PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

www.strideacademy.org

Web Site: www.strideacademy.org
Elementary School Office Hours: 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Middle School Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

STRIDE Academy is a charter school authorized by the Minnesota Department of Education. As a charter school, we are a public, non-profit entity and receive funding through the Minnesota Department of Education. We must comply with all state and federal mandates that govern public schools in the State of Minnesota. We must also comply with requirements established by our authorizer, Pillsbury United Communities. Students are not assessed tuition fees to attend STRIDE Academy.

Eric Skanson, Executive Director | eskanson@strideacademy.org

Angie Lichy, Elementary School Principal | alichy@strideacademy.org
Elementary School: (320)230-5340

Heather Ebnet, Middle School Principal | hebnet@strideacademy.org
Middle School: (320)452-8601

STRIDE Academy School Board of Education Members:
Tina Barak - Board Chair
Pamela Holubetz - Community Member
Kelly Springer - Parent Representative
Stephen Schueller - Parent Representative
Carie Essig - Teacher Representative
Andy Lyman - Teacher Representative
Erica Louis - Teacher Representative
Kimberly Carlson- Teacher Representative
Eric Skanson - Ex-Officio

Board meetings are held on the dates listed below at 6:00 pm, in room #225 at STRIDE Academy Middle School. Meetings are open to the public. Board minutes are available on the STRIDE Academy website or upon request. See board meeting postings on the STRIDE Academy website or within each school building.

School Board Meeting Dates for the 2026-2027 School Year:
July 2026: July 16
August 2026: August 20
September 2026: September 17
October 2026: October 22 (changed due to MEA break)
November 2026: November 19
December 2026: December 17
January 2027: January 21
February 2027: February 18
March 2027: March 18
April 2027: April 15
May 2027: May 20
June 2027: June 17

Employee Directory

Email: first initial & last name @strideacademy.org
Example: eskanson@strideacademy.org)

Online Staff Directory TBD

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

In the best interest of the safety and well-being of all students, we are asking our families to follow the STRIDE arrival and dismissal procedures.

Elementary

Before School	**After School**
Day Begins at 7:15 am	Day Ends at 2:00 pm
No students are allowed in the building before 7:15 am unless accessing child care at the Elementary site.	All students must be picked up by 2:15 pm.
Please follow drop off/pick up arrows and signs if dropping your child off. Students and parents should remain in their vehicles until a staff member greets them.	Please follow drop off/pick up arrows and signs if picking your child up.
Students arriving after 7:30 am will need to come through the school office to get a late pass from the front desk.	Parent Pick-up: All families will be provided a parent pick-up number that must be visible from the rearview mirror of your vehicle while in the pick up line. Once staff recognizes the number and deems it safe, student(s) will be escorted to the vehicle. This will require all parents using this system to remain in single file for the flow of traffic to be continuous. Staff will only release children if and when vehicles are not moving and the number is clearly visible.
Breakfast will be served from 7:15-7:45 am. Breakfast is grab and go and eaten in the first period classroom.	Parents who need to come into the building, must park in the parking lot.
All students will enter through the main entrance **20S** from both buses and parent drop off.	All changes to transportation must be made before 1:00 pm the day of the change by calling the front office at

	320-230-5340.
Buses will be met by staff and escorted into the building. Students will pick up breakfast and go to their classroom.	If you are picking up prior to 1:45 pm, you must come in and check your student out from the front office. They will be dismissed from the office only.

Middle School:

Before School	**After School**
Day begins at 8:15 am	Day Ends at 3:18 pm
No students are allowed in the building before 8:15 am unless accessing child care at the Elementary site.	All students must be picked up by 3:25 pm.
Please follow drop off/pick up arrows and signs if dropping your child off. Students and parents should remain in their cars until staff dismiss them.	Please follow drop off/pick up arrows and signs if picking your child up.
Students arriving after 8:35 am will need to come through the office to get a late pass.	Parent Pick-up: All families will be provided a parent pick-up number that must be visible from the rearview mirror of your vehicle while in the pick up line. Once staff recognizes the number and deems it safe, student(s) will be escorted to the vehicle. This will require all parents using this system to remain in single file for the flow of traffic to be continuous. Staff will only release children if and when vehicles are not moving and the number is clearly visible.
Breakfast will be served from 8:15am-8:35 am, it will be grab and go and eaten in first period class prior to the bell.	Parents who need to come into the building, must park in the parking lot.
All students will enter through **Door J** from both buses and parent drop off.	All changes to transportation must be made by 2:00 pm the day of the change by calling the front office at 320-452-8601 **Changes requested after this time are not guaranteed.**
Buses will be met by staff and escorted	If you are picking up prior to 3:05 pm,

into the building. Students will pick up breakfast and go to their Advisory.	you must come in and check your student out from the front office. They will be dismissed from the office only.

Calendar

The school calendar is adopted annually by the school board. A copy of the school calendar can be found on the school district's website at ***www.strideacademy.org.***

Complaints

Students, parents/guardians, employees, or other persons may report concerns or complaints to the school district. Complaints may be either written or oral. People are encouraged, but not required, to file a written complaint at the building level where appropriate. The appropriate administrator will respond in writing to the complaining party regarding the school district's response to the complaint.

Flexible eLearning Days

In the event of a school closure due to inclement weather, learning expectations for all students may continue through a Flexible eLearning day. This day refers to a school day where teachers and students communicate online instead of coming to school or set up prior learning expectations, and students continue their learning from home. On a Flexible eLearning day, teachers will share assignments and hold office hours in which they are available to provide learning support to students. A Flexible eLearning day serves as a student contact day. The Flexible eLearning day plan is built upon the best work practices already occurring in school districts across Minnesota while adhering to Minnesota Statutes. This plan has been developed in cooperation with STRIDE Academy teaching staff.

MN State Statute 120A.41 Background Information

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) e-Learning days statute outlines how Minnesota school districts can implement these instructional days. According to the statute:

- Definition: e-Learning day means a school day where a school offers full access to online instruction provided by students' individual teachers due to inclement weather.
- Each student's teacher must be accessible both online and by telephone during normal school hours on an e-learning day to assist students and parents.
- Notify parents and students at least two hours prior to the normal school start time that students need to follow the Flexible eLearning day plan for that day.
- Notify parents and students of the e-Learning day plan at the beginning of the school year.
- Accommodations for students without sufficient access to the Internet, hardware or software in their homes. (School administration, teachers, and

other staff continually work with families to ensure equitable access to online learning resources.)

How will a Flexible eLearning Day be communicated to parents and students?

Parents/Guardians will receive an automated phone call via the School Messenger program with both an audio message and an email. Notification will also be posted to the STRIDE Academy web page, www.strideacademy.org, as soon as possible when school is closed for the day. Students should not report to school, but should engage in Flexible eLearning activities as assigned.

How will teachers communicate eLearning instructions and expectations?

Teachers will have provided instruction via E-Learning Folders. Every STRIDE Student has been provided a Flexible E-Learning folder. These will include accessible instructions for students with disabilities under chapter 125A and meet the needs of each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plans. All licensed staff will participate in professional development regarding the Flexible eLearning days plan to maximize student learning.

When will teachers be available?

Teachers will communicate with parents/guardians regarding how students can get help (or ask questions) about their Flexible eLearning day assignments via the students' Flexible eLearning folder. Teachers will be available to students from 9 am - 11:00 a.m. Teachers can opt to deliver Flexible eLearning instruction from off-campus or in their classroom. Specialists and case managers will also be available via email for support. All licensed staff are required to work on a Flexible eLearning day or take personal or sick leave as appropriate, subject to supervisor approval.

Is attendance taken for a Flexible eLearning Day?

Yes.

- K- 4 Attendance - students will be marked present by completing the assigned learning options.
- 5-8 Attendance - students will be marked present by completing the assigned learning options.

Attendance must be verified for each class. Students who do not participate in planned activities are considered absent for those class(es) and are reported as absent just as if they were not present for an on-campus class.

Can families choose to opt-out of Flexible eLearning days?

Students whose family chooses not to participate in the Flexible eLearning day are reported as absent. Absences reasons that fall under the current policy as excused will be marked as excused (503. Student Attendance Policy.) All other absences will be considered unexcused unless the student completes the Flexible eLearning assignments within one week. If there are extenuating circumstances, the principal may review the absence.

How will students be expected to “make up” their learning if not in attendance?

Students will be responsible for completing the required work independently as they would in any situation where they may have been absent from school. Students will have one week to complete Flexible eLearning assignments.

What if the Governor cancels schools across MN on a Flexible eLearning Day?

If the Governor cancels school statewide, there will not be a Flexible eLearning day, and teaching staff will not report to work.

Is technology required for Flexible eLearning days?

No. All instructions will be delivered via written instructions in their Flexible eLearning folder.

How will the Flexible eeLearning day affect activities?

In general, when school is closed, all activities are canceled.

How should Flexible eLearning days be reported in Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS)?

Flexible eLearning days are reported as regular instructional days on the MARSS School File. Students enrolled on an e-learning day would generate one day of membership. The length of the school day will be reported as the same length that was originally scheduled had the students attended at the school site.

Employment Background Checks

The school district will seek criminal history background checks for all applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district. The school district also will seek criminal history background checks for all individuals, except enrolled student volunteers, who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular academic coaching services to the school district, regardless of whether compensation is paid. These positions include, but are not limited to, all athletic coaches, extracurricular academic coaches, assistants, and advisors. The school district may elect to seek criminal history background checks for other volunteers, independent contractors, and student employees.

Equal Access to School Facilities

The school district has created a limited open forum for secondary students to conduct non curriculum-related meetings during non instructional time. The school district will not discriminate against or deny equal access or a fair opportunity on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings. These limited open forum meetings will be voluntary and student initiated; will not be sponsored by school employees or agents; employees or agents of the school will be present at religious meetings only in a non participatory

capacity; the meetings will not interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school; and nonschool persons will not direct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups. All meetings under this provision must follow the procedures established by the school district.

Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students ***are*** expected to provide their own pencils, pens, paper, erasers, notebooks, and other personal items. Students may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including (not an inclusive list):

- Admission fees or charges for extracurricular activities, where attendance is optional and where the admission fees or charges a student must pay to attend or participate in an extracurricular activity are the same for all students, regardless of whether the student is enrolled in a public or a home school.
- Cost for materials for a class project that exceeds minimum requirements and is kept by the student.
- Security deposits for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Items of personal use or products that a student has an option to purchase such as student publications, class rings, annuals, and graduation announcements.
- Field trips considered supplementary to the district's educational program.
- Admission fees or costs to attend or participate in optional extracurricular activities and programs.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Use of musical instruments owned or rented by the school district.
- A school district-sponsored driver or motorcycle education training course.
- Transportation to and from school for students living within two miles of school.
- Transportation of students to and from optional extracurricular activities or post-secondary instruction conducted at locations other than school.

Students will be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact Dr. Eric Skanson.

Food in the Classrooms

Students are encouraged to drink water during the school day. If they wish to carry water with them, it must be in a clear water bottle and not contain any flavored additives. No carbonated beverages will be allowed during the school day. Having a water bottle in class is a privilege and teachers may use their discretion.
All STRIDE Academy classrooms are nut-free. ONLY nut-free snacks are allowed into classrooms.

Birthday Snacks Brought to School

- We encourage you to consider healthy snacks, or pencils, stickers, etc as 'treats'.
- **We will not accept cakes, cupcakes, cookies, and candy to be brought in for birthday treats**.
- Students are not allowed to drink soda or juice boxes in the classrooms.

Snacks

● All snacks should be nutritious (i.e. fruit, crackers, and cheese, etc.) and in accordance with the Wellness Policy.
● Snacks must be nut-free.
● Students are not allowed to drink soda or juice boxes.

Fundraising

All fundraising activities conducted by student groups and organizations and/or parent groups must be approved in advance by the District Administration. Participation in non approved fundraising activities is a violation of school district policy. Solicitations of students or employees by students for nonschool-related activities will not be allowed during the school day.

Gifts to Employees

Employees are not allowed to solicit, accept, or receive a gift from a student, parent, or other individual or organization of greater than nominal value. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to write letters and notes of appreciation or to give small tokens of gratitude.

Graduation Ceremony (8th Grade)

Student participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right. Students who have completed the requirements for graduation are allowed to participate in graduation exercises, unless participation is denied for appropriate reasons, which may include discipline. Graduation exercises are under the control and direction of the principal(s).

Holiday Celebrations and Parties

STRIDE Academy recognizes that communities acknowledge and celebrate for varying reasons, which may include cultural holidays and celebrations, dances, and birthdays. STRIDE Academy strives to be an inclusive and welcoming institution. However, we also recognize the constraints of time. Instructional time is important so celebrations will be limited. Parents may opt out from any school celebration by contacting their teacher and/or principal.

Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies

Students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than a student's parents/guardians or school district officials, employees, and/or agents, except as provided by law and/or school policy.

Library and Media Center

The library/media center is open during school hours. The schedule varies depending on classes. Students may use the library/media center before and after school only when a supervisor is present.

Lunch

Lunch is to be eaten in designated areas only. Lunch times vary by classroom. Students will be notified of their assigned lunch time on the first day of school. Lunch calendars are sent home monthly. Students may receive a lunch at school or bring a prepared lunch from home. Milk will be available to supplement lunches brought from home.

STRIDE Academy will offer FREE breakfast AND lunch to all students, as part of the community eligibility provision. If a student is bringing a lunch from home, but chooses to take milk from school, they will be charged for the milk.

Messages to Students

Office telephones are not for students' personal use. Students will not be called out of class to receive phone messages except in the event of an emergency. Personal cell phone use during the instructional day is prohibited.

Nondiscrimination

The school district is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, or age in its programs and activities. The school board has designated the ***Executive Director*** as the district's human rights officer to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination.

Notice of Violent Behavior by Students

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

right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

Family/Teacher and Parent Engagement

At STRIDE Academy, we believe effective education succeeds only through partnership with families. By working together, we tap into your child's strengths, provide consistent support, foster strong academic and social outcomes, and set high expectations, all while building a supportive learning environment. Your engagement is central to your child's success, and we're committed to supporting you in it.

Family Conference nights and parent education nights will be held at each building throughout the year. Each building will communicate dates, times and additional information to families through ParentSquare.
For more information contact your building administrator.

Parent Volunteers

Parents/guardians are welcome in the schools and are encouraged to volunteer in their children's classrooms. To volunteer in the school building or classroom, parents/guardians should contact the School Administration.
For the safety and well-being of all children, the following guidelines regarding visitors in the building have been developed:

- All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must check-in at the school office and receive a badge. Anyone not wearing a badge will be escorted to the office to receive one.
- Children visiting (former students, relatives or friends wishing to visit STRIDE Academy) need prior approval from classroom teacher and principal, as these types of visits are a distraction from the learning environment for students. Children must be accompanied by an adult and sponsored by a teacher.

Student Photo/Media Notice

Students may be photographed or recorded during school activities and events for use in school or district communications, including newsletters, websites, social media, and ParentSquare. Parents/guardians who do not want their communications, including newsletters, websites, social media and Parent Square. Parents/guardians who do not want their child's image used should complete the districts' photo/media opt-out process. If no opt-out is received, the district will understand that there is no objection to uses including the yearbook.

Pledge of Allegiance

Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America daily via morning announcements. Any person who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not

to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice. Students will also receive instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag.

School Activities

The school district provides opportunities for students to pursue special interests that contribute to their physical, mental, and emotional health. Formal instruction is the school district's priority.
Students who participate in school-sponsored activities are expected to responsibly represent the school and community. All rules pertaining to student conduct and student discipline apply to school activities.
All spectators at school-sponsored activities are expected to behave appropriately. Students and employees may be subject to discipline. Parents/guardians and other spectators may be subject to sanctions for inappropriate, illegal, or unsportsmanlike behavior at these activities or events.

School Closing Procedures

School may be canceled when the Executive Director believes severe weather or other circumstances threaten the safety of students and employees. In case of inclement weather, it is advised for families to watch for STRIDE Academy's response on school closings, late starts, or early release announcements. We will post these announcements on:

- STRIDE Academy Website
- Parent Square Message (phone call/email home)
- Facebook and other social media outlets
- Local Radio/Television Stations

Searches

In the interest of student safety and to ensure that schools are drug free, district authorities may conduct searches. Students violate school policy when they carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions or store contraband in desks, lockers, or vehicles parked on school property. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item, the possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item(s) and, when appropriate, give the item(s) to legal officials for ultimate disposition. Students found to be in violation of this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and, when appropriate, the student may be referred to legal officials.

Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker

Under Minnesota law, school lockers and cubbies are school district property. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for students' convenience. School officials may inspect the interior of lockers for any

reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

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

Desks

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

Personal Possessions and Student's Person

The personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

Student Publications and Materials

The school district's policy is to protect students' free speech rights while, at the same time, preserving the district's obligation to provide a learning environment that is free of disruption. All school publications are under the supervision of the building principal and/or sponsor. Non School-sponsored publications may not be distributed without prior approval.

Distribution of Non School-Sponsored Materials on School Premises

The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes distributing nonschool-sponsored material, subject to school district regulations and procedures, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner.

School-Sponsored Media

The school district may exercise editorial control over the style and content of student expression in school-sponsored media as defined in Policy 512 and activities. Student media advisers shall supervise student writers to ensure compliance with the law and school district policies. Students producing school-sponsored media and participating in school activities will be under the supervision of a student media adviser and the school principal.. Expression in school-sponsored media or

school-sponsored activity is prohibited when the material:

1. is obscene to minors;
2. is defamatory;
3. is profane, harassing, threatening, or intimidating;
4. constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
5. violates federal or state law;
6. causes a material and substantial disruption of school activities;
7. is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action on school premises or the violation of lawful school policies or rules, including a policy adopted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.03 or 121A.031;
8. advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law;
9. expresses or advocates sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence or prejudice; or
10. is distributed or displayed in violation of time, place, and manner regulations.

Expression in school-sponsored media or school-sponsored activity is subject to school district editorial control over the style and content when the school district's actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. School-sponsored media may be distributed at reasonable times and locations.

Student Records

Student records are classified as public, private, or confidential. State and federal laws protect student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents/guardians and eligible students with certain rights. For the purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. For more information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students regarding student records, see "Student Records" (*Appendix 3*). A complete copy of the school district's "Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records" policy may be obtained at www.strideacademy.org.

Student Surveys

Schools conduct student surveys to gather feedback on teaching quality, curriculum relevance, school climate, and student well-being. This information helps educators and administrators make informed decisions to improve learning experiences, enhance support services, and create a safer, more inclusive environment. Surveys also give students a voice in their education and may be used to meet accountability or accreditation requirements.

Transportation of Public School Students

Students must ride on their assigned bus only. According to STRIDE Academy transportation guidelines, students are **not permitted** to ride a bus other than the one they are assigned. They may not switch buses nor ride to a friend's home on a different bus. This policy is an issue of safety. Contact Voigt and STRIDE if any changes are needed in your transportation needs.

Video and Audio Recording

School Buses

All school buses used by the school district may be equipped for the placement and operation of a video camera. The school district will post a notice in a conspicuous location informing students that their conversations or actions may be recorded. The school district may use a video recording of the actions of student passengers as evidence in any disciplinary action arising from the students' misconduct on the bus.

Places Other Than Buses

The school district buildings and grounds may be equipped with video cameras. Video surveillance may occur in any school district building or on any school district property. Video may be requested only by administration. Video surveillance of locker rooms or bathrooms will only be utilized in extreme situations, with extraordinary controls, and only as expressly approved by the superintendent.

ACADEMICS

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Students who cheat or commit plagiarism on any test or assignment will be given a failing grade for that test or assignment and will be disciplined in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline policy.

Extended School Year Opportunities

The school district provides extended school year opportunities to a student who is the subject of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the student's IEP team determines the services are necessary during a break in instruction in order to provide a free and appropriate public education. For more information on extended school year opportunities for students with an IEP, contact the school special education coordinator.

Field Trips

Field trips may be offered to supplement student learning in which students voluntarily participate and, if so, students who participate may be charged. Students will not be required to pay for instructional trips that take place during the school day, relate directly to a course of study, and require student participation.

Grades

Students' grades will be reported at the end of each quarter during the year. Report cards will be printed and sent home with students. Online grade reports may be reviewed via skyward.

Homework

Homework assignments are made by the teachers. The amount of homework varies by teacher and subject area. The school district asks parents/guardians to encourage their child(ren) to complete homework thoroughly and promptly. Students should read daily at home to build strong literacy skills, improve vocabulary, and enhance comprehension. Regular reading also helps develop focus, imagination, and a love for learning. It supports academic success across all subjects and encourages lifelong learning habits.

Promotion and Retention

All students are expected to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency. Students who achieve at an acceptable level will be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of the school year. Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents/guardians feel that it is in the best interest of the student. The superintendent's decision will be final. The district has a variety of services to help students succeed in school. For more information, contact the school administration.

Parent Right to Know

If a parent requests it, the school district will provide information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional licensing status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
4. Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, the school district will provide parents with information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The school district will provide notice to parents if their child has been assigned to, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

RULES AND DISCIPLINE

Attendance

Regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students, and establishes regular habits of dependability.

MN Compulsory School Attendance Law (Minn. Stat. § 120A.22) states that children between the ages 7 - 18, and ages 5 and 6 if they are enrolled, must attend school every day on time unless lawfully excused by the school. STRIDE Academy believes regular school attendance is vital for the child to experience optimum success at school and throughout life. Attendance habits developed in childhood often carry over into later school years and influence attitudes about work responsibility in later life. It is important that parents carefully consider any condition or activity that will keep the child out of school. Routine visits to doctor, dentists, etc., should be made after school hours, if possible. Parents are urged to consider the school calendar carefully when planning family vacations.

Important Notes Regarding Attendance

- Attendance is taken in every classroom (ES 8:00am MS 9:00am)
- **Please call the office before ES 7:15 and MS 8:15 a.m. when your child is absent. Attendance can be text or called in to 320-200-4297.**
- Calls will be made home throughout the day in order to verify absences.
- Parents must send a note to the office or call the office in order to excuse absences.
- Students are expected to be in their assigned area at designated times. Failure to do so constitutes tardiness.

Excused Absences

Regular attendance in school is a critical factor in student progress. The burden of a child being excused from school is placed on the parent/guardian. The school has the right to accept or not accept an excused absence. The school can reject invalid or unacceptable excuses from school. If it appears a parent/guardian is requesting that the school excuse excessive absences or keep a child home for unacceptable reasons, the school has the responsibility to collect data and report excessive absences as truant to the proper authorities.

Examples of Acceptable Reasons for Absenteeism:

- Illness (The school may request medical verification.)
- Doctor, dentist, mental health or other medical appointment. We encourage parents to make appointments before or after school. (Medical note is required for medical excuse)
- Religious holidays
- Extreme family emergencies (house fire, serious accident)
- Death in the immediate family

Unexcused absences

Unexcused absences may result in a truancy petition. We will monitor attendance closely and report truancy as mandated by state law. We will work collaboratively with County agencies to assist in resolving issues that result in truancy petitions.

Examples of Unacceptable Reasons for Absenteeism:

- Staying home to baby-sit, “needed at home”
- Missed the bus, no way to get the student to school
- Student overslept or is “having a bad day”
- Travel, family vacations without prior approval
- Weather is too cold, too hot, too stormy
- Student has nothing to wear
- 7 unexcused tardies = 1 full unexcused day

Family Vacations/Camps

Children attending STRIDE Academy are expected to plan family vacations around the school calendar. Family vacations are not routinely accepted as excused absences. The Prior Approval Form must be completed and pre-approved by the building principal in order to receive an excused absence for family vacations during STRIDE Academy school attendance days. The form is available at the main office. Parents will receive a letter home reminding them of the attendance policy. If the excessive absences continue, parents will be required to hand in a doctor’s excuse for each absence. Letters are sent out according to the following schedule:

- When a student reaches the following **unexcused** absences the following steps will be taken:
    - At **3** unexcused absences, an *Attendance Alert Letter* will be sent to parents.
    - At **5** full day unexcused absences we will send an Initial truancy Referral form to the county in which the student resides. This letter is sent directly to the county and they send a notice to the parents.
    - At **7** unexcused absences an Educational Neglect Referral form is sent to the county.

Bullying Prohibition

The school district is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Acts of bullying, in any form, by either an individual student or a group of students, are prohibited on school district property, at school-related functions or activities, on school transportation, and by misuse of technology.

Buses – Conduct on School Buses and Consequences for Misbehavior

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district’s general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses. The school district will not provide transportation for students whose transportation privileges have been revoked.

The school district is committed to transporting students in a safe and orderly manner. To accomplish this, student riders are expected to follow school district rules for waiting at a school bus stop and for riding on a school bus.

Students must ride on their assigned bus only. Students are **not permitted** to ride a bus other than the one they are assigned. They may not switch buses nor ride to a friend's home on a different bus. This policy is an issue of safety. Contact STRIDE Academy if any changes are needed for your transportation needs. **Chris Lichy 330.217.6573.**

Transportation Bus Phone Numbers
Voigt: 320.253.0510

Bus Safety Training will be provided to all STRIDE Academy students soon after the beginning of school. Training verification slips are required for all students. Free bus safety curriculum and resources are available from the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

While waiting for the bus or after being dropped off at a school bus stop, all students must comply with the following rules:

- Get to the bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
- Respect the property of others while waiting at the bus stop.
- Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
- Use appropriate language.
- Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.
- Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
- After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
- If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
- No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
- No use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

While riding a school bus, all riders must comply with the following rules:

- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Remain seated facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
- Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
- Keep arms, legs, and belongings to yourself and out of the aisle.
- No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
- Do not throw any object.
- No eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
- Do not bring any weapons or dangerous objects on the school bus.
- Do not damage the school bus.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the school district under administrative discipline procedures. All school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

STRIDE Academy will follow STRIDE Academy Bus Discipline Policies, Guidelines, and Consequences. If a student does not follow the district rules on a bus, the following steps will be taken: 1. The driver will attempt to resolve the problem. Bus

rules will be reviewed with students. 2. A seat may be assigned in an attempt to better manage the student's behavior. 3. When the driver is unable to manage a student's behavior, an incident report will be written. This report is used to inform parents and the school of unacceptable behavior. We follow District 742 Bus Policies.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Communication Devices

STRIDE Academy recognizes that electronic devices can support the development of 21st-century skills and may be valuable learning tools when used appropriately. At the same time, maintaining a focused, respectful, and productive learning environment requires clear expectations for personal cell phone and electronic device use during the school day.

STRIDE Academy is a cell phone-free campus. Students are not permitted to carry or use cell phones or other personal electronic devices during the school day unless permission has been granted by a staff member for a specific need, such as a medical reason or family emergency.

Students should leave cell phones at home or keep them powered off and secured in their school locker throughout the school day. Families should not expect to communicate with students by cell phone during instructional hours. If a family needs to reach a student during the school day, communication should take place through the school office.

STRIDE Academy is not responsible for the maintenance, care, loss, theft, or damage of students' personal electronic devices.

Student Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Not carry a cell phone during the school day.
- Keep cell phones powered off and secured in a school locker, or leave them at home.
- Obtain permission from a staff member before using a cell phone for an approved reason, including medical needs or family emergencies.
- Follow all staff directions regarding personal electronic devices.

Teacher Expectations

Teachers and staff are expected to:

- Enforce the cell phone policy consistently and uniformly.
- Not provide cell phone breaks during class.
- Use personal cell phones during the school day only when necessary for school-related communication or responsibilities.

Parent and Guardian Expectations

Parents and guardians are encouraged to support STRIDE Academy's cell phone-free policy by limiting students' phone access during the school day.
Recommended phone downtime settings are:

- Elementary School: 7:15 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
- Middle School: 8:15 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Families are also encouraged to communicate with students through alternate methods through the school office rather than through personal cell phones during the school day.

Administrator Expectations

School administrators will:

- Support consistent enforcement of the cell phone-free policy.
- Communicate cell phone violations to students and families as appropriate.
- Confiscate and hold cell phones or other electronic devices in the school office when students violate the policy.

Violations and Consequences

Any student who violates the cell phone policy will be referred to the school office. A confiscated phone may be returned to the student at the end of the school day for the first violation. For subsequent violations, a parent or guardian will be required to pick up the device from the school office.

Refusal to comply with the cell phone policy or with staff directions may result in additional disciplinary consequences for insubordination.

By working together to follow these expectations, students, families, and staff help STRIDE Academy maintain a safe, focused, respectful, and productive learning environment.

Discipline

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

Dress and Appearance

STRIDE Academy establishes an expectation of dress and grooming that creates an environment conducive to learning and reflects attire appropriate for an educational setting. STRIDE Academy reserves the right to address any behaviors or dress that are not appropriate.

- Student clothing must allow identification of the student.
- Jewelry that presents a safety hazard to self and/or others may not be worn or brought to school. Examples include, but are not limited to: chains, spike rings, spike collars or bracelets. approval (i.e., student undergoing chemotherapy,

medical situations, religious practice).
- Clothing or accessories with words, graphics or innuendo, that are obscene, vulgar, abusive or discriminatory, may not be worn or brought to school. Examples include, but are not limited to: ethnic, racist, sexual, or sexist remarks/images, such as swastikas, confederate flags, or other symbols of hate.
- Clothing or accessories that promote or advertise alcohol, chemicals, tobacco, or any product that is illegal for use by minors may not be worn or brought to school. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco logos. “Look alike” logos are also unacceptable. ○ Heavy/winter coats need to be kept in lockers and are not to be worn during the school day.
    - Shoes are to be worn at all times. Health and safety insurance codes are specific in addressing this mandatory requirement.

If a student wears an article of clothing that is considered questionable or repeatedly violates the expectations, they will be asked to change in order to continue their day. If a student does not have something to change into, the student will be provided attire. Continued violations will result in communication home to parent/guardian and could lead to school consequences. Administration reserves the right to determine if clothing is appropriate for school.

STRIDE Academy accommodates students’ free exercise of a sincerely held religious belief by allowing religious attire to be worn in place of a uniform bottom, and requests that it be of a solid color. The dress code is not intended to and shall not be implemented in a way that promotes a particular religion or particular religious programs.

Drug-Free School and Workplace

The possession and use of alcohol, controlled substances, and toxic substances are prohibited at school or in any other school location before, during, or after school hours. Paraphernalia associated with controlled substances also is prohibited. The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who violates this policy.

District policy is not violated when a person brings a controlled substance that has a currently accepted medical treatment into a school location for personal use if the person has a physician’s prescription for the substance except marijuana is not allowed on school property even if prescribed. Students who have prescriptions must comply with the school district’s “Student Medication and Telehealth” policy. The school district will provide an instructional program in every elementary and secondary school on chemical abuse and the prevention of chemical dependency.

Harassment and Violence Prohibition

The school district strives to maintain a learning and working environment free from

harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. Detailed information on the school district's "Harassment and Violence Prohibition" policy is included in this handbook.

Hazing Prohibition

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

Internet Acceptable Use

All school district students have conditional access to the school district's computer system, including Internet access, for limited educational purposes, including use of the system for classroom activities, educational research, and professional and career development. Use of the school district's system is a privilege, not a right. Unacceptable use of the school district's computer system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use or access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies, including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, or exclusion; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.
A copy of the school district's "Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use" policy is available at ***www.strideacademy.org***.
Within 30 days of the start of each school year, the school district must give parents and students direct and timely notice, by United States mail, e-mail, or other direct form of communication, of any curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider contract affecting a student's educational data. The notice must:

1. Identify each curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider with access to educational data;
2. Identify the educational data affected by the curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider contract; and
3. Include information about the contract inspection and provide contact information for a school department to which a parent or student may direct questions or concerns regarding any program or activity that allows a curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider to access a student's educational data.

The school district must provide parents and students an opportunity to inspect a complete copy of any contract with a technology provider. Students will receive a copy of the school district's "Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use" policy and are expected to understand and agree to abide by the policy as a condition of use of the school district's computer system. All students who wish to

use the school district's computer system must sign the Internet Use Agreement form.

Visitors

Visitors are permitted to park in designated school district visitor parking areas. Unattended vehicles left in other locations on school district property may be towed at the owner's expense.

Tobacco-Free Schools

Possession and Use of Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction

School district students and staff have the right to learn and work in an environment that is tobacco free. School policy is violated by any individual's use of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or carrying or using activated electronic delivery devices in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Students may not possess any type of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic delivery devices in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Any student who violates this policy is subject to school district discipline. For detailed information on the school district's "Tobacco-Free Environment; Possession and Use of Tobacco, Tobacco-Related Devices, and Electronic Delivery Devices; Vaping Awareness and Prevention Instruction" policy.

Vandalism

Vandalism of any district property is prohibited. Violators will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials.

Weapons Prohibition

No person will possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in school district policy. A "weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; airguns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nunchucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. A weapon also includes look-alike weapons. Appropriate discipline and action will be taken against any person who violates this policy. The school district does not allow the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students. Discipline of students will include, at a minimum: immediate out-of-school suspension; confiscation of the weapon; immediate notification of police; parent or guardian notification; and recommendation to the superintendent of dismissal for a period of time not to exceed one year. The building principal shall, as soon as practicable, refer to the

criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system, as appropriate, a student who brings a firearm to school unlawfully. A student who brings a firearm to school will be expelled for at least one year, subject to school district discretion on a case-by-case basis. For a copy of the “School Weapons”policy, visit www.strideacademy.org.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Accidents

All student injuries that occur at school, at school-sponsored activities, or on school transportation should be reported to the school nurse and school administration. Parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified as soon as possible. If the student requires immediate medical attention, the principal or other district leader will call 911 or seek emergency medical treatment and then contact the parent(s).

Asbestos Management Plan

The school district has developed an asbestos management plan. A copy of this plan can be found in the and is available on the district’s website.

Crisis Management

The school district has developed a “Crisis Management” plan. Students and parents will be provided with information as to district and school-specific plans.

The “Crisis Management” plan addresses a range of potential crisis situations in the school district. The school district has developed general crisis procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, campus evacuation, sheltering, and communication procedures. The school district will conduct lock-down drills, fire drills, and a tornado drill. Building plans include classroom and building evacuation procedures.

First Aid

The nurse’s office in each building is equipped to handle minor injuries requiring first aid. If the nurse’s office is not open, assistance can be sought from the building’s administrative office. If a student experiences a more serious medical emergency at school, 911 will be called and/or a parent/guardian will be contacted depending on the situation.

The district has installed automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in the front entrance area. Tampering with any AED is prohibited and may result in discipline.

Communicable Diseases

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent or guardian suspects that his/her child has a communicable or contagious disease, the parent or guardian should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

Students with certain communicable diseases will not be excluded from attending school in their usual daily attendance settings as long as their health permits and their attendance does not create a significant risk of transmitting the illness to other students or school district employees. The school district will determine on a case-by-case basis whether a contagious student's attendance creates a significant risk of transmitting the illness to others.

Health Service

The student health office is staffed by a trained health tech and supervised by a licensed school nurse. Students who become sick at school should report to the nurses office. In the event of an emergency, health services staff will notify parents or guardians and follow school health plans. The health office staff will arrange for students who get sick at school to go home early.

A parent/guardian should notify the school if his/her child is unable to attend school because of illness, by calling the attendance line.

Immunizations

All students must provide proof of immunization or submit appropriate documentation exempting them from such immunizations in order to enroll or remain enrolled. Students may be exempted from the immunization requirement when the immunization of the student is contraindicated for medical reasons; laboratory confirmation of adequate immunity exists; or due to the conscientiously held beliefs of the parents/guardians or student. The school district will maintain a file containing the immunization records for each student in attendance at the school district for at least five years after the student reaches the age of 18. For a copy of the immunization schedule or to obtain an exemption form or information, contact the school health office.

Medications at School During the School Day

The school district acknowledges that some students may require prescribed drugs or medication during the school day. The administration of prescription medication or drugs at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent. An "Administering Prescription Medications" form must be completed once a year and/or when a change in the prescription or requirements for administration occurs. Prescription medications must be brought to school in the original container labeled for the student by a pharmacist, 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 school personnel. Exceptions that may be allowed include: prescription asthma medications administered with an inhaler pursuant to school district policy and procedures, medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school district and parent or as specified in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (section504 Plan), or an individual health plan (IHP). Marijuana is not allowed on school property even if prescribed. The school district is to be notified of any change in administration of a student's prescription

medication.

Pesticide Application Notice

The school district may plan to apply pesticide(s) on school property. To the extent the school district applies certain pesticides, the school district will provide a notice by September 15 as to the school district's plan to use these pesticides. A parent may request to be notified prior to the application of certain pesticides on days different from those specified in the notice. Additional information regarding what pesticides are used, an estimated schedule of pesticide applications (which will be available for review or copying at the school office), and the long-term health effects of the class of pesticide on children can be requested by contacting Stride Academy Front Office, or via the school's website.

Safety

The safety of students on campus and at school-related activities is a high priority of the district. While district-wide safety procedures are in place, student and parent cooperation is essential to ensuring school safety.

School Board Policies

All School Board Policies can be viewed at www.strideacademy.org.

514 BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY *Rev. 2010*

I. PURPOSE

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' 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, it is the school district's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, 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, and other similar disruptive behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school 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. This policy also applies to any

student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees.

B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.
C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited. E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.
E. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with school district's policies and procedures. The school district may take into account the following factors:
    a. The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
    b. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
    c. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
    d. The relationship between the parties involved; and
    e. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

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

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

III. DEFINITIONS

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

A. "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 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:
    a. harming a student;
    b. damaging a student's property;
    c. placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property; or 4. creating a hostile educational environment for a student.
B. "Immediately" means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24

hours.

C. "On school district property or at school-related functions" means all school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. School district property also may mean a student's walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE

A. 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 to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district's ability to take action against an alleged perpetrator based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

C. The Dean of each building is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying at the building level. Any person may report bullying directly to a school district human rights officer or the district's director.

D. A teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall inform the building principal immediately.

E. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.

F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, or work assignments, or educational or work environment.

G. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of bullying, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.

B. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the

complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.

C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; school district policies; and regulations.
D. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, to the extent permitted by law, based on a confirmed report.

VI. REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A. The school district annually will provide information and any applicable training to school district staff regarding this policy.
B. The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying.
C. The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to victims of bullying.

VIII. NOTICE

The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 121A.03 (Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence)
- Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)

526 HAZING PROHIBITION POLICY

[Note: The Commissioner of the Department of Education approved Model Policy 526 – Hazing Prohibition as the State's Model Policy.]

I. PURPOSE

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

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

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

III. DEFINITIONS

A. "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:
    a. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking or placing a harmful substance on the body.
    b. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
    c. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
    d. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, adversely affects the mental health or dignity of

the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.

e. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

B. "Student organization" means a group, club or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular school events. A student organization does not have to be an official school organization to come within the terms of this definition.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. 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 school dean or director.

B. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to a school district human rights officer or to the superintendent.

C. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors and other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall inform the building principal immediately.

D. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.

B. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

C. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, school district policies and regulations.

VI. REPRISAL

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing

relating to such hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

VII. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

[Note: Proper reference should be made to the appropriate handbooks in each school district.]

This policy shall appear in each school's student handbook and in each school's Building and Staff handbooks.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 121A.69 (Hazing Policy)
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)

502 SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS, AND STUDENT'S PERSON

[Note: School districts are required by statute to have a policy addressing these issues.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for a safe and healthful educational environment by enforcing the school district's policies against contraband.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker
Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

B. Desks
School desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

C. 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 the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its

scope and intrusiveness.

D. It shall be a violation of this policy for students to use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. It shall be a violation for students to carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. It includes but is not limited to weapons and "lookalikes," alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and "look-alikes," overdue books and other materials belonging to the school district, and stolen property.

B. "Personal possessions" includes but is not limited to purses, backpacks, book bags, packages, and clothing.

C. "Reasonable suspicion" means that a school official has grounds to believe that the search will result in evidence of a violation of school district policy, rules, and/or law. Reasonable suspicion may be based on a school official's personal observation, a report from a student, parent or staff member, a student's suspicious behavior, a student's age and past history or record of conduct both in and out of the school context, or other reliable sources of information.

D. "Reasonable scope" means that the scope and/or intrusiveness of the search is reasonably related to the objectives of the search. Factors to consider in determining what is reasonable include the seriousness of the suspected infraction, the reliability of the information, the necessity of acting without delay, the existence of exigent circumstances necessitating an immediate search and further investigation (e.g. to prevent violence, serious and immediate risk of harm or destruction of evidence), and the age of the student.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. School officials may inspect the interiors of lockers and desks for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

B. School officials may inspect the personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person based on a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. A search of personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

C. As soon as practicable after a search of personal possessions within a locker pursuant to this policy, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose possessions were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

D. Whenever feasible, a search of a person shall be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex. A second school official of the same sex shall be present as an observer during the search of a person whenever feasible.

E. A strip search is a search involving the removal of coverings or clothing from private areas. Mass strip searches, or body cavity searches, are prohibited. Strip searches will be conducted only in circumstances involving imminent danger.

F. A school official conducting any other search may determine when it is appropriate to have a second official present as an observer.
G. A copy of this policy will be printed in the student handbook or disseminated in any other way which school officials deem appropriate. The school district shall provide a copy of this policy to a student when the student is given use of a locker.

V. DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES

School administration may establish reasonable directives and guidelines which address specific needs of the school district, such as use of tape in lockers, standards of cleanliness and care, posting of pin-ups and posters which may constitute sexual harassment, etc.

VI. SEIZURE OF CONTRABAND

If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal officials for ultimate disposition.

VII. VIOLATIONS

A student found to have violated this policy and/or the directives and guidelines implementing it shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline Policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, or expulsion, and the student may, when appropriate, be referred to legal officials.

Legal References:

- U. S. Const., amend. IV Minn. Const., art. I, § 10 New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 U.S. 325, 105 S.Ct. 733, 83 L.Ed.2d 720 (1985)
- Minn. Stat. § 121A.72 (School Locker Policy)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 503

Orig. 1995, Rev. 2002, Rev.2010

503 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

I. PURPOSE

A. The school board believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. It is intended to be positive and not punitive.
B. This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrators. This policy will assist students in attending class.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Responsibilities

a. Student's Responsibility
It is the student's right to be in school. It is also the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes and study halls every day that school is in session and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class or study hall. Finally, it is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.

b. Parent or Guardian's Responsibility
It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to ensure the student is attending school, to inform the school in the event of a student absence, and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

c. Teacher's Responsibility
It is the teacher's responsibility to take daily attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class and study hall. It is also the teacher's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly. It is also the teacher's responsibility to provide any student who has been absent with any missed assignments upon request and/or upon return. Finally, it is the teacher's responsibility to work cooperatively with the student's parent or guardian and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

d. Administrator's Responsibility

i. It is the administrator's responsibility to require students to attend all assigned classes and study halls. It is also the administrator's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly to all students, to maintain accurate records on student attendance and to prepare a list of the previous day's absences stating the status of each. Finally, it is the administrator's responsibility to inform the student's parent or guardian of the student's attendance and to work cooperatively with them and the student to solve attendance problems.

ii. In accordance with the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, the students of the school district are REQUIRED to attend all assigned classes and/or study halls every day school is in session, unless the student has been excused by the school board from attendance because the student has already completed the studies ordinarily required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse for absence.

B. Attendance Procedures
Attendance procedures shall be presented to the school board for review and approval. When approved by the school board, the attendance procedures will

be included as an addendum to this policy.

a. Excused Absences
    i. The following reasons shall be sufficient to constitute excused absences:
        1. Illness.
        2. Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
        3. A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
        4. Medical or dental treatment.
        5. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
        6. Religious instruction not to exceed three hours in any week.
        7. Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
        8. Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outing.
        9. Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students will be permitted to complete make-up work.
    ii. Consequences of Excused Absences
        1. Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.
        2. Work missed because of absence must be made up within two days for each day absent. Any work not completed within this period shall result in "no credit" for the missed assignment. However, the building principal or the classroom teacher may extend the time allowed for completion of make-up work in the case of an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances.
        3. **The school may require a doctor's note if absences become excessive**.

b. Unexcused Absences
    i. The following are examples of absences which will not be excused:
        1. Truancy. An absence by a student which was not approved by the parent and/or the school district.
        2. Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures.
        3. Work at home.
        4. Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program.
        5. Vacations with family.
        6. Personal trips to schools or colleges.
        7. Absences resulting from cumulated unexcused tardies (2 tardies equal one unexcused absence).

8. Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy.

ii. Consequences of Unexcused Absences
1. Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56.
2. Days during which a student is suspended from school shall not be counted in a student's total cumulated unexcused absences.
3. In cases of recurring unexcused absences, the administration may also request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant to Minnesota statutes.
4. Students with unexcused absences shall be subject to discipline in the following manner:
a. After the 2nd cumulated unexcused absences, a student's parent or guardian will be notified by mail that his or her child is nearing a total of 3 unexcused absences and that, after the 3 unexcused absences the absences will be reported to the county.
b. After such notification, the student or his or her parent or guardian may, within a reasonable time, request a conference with school officials regarding the student's absences and the prescribed discipline. The notification will state that the school strongly urges the student's parent or guardian to request such a conference.
c. If the result of a grade reduction or loss of credit has the effect of an expulsion, the school district will follow the procedures set forth in the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56.

C. Tardiness
a. Definition: Students are expected to be in their assigned area at designated times. Failure to do so constitutes tardiness.
b. Procedures for Reporting Tardiness
i. Students tardy at the start of school must report to the school office for an admission slip.
ii. Tardiness between periods will be handled by the teacher.
c. Excused Tardiness
i. Valid excuses for tardiness are:
1. Illness.
2. Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
3. A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
4. Medical or dental treatment.
5. Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
6. Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm,

etc.
7. Any tardiness for which the student has been excused in writing by an administrator or faculty member.
8. Late bus

d. Unexcused Tardiness
   i. An unexcused tardiness is failing to be in an assigned area at the designated time class period commences without a valid excuse.
   ii. Which includes:
      1. Missing the bus
      2. Waking up late
   iii. Consequences of tardiness: 7 unexcused tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence.

D. Participation in Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored Events
   a. This policy applies to all students involved in any extracurricular activity scheduled either during or outside the school day and any school-sponsored events.
   b. School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted.
   c. A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
   d. If a student is suspended from any class, he or she may not participate in any activity or program that day.
   e. If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, he or she must present a physician's statement or a statement from the student's parent or guardian clearing the student for participation that day. The note must be presented to the coach or advisor before the student participates in the activity or program.

III. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

Copies of this policy shall be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year. This policy shall also be available upon request in each principal's office.

IV. REQUIRED REPORTING

A. Continuing Truant
   Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 120A.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for:
   a. Three days if the child is in elementary school; or
   b. Three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school.

B. Reporting Responsibility
   When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 provides that the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:
   a. That the child is truant;

b. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
c. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. § 120A.34;
d. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. § 120A.34;
e. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
f. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260;
g. That if the child is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the child may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the child's driving privilege pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 260C.201; and
h. That it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

[*Where services and procedures under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A are available within the school district, the following provisions should also be included in the policy.*]

C. Habitual Truant
   a. A habitual truant is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school, or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.
   b. A school district attendance officer shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
- Minn. Stat. § 120A.24 (Reporting)
- Minn. Stat. § 120A.26 (Enforcement and Prosecution)
- Minn. Stat. § 120A.28 (School Boards and Teachers, Duties)
- Minn. Stat. § 120A.30 (Attendance Officers)
- Minn. Stat. § 120A.34 (Violations; Penalties)
- Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
- Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, Subd. 19 (Habitual Truant Defined)
- Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Definitions)
- Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian When Child is Continuing Truant)
- *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565, 95 S.Ct. 729 (1975)
- *Slocum v. Holton Board of Education*, 429 N.W.2d 607 (Mich. App. Ct. 1988)
- *Campbell v. Board of Education of New Milford*, 475 A.2d 289 (Conn. 1984)
- *Hamer v. Board of Education of Township High School District No. 113*, 66 Ill.

App.3d 7 (1978)
- *Gutierrez v. School District R-1*, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
- *Knight v. Board of Education*, 38 Ill. App. 3d 603, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
- *Dorsey v. Bale*, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

Cross References:
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
- Adopted: June 2005 MSBA/MASA Model Policy 501
- Revised: February 2014 Orig. 1995 Reviewed: December 2010 Rev.2005

501 SCHOOL WEAPONS POLICY

[NOTE: School districts are required by state statute to have a policy addressing these issues. ATTENTION: This policy incorporates certain provisions of the Minnesota

Citizens' Personal Protection Act of 2003. That law was struck down by the Minnesota Court of Appeals. However, in the 2005 session, the Minnesota legislature reenacted this law effective retroactively and without interruption from April 28, 2003. The reenacted law is now in effect.]

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assure a safe school environment for students, staff and the public.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

No student or nonstudent, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer or member of the public who violates this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. "Weapon"
   a. A "Weapon" means any object, device of instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles, nun chucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon.
   b. No person shall possess, use or distribute any object, device or instrument having the appearance of a weapon and such objects, devices or instruments shall be treated as weapons including, but not limited to, weapons listed above which are broken or non-functional, look-alike guns; toy guns; and any object that is a facsimile of a real weapon.
   c. No person shall use articles designed for other purposes (i.e., laser or

laser pointers, belts, combs, pencils, files, scissors, etc.), to inflict bodily harm and / or intimidate and such use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

B. "School Property" includes any school building or grounds, whether leased, rented or owned or controlled by the school, locations of school activities or trips, bus stops, school buses or school vehicles, school-contracted vehicles, the area of entrance or departure from school premises or events, all locations where school-related functions are conducted, and anywhere students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.
C. "Possession" means having a weapon on one's person or in an area subject to one's control in a school location.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

A. A student who finds a weapon on the way to school or in a school location, or a student who discovers that he or she accidentally has a weapon in his or her possession, and takes the weapon immediately to the principal's office shall not be considered to possess a weapon. If it would be impractical or dangerous to take the weapon to the principal's office, a student shall not be considered to possess a weapon if he or she immediately turns the weapon over to an administrator, teacher or school employee or immediately notifies an administrator, teacher or school employee of the weapons location
B. It shall not be a violation of this policy if a nonstudent (or student where specified) falls within one of the following categories:
    a. Active licensed peace officers;
    b. Military personnel, or students or nonstudents participating in military training, who are on duty performing official duties;
    c. Persons authorized to carry a pistol under Minn. Statute 624.714 while in a motor vehicle or outside of a motor vehicle for the purpose of directly placing a firearm in, or retrieving it from, the trunk or rear area of the vehicle
    d. Persons who keep or store in a motor in a motor vehicle, pistols in accordance with Minn. Stat. 624.714 or 624.715 or other firearms in accordance with Statute 97B.045;
        i. Section 624.714 specifies procedures and standards for obtaining a pistol permits and penalties for the failure to do so. Section 624.715 defines an exception to the pistol permit requirements for "Antique firearms which are carried or possessed as curiosities or for their historical significance or value.
        ii. Section 97B.045 generally provides that a firearm may not be transported in a motor vehicle unless it is (1) unloaded and in a gun case without any portion of the firearm exposed; (2) unloaded and in the closed trunk; or (3) a handgun carried in compliance with Section 624.714 and 624.715.
    e. Firearm safety or marksmanship courses or activities for students or nonstudents conducted on school property;
    f. Possession of dangerous weapons, BB guns, or replica firearms by a ceremonial color guard;

g. A gun or knife show held on school property;
h. Possession of dangerous weapons, BB guns, or replica firearms with written permission of the principal or other person having general control and supervision of the school;
i. Persons who are on unimproved property owned or leased by a school or school district unless the person knows that a student is currently present on the land for a school-related activity.
j. Persons must have written permission from the Executive Director as well as a principal for someone to possess a dangerous weapon in a school location.

C. Policy Application to Instructional Equipment/Tools
While the school district takes a firm "Zero Tolerance" position on the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students, and a similar position with regard to nonstudents, such a position is not meant to interfere with instruction or the use of appropriate equipment and tools by students or nonstudents. Such equipment and tools, when properly possessed, used and stored, shall not be considered in violation of the rule against the possession, use or distribution of weapons. However, when authorized instructional and work equipment and tools are used in a potentially dangerous or threatening manner. Such possession and use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

D. Firearms in School Parking Lots and Parking Facilities
A school district may not prohibit the lawful carry or possession of firearms in a school parking lot or parking facility. For purposes of this policy, the "lawful" carry or possession of a firearm in a school parking lot or parking facility is specifically limited to nonstudent permit-holders authorized under Minn. Statue 624.714 to carry a pistol in the interior of a vehicle or outside the motor vehicle for the purpose of directly placing a firearm in, or retrieving it from, the trunk or rear area of the vehicle. Any possession or carry of a firearm beyond the immediate vicinity of a permit-holder's vehicle shall constitute a violation of this policy.

V. CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENT WEAPON POSSESSION/USE/DISTRIBUTION

A. The school district takes a position of "Zero Tolerance" in regard to the possession, use or distribution of weapons by students. Consequently, the minimum consequence for students possessing, suing, or distributing weapons shall include:
    a. Immediate out-of-school suspension;
    b. Confiscation of the weapon;
    c. Immediate notification of the police;
    d. Parent or guardian notification; and
    e. Recommendation of the Executive Director for dismissal for a period of time deemed appropriate.
B. Pursuant to Minnesota Law, a student who brings a firearm, as defined by federal law, to school will be expelled for at least a year. The school board may modify this requirement on a case-by-case basis.
C. Administrative Discretion:

While the school district takes a "Zero Tolerance" position on the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students, the Executive Director may use discretion in determining whether, under the circumstances, a course of action other than the minimum consequences specified above is warranted. If so, other appropriate action may be taken, including consideration of a recommendation for lesser discipline.

VI. CONSEQUENCES FOR WEAPON POSSESSION/USE/DISTRIBUTION BY NONSTUDENTS

A. Employees
    a. An employee who violates the terms of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, including nonrenewal, suspension, or discharge as deemed appropriate by the school board.
    b. Sanctions against employees, including nonrenewal, suspension, or discharge shall be pursuant to and in accordance with applicable statutory authority, collective bargaining agreements, and school district policies.
    c. When an employee violates the weapons policy, law enforcement may be notified, as appropriate.
B. Other nonstudents
    a. Any member of the public who violates this policy shall be informed of the policy and asked to leave the school location. Depending on the circumstances, the person may be barred from future entry to school locations. In addition, if the person is a student in another district, that school district may be contacted concerning the policy violation.
    b. If appropriate, law enforcement will be notified of the policy violation by the member of the public and may be asked to provide an escort to remove the member of the public from the school location.

Legal References:

- Minn. Stat. 97B.045 (Transportation of Firearms) Minn. Stat. 121A.05 (Referral to Police)
- Minn. Stat. 121A.40-121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act) Minn. Stat.
- 121A.44 (Expulsion for Possession of Firearms) Minn. Stat. 609.02,
- SUB.6 (Definition of Dangerous Weapons)
- Minn. Stat. 609.605 (Trespass)
- Minn. Stat. 609.66 (Dangerous Weapons)
- Minn. Stat. 624.714 (Carrying of Weapons without Permit, Penalties)
- Minn. Stat. 624.715 (Exemptions; Antiques and Ornaments) 18 U.S.C.
- 921 (Definition of Firearm) in re C.R.M. 611 N.W.2d 802 (MInn. 2000)
- Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 403 (Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal of School District Employees)
- MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline) MSBA/MASA
- Model Policy 525 (Violence Prevention)

Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

Student Information

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.
Why statewide testing? Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academic standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our children with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter? A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student's achievement, but your student's participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student's school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota's implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and will be counted as "not proficient" for the purpose of school and district accountability, including opportunities for support and recognition. • Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, non credit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- Academic Standards and Assessments: What are academic standards? The Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards? The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and

science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and Minnesota Test of (MTAS) (MTAS) ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCAs are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing. In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/ guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your

student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is less than 1 percent of instructional time in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our Statewide Testing page (education.state.mn.us > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

MN Parent/Guardian Refusal Document