

KAMSC

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Welcome/Introduction

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! We are thrilled to have you as a part of our school community. This handbook outlines key policies, expectations, and resources designed to foster a safe, supportive, and academically rigorous environment.

Mission and Vision

Mission: The mission of the Kalamazoo Area Mathematics and Science Center Accelerated Program is to design and deliver educational experiences to students who will benefit from a highly rigorous, sequential, and integrated exposure to mathematics, science, and computer science in an environment where respect for self and others is valued.

Vision: KAMSC C.O.R.E

C - COMMUNITY

KAMSC strives to create a caring and collaborative community with and among students, families and with all Kalamazoo local public school districts, community leaders and mentors, businesses and universities.

O - OPPORTUNITIES

KAMSC prides itself on providing students with unique opportunities to collaborate with the strongest minds across the county as well as engage in opportunities to conduct research within the school and community. KAMSC provides many opportunities for students to join and lead clubs held here as well as provide many opportunities to volunteer to support both the Vine neighborhood and Kalamazoo County at large. We believe these opportunities prepare students to apply to and attend some of the best post-secondary institutions in the nation.

R - RESEARCH

A Core foundation of the KAMSC curriculum is our robust research program. Students in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade are required to conduct research each year, with the support of our research director and our teaching staff. Students learn how to create a literature review, design, set up, and investigate their own ideas/experiments, and use mathematics to summarize their findings. Students learn how to create professional research posters and learn to defend and answer questions about their topics and findings. Students also have the option to join the research team, an independent study with extra research opportunities that include competing in science and engineering fairs. This arm of KAMSC allows students to have an extensive research experience to put on their college applications and, in many cases, has opened doors for college-level research.

E - EXCELLENCE

KAMSC's founding committee was tasked with a mission to provide a rigorous and unique experience for those who qualify. We will uphold those tenants as we continue to evolve into the future. Our staff expects excellence from themselves and our students. We will model the way for excellence in study habits, curiosity, student learning products and presentation skills. Students at KAMSC will leave with

- Strong math/science backgrounds
- An understanding of our to get academic support from peers, teachers and counselors
- An understanding of how to use all of their resources to fully engage in learning
- Be a collaborative partner in learning
- Have confidence in themselves as learners and students
- Knowing how to engage in scientific research

Challenge Success - KAMSC collaborates with Challenge Success, a non-profit organization connected to Stanford University's Graduate School of Education. Through this partnership, we amplify student perspectives and apply proven, equity-focused approaches to enhance student well-being, engagement, and sense of belonging across all grade levels. This work strengthens both mental health support and academic success for our students. We have a challenge success team at KAMSC that consists of students, staff, parents and community member as well as a coach from the Challenge Success program. Here are our current Challenge Success goals and measurables. Please note that this plan, while by in large consistent, may change slightly throughout any given school year depending on the needs of students, teachers and families. Please see our website for any revised versions.

School Calendar

- **First Day of School:** September 1, 2026
- **Winter Break:** December 21, 2026 - January 1, 2027
- **Spring Break:** March 26 – April 2, 2027
- **Last Day of School:** June 4, 2027
  (Refer to the official school district calendar or calendars on the KAMSC website for additional holidays and early dismissal days.)

Daily Schedule

- **9th & 10th graders:** 8:00 AM – 10:27 AM
- **11th & 12th graders:** 11:30AM -2:00PM
- Sample weekly schedule we typically follow

Attendance Policy

Why is this important? Regular attendance is critical for student success. Missing just 17 days a year—less than two per month—at KAMSC is considered chronic absenteeism by the state of Michigan. Research shows this can harm academic performance. KAMSC's collaborative, hands-on learning environment relies on active participation, rich discussions, and lab work that can't be replicated outside the classroom.

Types of Absences

- Excused Absence: Reported by a parent/guardian within 24 hours for illness, injury, funeral, emergencies, or pre-approved absences.
- Pre-Arranged Absence: Submit the form at least 5 days in advance. Limit to 5 days per year. Students must make up missed work—ideally before the absence, but no later than one week after returning.
- Unexcused Absence: Any absence not covered above, including non-school sports or activities.
- School-Related Absence: Must be reported to the KAMSC office within 24 hours of the event or trip.
- What constitutes a "day" absent - 2 or more classes missed in one day

What happens if you are chronically absent at KAMSC?

- Attendance is reviewed every 6 weeks. Students should have no more than 3 absences per review period **(excluding school-related absences)**, and no more than 17 total absences for the school year. Review Dates & Thresholds:

- Oct 9 – More than 3 absences → Letter sent to student and parent
- Nov 20 – More than 6 absences → Student meeting + parent email
- Jan 8 – More than 9 absences → Student meeting + parent email
- Feb 19 – More than 12 absences → Student & parent meeting required
- Apr 9 – More than 15 absences → Student & parent meeting required
- May 21 – More than 17 absences → May result in return to partner school
- Our goal is to support students in keeping absences below 10% of the school year.

Support for You

- We will provide counseling or therapist support for those that are in need in order to overcome barriers to achieving 90% attendance or better.
- We will work with families as a team to find root causes of excessive absenteeism and do our best to support students through those causes.
- We will closely monitor and inform families of any attendance concerns as outlined above.

Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct ensures a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment.

- Respect for self, others, and property is expected.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated.
- Plagiarism/cheating/inappropriate use of technology or inappropriate use of AI is carefully monitored and will not be tolerated.
- Consequences for misconduct will be administered fairly and consistently using the Kalamazoo Public Schools Code of Conduct and consequences and could result in dismissal from KAMSC.
- Please note, that new this year is the Michigan Cell Phone law: At KAMSC all cell phones must remain in student bags outside of the classroom. Under state law, cell phone use during class will only be permitted in very rare, teacher-initiated instances where a phone is directly required for a specific academic lesson, as well as for **verified medical or other accommodations.**

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately for a learning environment.

- Clothing must be free of offensive or inappropriate language/images.
- Dress code violations may result in a request to change or parent contact.

Academic Policies

- **Homework:** Reinforces daily learning. Students are expected to complete assignments on time.
- **Academic Integrity:** Cheating/plagiarism will result in disciplinary action up to removal from the program.
- **Syllabi:** Students and families should review each teacher's syllabus.

- **Academic Supports at KAMSC (Mutli-Tiered Support System)**
    - In all student's acceptance letters, we say: "We're excited about the possibility of having you in the KAMSC program. KAMSC offers a rigorous learning environment that requires your time and effort to really thrive. We expect you to maintain at least a B average in KAMSC classes while you're with us. If you're ready to take on this challenge please let us know if you accept the KAMSC invitation." With the requirement of a B average, we provide immediate support when C's are detected.
    - To support students in this high expectation we have an MTSS system that will provide support for students if we see that they require it. This is based on data from grades and teacher feedback. All students receive Tier I supports.
        - Students can prearrange time with their teachers before or after school.
        - All students are always supported by Wednesday night open labs where staff come back to support students
        - Student planner provided to all 9th and 10th graders
    - Students will be offered Tier II supports if they have a grade of C+ or lower at the time of a grade pull or if a teacher feels they need this level of support. These supports may consist of online peer tutoring, or 1:1 either virtual or face to face tutoring.
    - Students will be required to have a team meeting and make use of Tier III supports including but not limited to a provided face to face or 1:1 tutor, meeting times with teachers, and taking advantage of other tier II suports if after one semester the report card shows a C+ or lower in any 2 classes. A meeting will be held with the counselor, director, teachers, student and parent to create a plan to best support the student.
    - **Math Sequencing Note:**
        - Students who begin at KAMSC in a mathematics course above the standard course sequence will be evaluated during the first nine weeks of school. Based on teacher observations and demonstrated readiness, students may be reassigned to the mathematics course that best matches their instructional needs.
            - **Example:** A 9th-grade student placed above Math I may be moved to a course that is deemed a better fit and more supportive for the student.

Academic Expectations

Students enrolled at KAMSC are expected to maintain strong academic performance (B average). Students who do not meet the academic standards outlined below will be required to return to their partner school as a full-time student. The following three standards determine academic eligibility. The examples are provided for illustration only and are not intended to cover every possible situation.

- **Standard #1:** More than one C or C+ for two consecutive semesters.
- **Standard #2:** A C- or lower in any one course for two consecutive semesters
- **Standard #3:** Any D+ (69.99%) or lower at the end of a semester.
- A two consecutive semester combination of standard #1 and standard #2

Standard #1: Multiple C or C+ Grades for Two Consecutive Semester report cards

- A student who earns **more than one final grade of C+ or C** for **two consecutive semesters** will no longer be eligible to attend KAMSC.

Example: 9th grader	
Fall Semester (January report card)	Biology: C+ Information Technology: A- Math I: C
Winter Semester (June report card)	Biology: C+ Information Technology: B Math I: C
Result: The student would return to their partner school full-time for 10th grade.	

Example: Across two school years, but consecutive semesters	
Winter Semester (June report card) - end of 9th grade	Biology: C+ Information Technology: B Math I: C
Fall Semester (January report card)	Chemistry: C+ Computer Science: B- Math II: C
Result: The student would return to their partner school full-time in January of 10th grade year	

Standard #2: One C- in any Courses for Two Consecutive Semester report cards

- A student who earns a C- in any course for two consecutive semesters will no longer be eligible to attend KAMSC.

Example: 9th grader	
Fall Semester (January report card)	Biology: C- Information Technology: A- Math I: B-
Winter Semester (June report card)	Biology: B- Information Technology: B+ Math I: C-
Result: The student would return to their partner school full-time for 10th grade.	

Example: Combination of Rules #1 and #2	
Winter Semester (June report card) (9th grade)	Biology: C+ Information Technology: B Math I: C
Fall Semester (January report card) (10th grade)	Chemistry: C- Computer Science: B- Math II: B-
Result: The student would return to their partner school full-time beginning in January of 10th grade.	

Standard #3: D+ or Lower

- A student who earns a final semester grade of D+ (69.99%) or lower in any course will no longer be eligible to attend KAMSC. Because KAMSC courses are highly sequenced, a grade at this level indicates insufficient mastery of the course content needed for success in subsequent coursework.

Example: 11th grader	
Fall Semester (January report card)	Physics: C AP Biology: B- Math III: D+
Result: The student would return to their partner school full-time beginning in January of 11th grade.	

* please know that while we must maintain our mission of high academic standards, we will provide support along the way including: counseling services, tutoring services both group study tables and 1:1 or small group tutoring, meet with families, collaboratively making plans and teaching students how to employ student-skills to make them successful. See supports listed above.

Grading and Assessment

Grades reflect mastery of curriculum standards. For determination of letter grades on report cards:

- **A: 93+**
- **A- 90-92.99**
- **B+ 87-89.99**
- **B 83-86.99**
- **B- 80-82.99**
- **C+ 77-77.99**
- **C 73-76.99**
- **C- 70-72.99**
- **D+ 67-69.99**
- **D 63-66.99**
- **D- 60-62.99**
- **F: 59.99 and below**

*Assessments may include tests, projects, presentations, and formative checks.

*We round to the nearest hundredth, so a 89.99 does not round to an A-, it is considered a B+

Technology Use

- All students must adhere to the **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**.
- School devices (provided by their partner school) are for educational purposes only.
- Cyberbullying or misuse of digital tools (including AI) may result in restricted access or disciplinary action.

Health and Safety

- **Nurses** are available during school hours for minor injuries and illness.
- Parents must notify the school of **medical conditions or medications**.
- School grounds are **smoke-free, drug-free, and weapon-free zones**.
- All students (and visitors) must pass through the weapons detectors before entering KAMSC

Emergency Procedures

Emergency drills (fire, lockdown, severe weather) are conducted regularly.

- Parents will be notified through the school messaging system in case of real emergencies.
- Students must follow staff directions promptly and calmly.

Extracurricular Activities and KAMSC Awards/Ceremonies

We offer a variety of clubs and student organizations.

- Eligibility for participation requires good academic standing and behavior.
- Parents must complete permission and health forms as required.
- Please note that the seniors will only be able to participate in the senior ceremony if they have passed all of their classes for every semester and have a C- or higher in all second semester senior classes.

Parent and Family Engagement

We value strong family partnerships. Opportunities include:

- Weekly KAMSC newsletter - Every Friday at 5 pm.
- Open Houses/Project Day
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Family Workshops and Events
- Parent Organization Meetings

Communication Guidelines

We encourage open and respectful communication.

- Teachers are available via email or by appointment. You should always go to the teacher first if you have a question about their class.
- Newsletters and school updates will be sent regularly.
- Social media and the school website provide updates.

Transportation

- **Bus riders** must follow all rules for safety.
- **Drop-off and pick-up** procedures are strictly enforced for smooth traffic flow.
    - You may **not** park in the lot across the street from the Vine entrance. You may pull through there to turn around only.
    - Please drop off on the North side of the street (same side as entrance door) so that we limit students needing to cross the street)
    - Do NOT pull into the CEC parking lot drive and stop at the end to drop students off, it causes backups and is not safe. Pull into the parking lot to drop off. Students should then walk towards the sidewalk on Vine St., go down the steps closest to the sidewalk, and use the sidewalk to the Vine Street entrance.
- Arrangement for transportation is done through your partner school, not the KAMSC office.
- Students that drive must fill out and use a parking permit in their vehicle dash so their car does not risk being towed.
- Students may not park in the staff lot, they must park in the back near the El Sol playground in the student parking area. Parking permits must be displayed at all times or cars are at risk of being **towed**.
- Please note that any of our local businesses may also tow vehicles if they suspect KAMSC students are using their private lots during the school day or not for business purposes.

***All towing will be at the car owner's expense.

Student Services

- **Counseling Services:** Academic and emotional support.
- **Special Education:** Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and accommodations should be sent from the partner school to KAMSC to be followed at KAMSC.
- **504 Plans:** Support for students with medical or physical needs. These documented plans should be sent from the partner school to KAMSC to be followed at KAMSC.

We look forward to a successful year of learning and growth!

We have read through the KAMSC student handbook and understand the attendance policy, academic policy, and agree to follow all aspects of the handbook. Please sign after all parties have read and agreed to the handbook and turn into the office by September 11th, 2026. Please sign using the google form found in PowerSchool.