



Star Program Student Handbook

WCED: Albany-Melrose-Paynesville-Sauk Centre

Our program was established by the West Central Education District to provide an increased level of intervention for special education students focusing on increasing their social skills, self regulation skills, and coping strategies.

MISSION STATEMENT~ The West Central Education District's mission is to maximize every student's educational experience by providing high quality services to students, families, and member districts.

BELIEF STATEMENTS~

- All WCED staff have expertise in their individual discipline or licensure area
- Lifelong learning is a vital component of the educational experience
- Parents are an integral part of their child's learning
- Partnerships with community resources and other agencies are key in helping children and families reach their fullest potential

OBJECTIVES~

- to provide students with the life skills necessary to be healthy individuals through social skill building, mental health awareness and academic instruction.
 - Students will be provided a structured, consistent and predictable environment
 - Students will be provided the opportunity to realize their full potential
 - Collaboration with families, home school, and community agencies must exist
 - Guardian/Parents are an integral part of team planning

Contact Information

Phone number: (320) 256-7836

Website: wced6026.org

Address: WCED Star Program
9 2nd Street Southwest
Melrose, Mn 56352

***We reserve the right to refer to home district student handbooks
for additional clarification and guidance.
Board approved December 2017***



WEST CENTRAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

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Assessments: Special Education comprehensive assessments will be administered by the Star Program when individual teams agree it is necessary to gather the data or in accordance with state guidelines.

Attendance/Truancy: The attendance policy will be in effect for this school year in accordance with all applicable state and federal statutes, regulations and the school board's policy. If a student is absent for any reason, the student's parent/guardian must verify the absence, in accordance with the following procedure:

- Parent/guardian responsibility to call home district transportation prior to their student's scheduled time to be picked up. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify home district transportation of any changes; such as but not limited to address changes, student being picked up for an appointment...
- Parents/guardians are to call the school by 8:00 AM (320-256-7836) on days their child is absent.

Categories of Absences

All absences are either "excused" or "unexcused". A designated staff or the school principal has discretion to determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused. All students are expected to complete coursework missed due to absence.

Excused Absences: In order for an absence to qualify as "excused" it must fit into one or more of the following categories and be approved by designated staff:

1. Illness/injury: any absence due to a student's legitimate illness or injury is excused. The designated staff has the sole discretion to require a doctor's note verifying the need for the absence before designating any absence as excused due to illness/injury.
2. Family Emergencies: For purposes of the attendance policy, family emergencies include serious, unavoidable events that require the student's absence from school. Examples of family emergencies include funerals for family members and visiting immediate family members (such as parents, grandparents, siblings) in the hospital.
3. Family Trips: Absences due to family trips may be excused if the request for absences due to family trips is made at least 3 school days before the trip is to begin. The request must be signed by the student's parent/guardian, and include a brief description of the purpose of the trip.
 - a. Students may be entitled up to a total of 10 excused absences for family trips each year.
4. Dental, Medical or Court Ordered Appointments: Any absence due to a student's legitimate dental, medical, or court ordered appointment is excused; note from appointment is encouraged and will be required if truancy has been previously filed.
5. Religion: Any absence due to a student's religious observance is excused; not to exceed 3 hours per week.
6. Other Absences: Any absence not covered in categories 1-5 will be determined by the building principal as either excused or unexcused.

Unexcused Absences

An "unexcused" absence occurs when the absence has not been identified as an "excused absence" according to above criteria. Whenever a student receives an "unexcused absence," the guidelines of resident county truancy mediation program is followed.

Continuing Truant

"Continuing Truant" refers to a child who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements for section 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in section 120A.05, without valid excuse

within a single school year for three or more days Upon a child's initial classification as a "continuing truant," the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the child's parent or legal guardian, by first-class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. That the child is truant;
2. That the parent or guardian should notify the school is there a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. That the parent or the guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to section 120A.22 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject prosecution under section 120A.34;
4. That this notification serves as the notification required by section 120A.34;
5. That alternative education programs and services may be available in the district;
6. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel the discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
7. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under chapter 260C;
8. 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 section 260C.201; and
9. That it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with child for one day.

When students have 3 unexcused absences, the school will notify the County Attorney requesting a first letter be sent to the child and/or the child's parent(s). The County Attorney will send a letter to the child and/or the parent(s) and mail a copy of the letter to the school authority who sent the request

Behavior Guidelines: The Star Program has been established to meet the needs of a variety of individuals. The safety and security of all who attend is vital in providing a quality educational environment for all students. The purpose of the following Policy and Rules of Conduct is to clearly state our expectations of student's behavior and consequences for violations of the rules.

Students are entitled to fair treatment and recognition of their rights and privileges. In return, students are expected to comply with the rules and follow the lawful authority of the school staff. The mutual aim of the school staff and students should be to create a sense of community where everyone is respectful of the rights of others and all may develop to their fullest potential. Students will earn recognition based upon their behavioral and academic performance.

All forms of harassment, abuse, insubordination, bullying, inappropriate language, stealing, illegal substance abuse, or violence among or by students whether by action, spoken words, written words, pictures, sounds, or other form of communication will not be tolerated and are subject to discipline.

Book Orders: Book orders will be sent home in the student's take home folder. You can order using the paper copy or order online. The books usually arrive at school in 1-2 weeks and we will hand them out at school. If you are choosing to buy the book as a gift, let us know and we will let you know when it is in.

Calendar: A copy of our school calendar can be found on our website; www.wced6026.org

Communication: A "take home folder" will be used on a daily basis to help organize materials between home and school. A daily point sheet will be sent home in the folder summarizing the school day. We will add any special notes on the point sheet. We encourage you to let us know any schedule changes, updates, or concerns on the point sheet. You are also welcome to call or email teachers, or request to

meet in person. Project and school work will also be in the take home folder. Items on the "keep at home" side, need to be taken out on a daily basis. Items on the "return to school" side, need to be reviewed, signed, and returned.

Daily Schedule: The Star Program school day is determined by each IEP team; within the times of 8:30 AM and 2:30 PM. Social skills instruction, reading, math, and motor skills will be the focus of learning with a priority on increasing self awareness and self regulation. Students attending over the lunch period will be able to bring their own lunch or have a school lunch. Student snacks are provided by individual families. The schedule for snack break is determined by the team.

Dress Code: School appropriate clothing includes clothing appropriate for weather conditions as well as school appropriate images (no representation of drugs, weapons, violence, or put downs). Students will have many opportunities for movement and time on the playground. It is important that students dress appropriate and safe for these situations. Sandals, flip-flops, and fashion boots are not appropriate or safe for play at school. Winter clothing is required for play outside in cold weather days. Please provide an extra pair of clothes and undergarments in case of accidents.

Drop off & Pick Up: If you are choosing to drop of and/or pick up your child, please contact teachers. We do not have supervision outside of our instruction time.

Due Process: The Star Program strives to adhere to all due process required by State and Federal Laws. Special education due process requirements will be addressed at the Star Program; such as but not limited to annual IEP meetings, progress reports, and 3-year evaluations when applicable.

Emergency Contact: It is required that all students must have a completed Registration Questionnaire, which includes emergency contact. Any changes to this information are the responsibility of the parent/guardian or student.

Emergency Procedures

Fire

The signal for a fire is a continuous blast of the fire alarm system. Everyone must leave the building. Close doors as you leave. Wait in designated area with students and staff until "all clear" signal from designated staff before re-entering.

Lock Down

The signal for a lockdown is an announcement over the intercom system. There are two types of lock downs that are used:

- In a "soft lockdown", everyone must remain in a locked room until an announcement is made by school personnel and/or law enforcement. No one will be allowed to enter a secured room. Phones may be used by staff/teachers; not students. Teachers should continue teaching.
- In a "hard lockdown", everyone must remain in a locked room, located away from doors and windows until an announcement is made by school personnel and/or law enforcement. Cover windows. No one will be allowed to enter a secured room and school/cell phones will not be used. Lights are turned off. Students and staff need to remain quiet. Teaching will not occur.

Tornado

The signal for a tornado will be announced over the intercom system. When you reach your shelter area, sit on the floor with your hands covering your head. An "all clear" announcement will be given when you are to return to your classrooms.

Evacuation

The signal for an evacuation is an announcement over the intercom system. Everyone must report to the pre-designated evacuation site in an orderly manner, with his/her class. Keep away from the dangerous situations. Return to the classroom when instructed to do so.

Extra-Curricular: Contact your home district to participate in extracurricular activities.

Food: Lunch is offered through the Melrose School District. Applications for free and reduced lunches are available. Turn in completed forms to Star Staff. Turn lunch money (checks payable to Melrose Public Schools) to Star staff.

- Birthday Treats: Students are welcome to bring treats on their birthday or half birthday. Treats must be store-bought. If students enrolled have food allergies, we ask that the treats are supportive to all students joining in on the celebration. A note will be sent home prior to your child's birthday to let you know when we are celebrating as well stating if we have any food allergies.

Internet: The Star Program will promote safe internet use. Students demonstrating unsafe behaviors may be at risk of losing technology privileges.

Leaving Campus: Students need to remain on school grounds and within designated areas. If a student leaves school grounds without permission, law enforcement and parent/guardian are notified.

Medical: Be sure all health concerns (allergies, diabetes, seizures, etc) are documented on the Registration Questionnaire.

- Accidents: Students should report all accidents to the staff if they are injured in the classroom, the school building, or school grounds. If medical attention is needed parents or guardians will be notified. All incidents will be documented by completing an accident report. The school does not provide accident insurance plans for students.
- Immunization Records: Students are required by law to have a current immunization records on file at school prior to attending. A health record will be maintained at the Star Program including medication information, emergency health data and vision and hearing screening information.
- Medication
 - Nonprescription/over-the-counter (OTC) medications: The school will not provide OTC medications. If used, OTC medications must be in the original bottle with official container label and directions. The student's name will be legibly placed on a label in permanent marker, attached to the bottle, not obstructing drug name, dose, official instructions, or expiration date. Parents will sign a permission form for school staff to administer OTC medication. Medication will be kept in a locked box in the Star Program.
 - Prescription medications: The administration of prescription medication at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent. A "Prescription Medication Administration" form must be completed annually and/or when a change in prescription or requirements for administration occurs. Prescription medication must come to school in the

original container labeled for the student by a pharmacist in accordance with the law, and must be administered in a manner consistent with the instructions on the label. Prescription medications are not be carried by the student, but will be left in the office. Exceptions to this requirement are: prescription asthma medications self-administered with an inhaler, and medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school and the parents or as specified in an individual health plan. Medication will be kept in a locked box in the Star Program.

Non-Discrimination: It is the policy of the West Central Education District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, national origin, age, marital status, disability, and status with regard to public assistance or in its educational programs or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, Title IX (1972 Education Amendments), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The District will identify, evaluate and provide an appropriate public education to learners who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act should be directed to the respective Director of the West Central Education District, 903 State Road, Sauk Centre, MN or to the office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

Pledge Of Allegiance: In accordance with the state law, the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited weekly. Students choosing not to participate must be respectful during the pledge. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice.

Removal of Student from Class: Teachers have the responsibility of attempting to modify disruptive student behavior by such means as conferring with the student, using positive reinforcement, or contacting the student's parents. When such measures fail, or when the teacher determines it is otherwise appropriate based upon the student's conduct, the teacher shall have the authority to remove the student from class pursuant to the procedures established by this discipline policy. "Removal from class" and "removal" mean any actions taken by a teacher, principal, or other school district employee to prohibit a student from attending a class or activity period for a period of time not to exceed five (5) days, pursuant to this discipline policy.

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

1. Willful conduct that significantly disrupts the rights of others to an education, including conduct that interferes with a teacher's ability to teach or communicate effectively with students in a class or with the ability of other students to learn;
2. Willful conduct that endangers surrounding persons, including school district employees, the student or other students, or the property of the school;
3. Willful violation of any school rules, regulations, policies or procedures, including the Code of Student Conduct in this policy; or
4. Other conduct, which in the discretion of the teacher or administration requires removal of the student from class. Such removal shall be for at least one (1) activity period or class period, of instruction for a given course of study and shall not exceed five(5) such periods.

If a student is removed from the class more than ten (10) times in a school year, the school district shall notify the parent or guardian of the student's tenth removal from class and make reasonable attempts to convene a meeting with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the problem that is causing the student to be removed from class.

Procedures for Removal of a Student From a Class.

1. Specify procedures to be followed by a teacher, administrator or other school district employee to remove a student from a class;
2. Specify required approvals necessary;
3. Specify paperwork and reporting procedures.

Responsibility for and Custody of a Student Removed From Class.

1. Designation of where student is to go when removed;
2. Designation of how student is to get to designated destination;
3. Whether student must be accompanied;
4. Statement of what student is to do when and while removed;
5. Designation of who has control over and responsibility for student after removal from class.

Procedures for Return of a Student to a Class From Which the Student Was Removed.

1. Specification of procedures;
2. Actions or approvals required such as notes, conferences, readmission plans.

Procedures for Notification.

1. Specify procedures for notifying students and parents/guardians of violations of the rules of conduct and resulting disciplinary action;
2. Actions or approvals required, such as notes, conferences, readmission plans.

Disabled Students; Special Provisions.

1. Procedures for consideration of whether there is a need for further assessment;
2. Procedures for consideration of whether there is a need for a review of the adequacy of the current Individualized Education Program (IEP) of a disabled student who is removed from class or disciplined; and
3. Any procedures determined appropriate for referring students in need of special education services those services.

Procedures for Detecting and Addressing Chemical Abuse Problems of Students While on School Premises.

1. Establishment of a chemical abuse pre-assessment team pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 121A.26;
2. Establishment of a school and community advisory team to address chemical abuse problems in the district pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 121A.27; and
3. Establishment of teacher reporting procedures to the chemical abuse pre-assessment team pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 121A.29.

Specific procedures addressing disruptive behaviors (identifying replacement behaviors, as well as rewarding and consequences for behaviors are developed by individual teams and outlined in the student's Behavior Support Plan within the IEP.

Report Cards/Progress Reports: Report cards, documenting academic progress, are written and sent to parents quarterly. Progress reports specific to goals and objectives on the IEP are also written and sent to parents quarterly. A complete transcript is shared with home district when the student transitions back to home district.

Respectful, Safe, and Secure Environment: The Star Program strives to provide a safe and secure environment. A safe and secure environment can be described as a place where appropriate language is used, appropriate behavioral choices are made, and students are making progress.

Rule Violations: A positive behavior intervention supports is implemented to provide privileges based on level of independence observed during the school day. Instruction is provided to assist students in gaining independence. We reserve the right to determine the potential severity of a given situation. Staff will make every effort to assist the student with their behavior by providing appropriate guidance, counsel and action. The Star Program will cooperate with all local and state law enforcement agencies. Rule violations will result in a consequence.

School Authority: All employees of Star Program have the responsibility and obligation to enforce school regulations.

School Closing: The Star Program will mirror all weather-related directions that are announced for Melrose School District. You also need to watch for the weather related decisions for your school district. Examples:

- If Melrose is two hours late, Star Program will be two hours late.
- If Melrose is closed, Star Program is CLOSED.
- If your home district is 2 hours late or closed due to weather, you may be arriving 2 hours late or not at all depending on travel conditions. Your home district will make that determination.

School Pictures: Your child can take school pictures when it is scheduled in their home district. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to contact the home district to schedule pictures. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to get your child to/from pictures and then to/from school on that day.

Searches: The Star Program strives for a safe learning environment. Individual teams will determine what items are school appropriate and what items need to remain at home. Items that become a disruption to student learning will be addressed. In all situations, weapons (including toy weapons) are prohibited. Parents/guardians will be notified when searches are conducted and in inappropriate item is found.

Student Records: All special education documentation will be returned to the home district when the student transitions out of the Star Program. See Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records and Public Notice Policy in appendix.

Student Rights and Responsibilities Regarding Conduct

1. Student Rights
 - a. The board of education recognizes that students are entitled to the civil liberties guaranteed all citizens. One of the primary goals of public education is to prepare students to successfully complete the transition from school into the general society in which they live, and to accept the responsibility commensurate with the rights and privileges they have and those they will assume.
 - b. The district shall provide an environment in which students may exercise the rights and privileges of the society in which they live, with its proportional amount of responsibility.
 - c. Students have the right to freely express ideas, verbally or in writing, within their school program. Responsible criticism and reasonable dissent are basic to the educational process. However, false statements, disruptive activities, threats, the use of obscenities, profanity or ridicule, and advocating violation of the law or school rules and regulations are unacceptable means of expression.
 - d. Students have the right to be safe and free from threatening situations on school property,

at school activities and in district vehicles.

2. Student Responsibilities

- a. Regular attendance
- b. Conscientious effort in school work and activities
- c. Respect for the rights of other students, school staff, and school visitors
- d. Adherence to and cooperation in upholding local, state, and national laws, and district and school rules and regulations.
- e. Students share with the administration and staff, the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a safe, stimulating and productive environment.

3. Student Behavior and Discipline

- a. Discipline is a learning experience which:
 - i. sets behavioral limits and guidelines to lead students to and through adulthood
 - ii. develops individual respect for law, authority, property, and the rights of others and self
 - iii. develops a mature individual capable of self-control and direction
- b. Disciplinary efforts are to be as positive as possible and are to include recognizing and strengthening appropriate behavior.
- c. The district is responsible for safeguarding the health and safety of each student, making reasonable rules and regulations governing student behavior and conduct, and maintaining proper control and discipline. To carry out this responsibility, district employees are expected to deal with students fairly and honestly and to treat all students with courtesy and respect.
- d. In establishing the proper learning environment, with proper control and discipline, the general maturation of the students involved must be considered. Within this context, district officials must protect the health and well being of all students while safeguarding individuals rights.
- e. Students are expected to behave in accordance with federal, state and local laws and rules and district and school policies and regulations, and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Corrective action, to discipline a student and/or modify a student's behavior, will be taken by the staff when a student's behavior does not fall within these parameters.
 - i. Actions which may be used by district staff to discipline students and/or encourage them to modify their behavior include but are not limited to: student conference, parent or guardian conference, fine restitution, detention, removal from class, dismissal from school, suspension, recommendation of alternative community service.
 - ii. The use of corporal punishment is not permitted. Corporal punishment is defined as inflicting physical hurt upon a child in order to punish her/him for misconduct.
 - iii. When an incident occurs in which one or more students have been physically or emotionally harmed by the misbehavior of other student(s), district staff shall be sensitive to the need to provide support to the victim(s) and to inform their parents about the incident.

4. Discipline Procedures

- a. Violations against school administrative procedures
 - i. unexcused absence → for students age 7 and older, follow resident county regulations in reporting
 - ii. disruptive behavior → see individual behavior support plans

- b. Violations against property
 - i. theft → report to administrator to determine consequence, possible notification to law enforcement, parent/guardian contact, behavior addressed on PBSP
 - ii. vandalism → report to administrator to determine consequence, possible notification to law enforcement, parent/guardian contact, behavior addressed on PBSP
 - c. Violations against persons
 - i. physical aggression → behavior addressed on PBSP, parent/guardian contact
 - ii. harmful or nuisance articles (items that are of a nuisance, illegal, or may cause harm) → confiscation, student removal, possible notification to law enforcement, parent/guardian contact, behavior addressed on PBSP
 - iii. verbal assault/Intimidation/threats → behavior addressed on PBSP, report to administrator to determine consequence, notification to law enforcement if a student threatens to harm or take the life of another person., parent/guardian contact
 - iv. weapons → report to administrator to determine consequence, law enforcement notified, parent/guardian notification, home district notification, ISS/OSS, exclusion, expulsion
5. Parent Notification: Parents/guardians will be notified in writing or by phone of violation of the rules and resulting in disciplinary actions except as provided otherwise by the Pupil Fair Dismissal

Supplies provided by student and/or school: Students are provided a list of necessary school supplies at the start of the school year or at the time of initial placement into the program. As per M.S. 120-101, the school will charge an appropriate replacement fee for textbooks, workbooks, equipment, or library books lost or destroyed by students.

Transportation: Students riding district transportation are subject to local district policies. If student loses bus privileges they are still obligated to attend school. Students who ride the bus/van to school must ride the bus/van home from school. Students are not allowed to use district transportation services other than that provided by their own home district.

School bus safety expectations pertain to all transportation provided by school districts; including cars, vans, school buses, or other school vehicles. As per Minnesota Statute Sec. 4 (123.7991) School Bus Safety Training, all students K-10 and new students must be provided Bus Safety Training and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of at least the following competencies and concepts;

1. Transportation by school bus is a privilege not a right
2. District policies for student conduct and school bus safety
3. Appropriate conduct while on bus
4. Procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus
5. Procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
6. School bus evacuation and other emergency procedures.

Visitors: All visitors, including parents/guardians and former students, need to stop in the office, sign in and get a visitor's' pass.

West Central Education District Star Program Student Handbook Appendix

APPROVED POLICIES

- 413: Policy and Procedures Prohibiting Harassment and Violence
- 417: Chemical Use and Abuse
- 418: Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School
- 419: Tobacco Free Environment
- 501: Weapons Policy
- 502: Search of Student
- 506: Student Discipline
- 514: Bully Prohibition
- 515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records & Public Notice
- 516: Student Medication
- 522: Student Sexual Nondiscrimination
- 524: Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy
- 526: Hazing
- 709: Transportation