at the designated location.

Willmar Online: Any student graduating from Willmar Online may participate in the Willmar Alternatives graduation and Willmar Senior High if they meet the necessary guidelines from above.

Classes

Student classes are scheduled based on each students individual educational needs. All classes are available to all students regardless of race, gender, color, national origin or handicap and is not limited by a historical understanding of gender roles.

Willmar Area Learning Center Day School

New and returning ALC Days School students must complete a new ALC registration form each year. Students who were not enrolled in a Willmar Public School prior to attending Willmar Area Learning center or have not been enrolled in school for more than three weeks will need to complete the registration process ONLINE by going to the Willmar Public Schools Website: <https://www.willmar.k12.mn.us/about-us/enrollregistration>

Willmar Area Learning Center Summer School

Summer School classes for students in grades 9 through 12 are offered Monday through Thursday during June each summer. Registration for the Summer School will start in April and run through May. Students who attend each class session and complete all assigned homework can earn quarter credits by the end of summer. Credits not completed during the summer session can be completed in the fall.

Willmar Area Learning Center Night School

Night School classes are offered Monday through Thursday from 2:50 to 4:10 at Willmar Senior High. Night School is available to students no longer enrolled in another high school and students attending a high school during the day but needing to make up credits. Students must normally be 16 years of age or older. Students under 16 can attend if they attend a 9th through 12th grade high school. Registration for Night School classes runs August through May.

PSEO

The Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) allows public high school juniors and seniors to take full-time or part-time courses at a liberal arts/community/technical college, a university, or non-profit degree granting trade school for high school credit. The tuition, fees and required textbooks are at no cost to students.

Eligible students who desire to participate in the PSEO Program are requested to discuss this with the School Counselor. Students wishing to participate will need to complete the necessary application forms and meet with a post-secondary counselor.

Deadlines for PSEO Applications

Spring Term 2025 - November 15th, 2026

Fall Term 2025 - May 30th, 2027

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Learning is increased by regular school attendance. Students have the responsibility of regular punctual attendance. Parents have the responsibility of encouraging regular attendance and informing the school in the event of a student's absence. Willmar Alternative Programs will follow the School District Student Attendance Policy 503 found [HERE](#).

Procedure

If a student will be absent or late, a parent or guardian should call the school's main office. You can leave a message anytime—day or night. We prefer phone calls, but if that's not possible, a written note with a contact number is okay. If you can't follow this process, please contact the principal directly.

Leaving the Building

Once students arrive at school, they are expected to stay for all scheduled classes. Students may only leave if a parent or guardian contacts the school. If a student has an appointment, they must check out at the office before leaving and check back in when they return. At Willmar ALC, students who leave without permission are not allowed to return to school that day.

Classification of Absences

School Related Absences - Absences that are approved by the school and won't count against your attendance. *Examples include field trips or state testing, or other school-approved activities.*

Excused Absences - Absences with a valid reason. To be excused, families need to provide a note or call the school. The following constitute valid excuses allowed by the State of Minnesota:

- a. Illness, verified by the parent/guardian or doctor.
- b. Medical or dental appointments, with a note from the provider, stating the date and time of visit. The note should also state when the student can return to classes.
- c. Family emergencies, as approved by the principal.
- d. Religious observance (funeral, wedding, etc).
- e. Court appearances, with documentation.

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.

Unexcused Absences (Truant) - Absences not verified by a parent or guardian or absences that are not school authorized.

Truancy

Truancy is missing all or part of the school day without an acceptable excuse. Leaving school grounds without permission constitutes truancy.

If a student exceeds the number of days truant as allowed by law, a letter will be sent to the parent or guardian and a copy will be sent to the Kandiyohi County Family Services Truancy Mediation Officer explaining the details of the truancy.

Supporting Attendance

Parents or guardians who have their phone number in Infinite Campus will receive a phone call when their child is absent from school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to check their child's attendance on Infinite Campus or by calling the school. Parents or guardians, who wish to have weekly attendance reports sent to them, should call the office for the specific site with this request.

When a student is having an attendance problem, a variety of approaches may occur:

1. Meeting with the student.
2. Contacting Parents/Guardians
3. A parent/student meeting with staff.

Our goal is to support students and help them succeed. If absences continue and meet truancy levels, the school is required to report the student for truancy.

Tardiness

If a student arrives after the start of the school day, they are to report to the office for a pass to class. When a student arrives late for class, the teacher records the student's absence. If a student's tardiness is extreme or repeating, they may be asked to meet with a Principal.

If a student arrives within the first half of the class, their attendance will be a tardy. If a student arrives within the last half of class, this will result in an unexcused absence.

Attendance Progress Reports

Parents or guardians wishing to request weekly or monthly attendance updates can do so by calling each school's main office.

See School Board Policy [Here](#)

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND SCHOOL POLICIES

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Alternative School Sites and School District's policies at all times. This includes when students are on the school grounds, in any Willmar School buildings, on school premises; in any school-owned vehicle or school-contracted vehicles; at school-sponsored or school-approved activities, events or functions, such as field trips or athletic events, including home and away events.

The following points serve as a guideline to help ensure that all alternatives sites can function to the best advantage for all students and staff:

1. Be present for all scheduled classes.
2. Arrive at classes on time.
3. Come prepared for class.
4. Bring all required materials to class, **including paper, pencil, pen, binders, and fully charged iPads.**
5. Be attentive to classroom activities.
6. Make an effort to be successful.
7. Show respect for teachers, staff, other students, and school property by not engaging in activities which disturb the class or school environment.
8. Follow the directives of teachers, staff, and school policies.
9. Help keep the classroom, building and grounds clean by not littering.
10. Dress appropriately for a school environment ([see dress code criteria](#)).
11. Refrain from intimate physical touching (kissing, hugging, handshaking).

Alcohol and Drugs

The possession or use of drugs or alcohol is a serious violation of state laws and is punishable by fines and/or imprisonment. Violators will be reported to the proper authorities and/or social agencies.

Students, who consume, sell, give away, or have possession of drugs or alcohol on school property or at school-sponsored activities will be suspended from school. Before a student can return to school, a conference consisting of parents/guardians, student, school personnel, and when appropriate, some community resource people will be arranged to determine the best course of action to be taken.

See the district's Discipline Policy by clicking [HERE](#)

Behavioral Issues

All behavior issues will be dealt with by an administrator or designee.

The key focus of student reflection time is to assist students in recognizing problematic issues and in learning techniques to control their behavior. If behaviors continue to reoccur or are significant; parents/guardians will be contacted to develop a plan to assist the student in being successful in school.

This assistance could include students checking in daily with a staff member, a personalized contract, or other behavioral support. The regular "check-in" would be with an Advisement Teacher, Counselor, Social Worker, Administrator, or other assigned adult.

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 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.

See the District Bullying Prohibition Policy [Here](#)

Bus Expectations

To help ensure the safety of students, transportation employees and other motorists, students are required to abide by all student behavior rules outlined in [board policy](#) and reviewed in this handbook, and by the additional transportation safety rules.

Consequences for misbehavior, whether the misbehavior takes place on a school vehicle, in school, elsewhere on school property or at a school event, will be applied to any student who violates the rules.

Minnesota Statute 121A.59 states: *“Transportation by school bus is a privilege not a right for an eligible student. A student’s eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies, or for violation of any other law governing student conduct on a school bus, pursuant to a written school district discipline policy.”*

See School Board Policies [Here](#)

Care of School Property

We want students and staff to take care of and be proud of their school. Acts of vandalism, such as willful destruction of property, defacing of walls, desks, etc., will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the Willmar School District Discipline Policy. Students involved in acts of vandalism will be held responsible for damages and will be reported to law enforcement.

Cell Phones & Electronic Devices

No Cell Phones During Class

Cell phones cannot be physically on your person during class time. This means cell phones cannot be on student’s desks, in student pockets, and/or within reach while in classrooms. All cell phones should be in the designated location during the school day. Staff who see cell phones will confiscate them until the end of class. If the issues continue, office staff will become involved, and further action will be taken.

Headphones

Headphones (wired and/or bluetooth) are ONLY to be used with teacher permission and appropriate volume.

Dress Code

In order to create a safe, non-threatening climate, Willmar Alternative programs has developed a dress code and will follow the School District Student Dress and Appearance Policy 504 found [HERE](#).

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Personal Appearance:

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the education of our students by establishing expectations of dress and grooming that are related to safety, educational goals, and community/school standards.

Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
2. Clothing appropriate for the activity and weather.
3. Clothing that covers undergarments.

Specifics of the policy include but are not limited to:

- Undergarments must be hidden from public view.
- Chains, spike studs, and/or other like apparel present safety concerns for the school and are inappropriate for school.
- Clothing, jewelry, or markings to the body must not include words or visuals that display violence, are sexually suggestive, profane, abusive, degrading, or discriminatory.
- Clothing, jewelry, or markings to the body must not display or promote the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other activities and products that are illegal to minors.
- Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on clothing or jewelry must not communicate a message that is racist, sexist or otherwise derogatory, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals.

Hat/Hood Policy:

- Hat Policy: Miscellaneous headgear, sunglasses, etc. are not allowed to be worn in the building during school hours with the following exceptions: Hats are permitted in all non-instructional areas of the building (hallways, cafeteria, etc.).
- Teacher discretion is used, regarding the use of hats, in individual classrooms. Other exceptions must be approved by administration (i.e. student undergoing chemotherapy, medical situations, religious significance, ect.) Staff may confiscate headgear as needed.
- Sweatshirts with hoods are allowed, but the hood cannot be covering your head and ears at any time in the classroom.

Process:

If a student wears an article of clothing that is considered questionable, he/she will be asked to change in order to continue the day. A parent or guardian will be contacted and a student will be allowed time to return home to change or they can have clothing brought to school to change. Shirts are available in the office to use on a temporary basis. If he/she refuses to change, the student will be sent home for the remainder of the school day. This absence will be considered to be unexcused. Continued violations will result in disciplinary action. Administration has the final say in any questionable dress code decision.

Driving & Parking

Willmar Area Learning Center: Day students are encouraged to use the school bus service if eligible. ALC parking is limited. Students who attend the ALC day and night program may park along the school side of 8th and Monongalia Ave as long as they observe posted signs. Day students are not allowed to park in the school lot. Students who drive are asked to be respectful of our neighbors. Please drive at reasonable speeds and keep noise levels low.

18-Year Olds

Minnesota Law 120A.20 states that school districts may impose the same rules and regulations on students 18-21 years of age as those imposed on students under 18. All students in Willmar Alternative Programs are expected to adhere to the same set of policies and guidelines.

Food in the Building

Food served during lunch must be consumed in the Cafeteria. Students are not allowed to leave school during lunchtime ([See Nutrition Programs](#)). Food purchased at local businesses should not be brought into the building, including deliveries. Students will not be allowed to have beverage containers larger than 32 ounces. All outside food and beverages are subject to confiscation.

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 service food obtained from sources which do not conform to 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 that food is served in school must be purchased from a store which is subject to state food inspection regulations. All food TO BE SHARED WITH OTHER STUDENTS must be commercially prepared, pre-packaged, 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.

Gang-Related Behavior

Students are prohibited from using or exhibiting gang-related behaviors and dress at school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored events. Unacceptable gang items and behaviors will be handled by a principal.

- Any apparel, jewelry, accessories, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute (as a primary purpose) denotes membership in an organized gang as defined by MN statute 260.125., WILL NOT be allowed.
- Graffiti on a person, their clothing, books, notebook, or other personal items that denotes affiliation to an organized gang or threat group, WILL NOT be allowed.
- Making hand signs which denote affiliation with an organized gang or threat group, WILL NOT be allowed.

Harassment and Violence Policy

Willmar Alternative Programs does not tolerate verbal or physical conduct by any student or staff member who harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another's work performance or which creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Students and staff members may report any concerns to a Teacher, Counselor, Social Worker, or Administrator. Further, any person may also report to the school district's Human Rights Officers, Elizabeth Fischer, and Principal of Alternative Programs, Katie Schieck.

Any person found in violation of any of the Willmar School District's harassment and violence policies will be subject to disciplinary measures as laid out in school policy. Copies of the discipline, harassment and violence, and bullying prohibition policies are included with this handbook.

See School Board Policies [Here](#)

Personal Items

Students are encouraged to bring only the personal items that are essential for making the school day productive. While Willmar Alternative Programs maintains a safe and respectful setting, students need to understand that any personal item that is lost or stolen is the sole responsibility of the student. Willmar Public Schools does not replace any lost or stolen items.

Backpacks

Willmar Area Learning Center and Focus House:

Backpacks may be used within the school building. Students are expected to use them safely. This includes bringing only things that are allowed and beneficial to their school program, keeping them as light as possible, using caution while passing others, and ensuring that they are not a distraction to their educational program. While in classrooms, student backpacks and purses must be on the floor by the student's desk or in assigned areas within the classroom.

Prairie Lakes, Lake Park, and Lakeview Schools:

Student backpacks are not permitted within the building.

Search of Personal Possessions and Student's Person

The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that a student may be in possession of items that would interfere with the safety and security of the student and building. (i.e. student having a vaping device, illegal substance, or weapon.)

[See District Policies](#)

Printed Material and Software

Possession, distribution, or display of slanderous, libelous, pornographic, racist or gang-related materials or symbolism is not allowed on school property or school electronic devices.

Smoking Policy

The Willmar School Board of Education has rules that all buildings and grounds in District #347 will be tobacco free. That means students will not be able to smoke, chew, possess tobacco, vaporizers or E-cigarettes on school grounds. The administration has also extended that policy to include surrounding property visible from the Area Learning Center. The violator will be fined up to \$200. [See Discipline Policy.](#)

Suspension Policy

Suspension procedures shall afford the student the right to due process in accordance with the following:

- The principal, or designee, shall notify the student of all charges.
- A conference shall be held prior to suspension. When, in the opinion of the principal or designee, the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or school property, or is an ongoing threat of disruption of the educational process, the student may be immediately suspended from school. In such cases, the necessary notice and hearing shall follow as soon as practicable thereafter.
- The students shall be given an opportunity to give their version of the facts and their implications.
- The parent/legal guardian shall be informed of the suspension as soon as practicable.

Technology

Independent access to computers, iPads, and network services are provided to the students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parent permission is required for minors to access the Internet (Please refer to the District Internet Policy for further information). **Access is a privilege not a right.**

Unacceptable Uses

Unacceptable uses of the district's computers, iPads and networks include, but are not limited to:

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Damaging computers, iPads, computer systems or networks
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Use of the network in infringing on the rights of others
- Using obscene language
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another person's password
- Installing personal software or customizing the desktop.

Unacceptable uses will result in actions consistent with existing disciplinary policies and may include any or all of the following:

- Loss of access
- Student held responsible for any damage, theft, or vandalism
- Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in line with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
- When applicable, law enforcement may be involved.

Device Protection Plan

A protection plan is available for the district-issued device. The cost for this protection is \$40/year and is due prior to receiving the device for the school year. The protection plan offers complete coverage for the first instance of accidental damage. The protection plan does not cover intentional damage, loss, theft, or damage to the brick, cord, and case. See the district's Device Protection Policy [HERE](#).

Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure & Process

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 Act 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 Resource Director,
320-231-8520,
windingstade@willmar.k12.mn.us
Willmar District Office 611 5th St SW, Willmar, MN 56201

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.

RELIGIOUS, RACIAL AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE ARE AGAINST THE LAW.

DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW!

The person responsible for assuring compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is Melissa Wilson.

Weapons Reporting Procedure

Please report to a trusted adult any knowledge you (the student) have about any type of weapon being present in our school. Please don't hesitate to report to the main office, security liaison, or administration at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Accidents

Students should report all accidents involving injuries immediately to their teacher or to the office. If medical attention is needed, parents or guardians will be notified.

Advisement

Willmar Area Learning Center, Prairie Lakes Education Center, and Lake Park School:

Students will participate daily in the Advisement elective class. The intent of the Advisement is to create college and career readiness for all students. The three main components of the program are academic instruction, tutorial support, and motivational activities.

Affirmative Action

No student shall be discriminated against or by willful act or statement shall discriminate against anyone for reasons of sex, sexual orientation, creed, color, national origin, physical disability or economic status. Willmar Public Schools does not discriminate in employment or in access to or participation in educational programs and services.

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 10-11), ACCESS for English Language Learners (Grades 9-12), Star Reading and Math Assessments (Grades 9-12), 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](#).

Building Security

All exterior doors will be locked to restrict traffic into the buildings. Numerous surveillance cameras are inside and outside the building for student and school safety.

Visitors

All parents and visitors must check in at the school office upon entering the building. Parents and visitors will sign in and receive a visitor badge before proceeding to other parts of the building. During the school day, visitors should enter the building through the eighth street entrance. All entrances are kept locked during the school day. Visitors need to press the buzzer, and show ID to have the doors unlocked for entrance to the building.

Bus Transportation - ALC

Bus transportation to and from the ALC is provided for students who live within the Willmar School District AND qualify for bussing to Willmar Senior High or Willmar Middle School. Those students living within the city limits will be picked up at a location near their home. For the time and location of the pickup, please check with the bus company.

The after school bus (from Willmar Senior High) is scheduled by the bus company and will leave Mon-Thur. between 4:10-4:20PM. Students who ride the bus to school and then skip part or all of the school day will lose the privilege of riding the bus after school. Transportation is a privilege not a right. A student's eligibility to ride a school bus may be

revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies.

Students who need transportation can sign up by calling one of the bus companies. If a parent does not know which company provides transportation, please call either company and provide the home address. The respective bus company will either work with you or refer you to the other company. If further assistance is needed, call the ALC office.

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

Early Arrival - ALC

Students may arrive at school starting at 7:45am. Students who arrive at school before 8:00am are to go to the designated area for students. Students should not be in the other areas of the building prior to 8:00 AM without staff permission. Once students arrive at school, they are required to remain at school. The ALC is a closed campus.

Eligibility to Attend the ALC

State Criteria must be met for a student to be eligible to attend the ALC. Any student may inquire about and fill out an application to attend, but final approval on meeting the state criteria will be determined by the Principal of Alternative Programs.

Language Access Plan

Please see the [LINK](#) for the [WPS Language Access Plan](#)

High School Activities

If a student would like to participate in activities such as athletics, prom, and graduation at your former High School please see the School Counselor.

Phone Messages

Phone messages for students will be accepted from parents/guardians only. Students will not be called out of class for phone calls except for major emergencies.

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. More information about Title Programs: [Title 1-Willmar Public Schools](#)

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance will be said at the beginning of each week. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so and students must respect another person's right to make that choice. [Minn. Stat. 121A.11](#)

Returning to a High School

Students wishing to continue their educational program at a high school must visit with the School Counselor. Most high schools encourage students to transfer at the start of a new marking period or school term.

Willmar Online Expectations

Willmar Online has additional supplemental expectations due to the nature of learning outside of a school building. All additional guidelines can be found in the [Supplemental Handbook](#)

School Nutrition Programs

Prairie Lakes, Lake Park, & Lakeview

Meals will be provided by the residential facility.

Focus House

Students will work on their independent living skills by grocery shopping and cooking their own meals.

Willmar Online

School meals are not available to students attending online programs.

Willmar Area Learning Center (Breakfast and Lunch)

The Area Learning Center (ALC) 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.

2026-2027 Pricing

Breakfast and lunch meals will be free for enrolled 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	\$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

Free & Reduced Meal Applications

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. Even though meals are free, 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.

If you have a remaining balance that you will not use this school year and you'd like to donate it to help households in need pay off their balance from the prior year, please contact us at 320-231-8526.

Managing Meal Account Payments

You have several options when it comes to managing the payment method on your meal accounts. Each student has their own meal account. **All payments will be distributed equally between your students unless you notify Food and Nutrition Services otherwise.**

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 8:00am - 4:30pm, 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.**

Breakfast Option

Students and staff can access Breakfast in the cafeteria in the morning for traditional breakfast or during second chance breakfast each morning.

Lunch Site Options

Students and staff will be provided a Main or Alternate Choice Line.

Students may purchase a second meal at the current adult meal price or additional Ala Carte items based on our ala carte pricing (Ala Carte Price List available on our website). There must be money in hand or on their account before charging extra items or entrees.

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 \$0.75 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.

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 two 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.

See the District Food and Nutrition Policy [HERE](#)

Student Messages & Deliveries

We strongly recommend that deliveries of items to students (balloons, flowers, etc.) not be arranged to occur at school. These items cannot be delivered to the classroom and are held in the office area until students can pick them up at the end of the day. Transporting these items home, especially for those who ride the school bus, can also be a problem for the student. Emergency messages will be delivered to students as soon as possible. To maintain the integrity of instructional times, non-emergency messages will not be delivered during the school day.

Telephone for Student Use at Willmar ALC

Students needing to make a phone call may stop at the front desk. Staff will identify a phone available for these calls.

Weather-Related School Closing

All Alternative Programs are part of the Willmar Public School District and will follow any inclement weather closings for Willmar Public Schools.

Willmar Public Schools has an automated messaging system. The system will send messages to all

operating phone numbers regarding school closings. Please keep your home and cell phone numbers up-to-date to receive these calls. Weather-related announcements will also be available on the following Willmar radio stations: K95/KDJS/97.3, The River, Q102/KWLM/K100, or Wild Country 99/KCLD. Television stations: KSTP/KRWF 43 (Twin Cities/ Alexandria/Redwood Falls), FOX 9/KMSP, KARE 11, and WCCO-TV.

Example: If schools are starting one hour late, classes at the Area Learning Center will begin at 9:00 AM. If schools are starting two hours late, classes at the Area Learning Center will begin at 10:00 AM. If school has been closed for the entire school day or dismissed early due to inclement weather, evening school classes are also canceled.

E-learning Days

Willmar Public Schools have adopted e-learning days for inclement weather days. On e-learning days students will learn from home.

On e-learning days, teachers are available to support students with questions from 10:00am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 3:00pm.

For more details about e-learning, visit the school website: [District e-learning Information](#)

Copies of the Willmar Public Schools District #347 [Bullying Prohibition](#), [Discipline Policy](#), [Harassment and Violence Policy](#), [Hazing Policy](#), and [Internet Computer and Equipment Usage Policy](#) are available upon request from the District Office

Willmar Education & Arts Center
611 SW 5th Street
Willmar, Minnesota 56201
or at www.willmar.k12.mn.us

Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act- The Pupil Fair Dismissal Act includes the policies, grounds, and procedures for students from public schools. Please click [HERE](#)

Annually, school districts are to inform students and families about the management of pests, asbestos, indoor air quality, and lead in water. To review these plans, please access this link: [Annual Notifications](#)

Other Links of Interest

[Staff Directory/Contact Information](#)

[eLearning Days](#)

[Human Resources \(Employee Background Checks\)](#)

[Distribution of Non-School Sponsored Materials](#)

[Student Records](#)

[Student Surveys](#)

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.

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 can use MCA results for:

- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) 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 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 on the following page. 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 WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the student will 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 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) you are opting your student out of 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 how to opt out of local assessments.

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