



WEST CENTRAL EDUCATION DISTRICT
Collaborating for a Stronger Educational Community

Area Learning Center 2026-2027 Student Handbook

Contact Information

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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.

Introduction

The West Central Education District Area Learning Center (ALC) is a Minnesota Department of Education-approved program designed to serve secondary students who are at risk of not graduating. Established to meet a wide range of individual student needs, the ALC provides an alternative pathway to earning a high school diploma through flexible instruction and personalized support.

Each student works collaboratively with their parent(s)/guardian(s) and ALC staff to develop an Individual Continuous Learning Plan (CLP)—a plan that outlines academic goals, tracks credit progress, and addresses both academic and social-emotional development. The program emphasizes building on student strengths, addressing areas of difficulty, and offering instruction in formats that better meet diverse learning styles.

The ALC prioritizes both education and the safety and well-being of all students. Academic skill-building and social-emotional learning are embedded throughout the day to prepare students for graduation and success beyond high school. While we primarily serve students from our member districts—Albany, Melrose, Paynesville, and Sauk Centre—we also welcome students from other districts who meet enrollment criteria.

Our ultimate goal is to help students earn their high school diploma, become lifelong learners, and grow into productive, engaged members of their communities.

Enrollment Process

Enrollment at the Area Learning Center (ALC) is a student and family choice. Students interested in attending should contact their home district guidance office for registration and enrollment details.

To enroll, students must be affiliated with a member district, as the home district is responsible for issuing the student's high school diploma.

Registration materials are also available on the West Central Education District website. Families may complete the paperwork and return it to their home district guidance office for processing.

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Accidents

All accidents must be reported to staff if injuries occur in the classroom, the school building, or school grounds. If the student requires immediate medical attention, administration or designee will call 911 or seek emergency medical treatment and then contact parents/guardians. All incidents will be documented in the student cumulative file. The school does not provide accident insurance plans for students.

Annual Notifications

West Central Education District provides annual notifications to families as required by Minnesota and federal law. These notifications are available on the WCED website and include information regarding:

- Homeless Student Rights (McKinney-Vento Act)
- Lead in School Drinking Water
- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
- Asbestos Management Plan

Families are encouraged to review these notices annually. Copies may also be requested from the West Central Education District office.

Area Learning Center Commitment

Enrollment at the West Central Education District Area Learning Center is voluntary and limited to students who meet Graduation Incentives criteria as defined by state guidelines. Eligibility and details about what constitutes "at-risk" status can be obtained through your home district's guidance counselor. Students cannot be required to attend the Area Learning Center.

Before enrollment, a meeting will be held with the student, parent/guardian, home district representative, and Area Learning Center staff to review academic progress, student needs, concerns, and Area Learning Center expectations. If it is determined that a student's needs exceed the services available at the Area Learning Center, alternative educational options will be considered.

Throughout the year, students will meet periodically with staff to review their progress toward graduation. These meetings focus on the student's:

- Continual Learning Plan
- Academic progress (passing classes)
- Attitude (meeting behavior expectations)
- Attendance (maintaining at least 90% attendance)

Students and guardians may request additional progress review meetings at any time.

Assessments

It is the policy of the school district to implement procedures for testing, test security, reporting, and documentation, notification to students and parents and student record keeping in accordance with Minnesota law.

The Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information form is located in the appendix. Additional information can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education website.

Attendance/Tuancy

West Central Education District recognizes class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by students, parents/guardians, teachers and administrators. These attendance procedures are designed to support students in maintaining consistent class attendance and outlines the responsibilities of all parties.

Absences, regardless of a student's age, must be verified by a parent or guardian. A student enrolled as a senior plus will be able to verify their own absences. Final authority in determining whether an absence is excused, unexcused, or unapproved rests with the program administrator.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 120A.37, any student who is absent for 15 consecutive school days will be withdrawn from enrollment. To re-enroll, the student, their parent/guardian, a representative from the resident school district, and West Central Education District staff must participate in a re-enrollment meeting to determine next steps and review attendance expectations. Students who are withdrawn due to excessive absences will be placed at the bottom of the Area Learning Center waitlist and may only return if space is available.

Absence Procedures

When a student is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian will

- Notify district transportation
- Call the attendance line prior to 8:00am 320-256-6139

Excused Absences

Absences will be excused if they fall into one of the categories: A) Illness, B) Family Emergency, C) Medical/Dental appointments, D) Court Appearances, E) Religious instruction not to exceed 3 hours per week, F) Physical emergencies such as flood, fire, etc., G) Pre approved Trips. H) In School Suspension.

A written note from the medical provider is encouraged and will be required if the student has had 8 or more absences or truancy has previously been filed. Pre-approved trips will not be granted if the student has already accumulated 8 or more absences.

Unapproved Absences

These are absences excused by the parent but not excused by the school. The student will not receive disciplinary consequences for these absences but the student will not have a time extension to complete their school work. Unapproved absences may be counted as unexcused absences for the purpose of determining truancy.

Unexcused Absences

The following excuses are illegal and unexcused: babysitting, work, rest due to work, travel (unless pre approval), missing the bus or getting kicked off the bus, weather (unless school is officially cancelled), keeping a parent company, oversleeping, or helping at home.

Tardy

When a student is late to school, the student needs to report to the office prior to entering class. A designated staff will determine if the tardy is excused or unexcused. The student may be subject to consequences as determined by the program administrator. Three unexcused tardies will result in one unexcused absence.

Habitual Truancy

After the third unexcused/unapproved absence, a letter will be sent to parents/guardians informing them of the issue. After the 5th unexcused/unapproved absence a student will be referred to the Stearns County Truancy mediation program.

Bags

All backpacks, bags, purses or other carrying devices must be stored in the student's assigned locker during the school day. Administration and/or teachers may impose additional restrictions if such items pose a health, safety, or educational disruption concern.

College Visits

Juniors may receive up to 1 excused absence and seniors up to 2 excused absences for post-secondary campus visits. To qualify, students must submit a parent/guardian note at least three days in advance and provide verification from the campus upon return. Students are responsible for making up all missed coursework.

Communication

The West Central Education District uses the Remind messaging system to notify parents/guardians of school closings, late starts, early dismissals, and other important updates.

In addition to Remind, the district will communicate via phone and email regarding academic progress, behavioral concerns, special education services, and other student-related matters.

Credits, Graduation and Diplomas

Students may choose to graduate based on either their home district's credit requirements or the West Central Education District's credit requirements, as outlined below. In all cases, the high school diploma is issued by the student's home (member) district.

Credits

Credit requirements for graduation are reviewed during the intake process, documented in the student's Continual Learning Plan (CLP), and monitored throughout enrollment. Students earn credits by successfully completing course requirements and demonstrating mastery of the standards. All credits are recorded on the West Central Education District transcript and sent to the student's home district..

To receive a diploma based on the West Central Education District requirements, students must complete a minimum of 86 quarter credits. These credits must include the following high school-level course requirements:

- Language Arts:
16 quarter credits
Must be sufficient to meet all academic standards in English Language Arts.
- Mathematics:
12 quarter credits
Must include Algebra II, Integrated Mathematics III, or an equivalent course aligned to Minnesota high school math standards.
- Science:
12 quarter credits
 - 4 credits in Earth and Space Science (grades 9–12 standards)
 - 4 credits in Life Science (grades 9–12 standards)
 - 4 credits in Chemistry or Physics (grades 9–12 standards)
- Social Studies:
14 quarter credits
Must include the following content areas to meet state academic standards:
 - United States History
 - World History
 - Geography
 - Government and Citizenship
 - Economics
- Physical Education and Health:
4 quarter credits
- *Personal Finance*
 - *Students who begin grade 9 in the 2024–25 school year or later must successfully complete 2 quarter credits of personal finance during grade 10, 11, or 12.*
- Electives:
Remaining credits to total *86 quarter credits*
 - May include additional coursework in core academic areas and electives
 - At least 4 quarter credits must be in the arts

Report Cards and Progress Reports

The Area Learning Center uses letter grades, percentage scores, and rubric-based assessments to measure and communicate student achievement. Students identified as at risk of failing a course will receive progress reports at Week 3 and Week 6 of each quarter. These reports are shared with students and their parents/guardians. Report cards are issued quarterly and reflect the final grade earned in each class.

Incomplete Classes

Students will be given a grade of incomplete if the student has excused absences and has not had enough time to make up the coursework that was missed (one day for every missed day plus one; i.e. absent 2 days would allow for 3 days to make up the work). Coursework not completed within timelines will result in a zero for the identified assignments and the letter grade will be issued accordingly.

Graduation and Diploma

The Area Learning Center hosts a spring graduation ceremony to recognize students who have completed their graduation requirements; students receive a Certificate of Attendance from the Area Learning Center. Graduates will receive their diploma from their home district following that district's policies and procedures.

Participation in the home district's graduation ceremony is determined by that district. Students and families are responsible for working with the home district to understand and meet eligibility requirements.

Students who have not met graduation requirements by the end of 12th grade may participate in summer credit recovery and/or return in the fall as a Senior Plus to complete remaining credits.

Crisis Behavior Awareness

In the event that a student is expressing or displaying suicidal, homicidal, or terrorist intentions/suggestions, the following may occur depending on the severity of the action.

- notification of parent while other actions are being taken,
- assessment of risk by West Central Education District staff,
- police notification, and/or
- notification of county social services

If a student displays behaviors that are an immediate threat to themselves or others, staff will use de-escalation techniques in which they have received training to minimize trauma and injury which may include the use of a restrictive procedure to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Additional information can be found in the Restrictive Procedure Plan, available by contacting the West Central Education District Office.

Suicide Prevention Information

Suicide and Crisis LifeLine: **988**

Crisis Text line: **741741**

Four County Crisis Response Team: **320-253-5555 or 1-800-635-8008**

Daily Schedule

The school building will be open from 7:50 AM - 2:45 PM, on all days that school is in session. Students should not arrive before 7:50 AM. Classes begin at 8:00 AM and end at 2:30 PM.

Dress Code

Student appearance and/or dress needs to be supportive to the learning environment.

Clothing (shirts, hats, or other) that contain profanity or slogans which are degrading to any group (including gang related images), or which promote alcohol or other drugs, will not be tolerated. Grooming or dress that prevents a student from doing his/her best work because of blocked vision, restricted movement, or clothing which exposes them or any other students to danger is not acceptable.

- clothing needs to provide full coverage and show no undergarments
- blankets are not allowed
- winter coats must be stored in lockers

Students who violate any of the above listed guidelines will be required to change into clothing that meets the guidelines. Students will remain in the office until they make the appropriate change. Further consequences may result based on how the student accepts responsibility. Repeat violations will result in additional consequences; including notifying parents/guardians.

Electronic Devices

Both personal devices and school issued procedures and guidelines are outlined below.

Students are encouraged not to bring cell phones or other electronic devices including smart watches, and earbuds/air pods to school.

If students choose to bring a cell phone/device to school the expectations are as follows:

- Cell phones, electronic devices (including smart watches) and earbuds/air pods will be turned in prior to entering the building. Devices will be stored in a locked location and will be returned to students at the end of the academic day.
- Students who need to be in contact with their family during the academic day are to ask permission to use one of our school phones. Parents are welcome and encouraged to contact our main office if there is a message that needs to be relayed.
- Students assume the risk of damage, theft, or loss when choosing to bring a phone to school.
- Cell phone use of any kind is not permitted in locker rooms or bathrooms.
- Corded earbuds/headphones may be allowed at designated times for instructional purposes on school approved devices.
- Phone usage during lockdown and fire drills is prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from photographing, recording or making any electronic record of other students, staff, or visitors without express consent of the individual that is the subject of the recording, photograph, or electronic record. This policy applies to students during the school day, instructional and non instructional time, or while participating in school events
- Cell Phone Guidelines for off-campus school activities (i.e. extracurricular activities, outdoor and service trips, school field trips) will be individualized depending on the specific trip and activities. These expectations will be addressed at pre-trip meetings and/or on trip-specific permission slips.

Consequences of Violations

1. First Violation - electronic device is turned into the office for the remainder of the school day. Student may pick up the device at the end of the academic day.
2. Second Violation - electronic device is turned into the office for the remainder of the school day. Parent/guardian will need to pick up the device at the end of the academic day.
3. Third Violation - electronic device is turned into the office for the remainder of the school day. Parent/guardian will need to pick up the device at the end of the academic day. Parent meeting to discuss plans for successful learning outcomes.

Chromebooks, Internet, and Email

The West Central Education District Area Learning Center is a Google School. While enrolled, students will be issued a West Central Education District email account to communicate regarding school expectations; such as but not limited to, announcements, school assignments, and teacher/student feedback. Stickers or student markings are not allowed on school issued devices and/or cases. Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school computer network. **The chromebook is intended for participation in school; not for personal use.** Communication on the network is often public in nature. General rules for behavior and communication apply. *Gaming and listening to music needs staff approval.* Access to the network is a privilege, not a right. Student chromebooks are monitored for appropriate use; inappropriate use will result in a consequence such as but not limited to a warning, closing the site, loss of technology access. Upon graduation or leaving the program, the gmail account will be disabled.

The following uses of email and internet are not permitted:

- sending/displaying offensive messages or pictures
- obscene language
- harassing/insulting others
- damaging computers/computer systems/computer networks
- violating copyright laws

- using another's password
- trespassing in another's folders/work/files
- intentionally wasting limited resources
- accessing social media

Damaged, lost, or stolen items are subject to a fee paid for by the student/family. Specific cost amounts will be listed on annual permission/agreement form parents/guardians complete.

Emergency Contacts

It is required that all students have completed registration paperwork, which includes emergency contact. Any changes to this information are the responsibility of the parent/guardian or student and must be communicated to the office.

Emergency Procedures

This is an abridged version of the West Central Education District's policy 806 Crisis Management Policy. The full version of applicable policies are available on the school website.

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West Central Education District has developed a "Crisis Management" plan. Each school building has its own building-specific crisis management plan. The plan addresses a range of potential situations and includes procedures for securing buildings, classroom evacuation, campus evaluation, sheltering and communication procedures. The school district will conduct fire and tornado drills pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 299F.29.

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.

Extra-Curricular

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities with their home district. Students must meet their home district's academic eligibility criteria. Contact your home district for more information.

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. Occasionally there may be activities and/or projects that go beyond the basic educational program, such as field trips, where a small fee will be requested.

Food

Breakfast and lunch is offered through the Melrose Area School District. There is no cost for student breakfast and lunch for the 2026-2027 school year. Additionally, students may opt to bring a lunch from home; there is a microwave and fridge available for student use.

Students need to receive permission from staff to have food/beverages during class.

At no time during school hours will students be allowed to order or have food delivered to the school. This includes parents/guardians delivering restaurant food to students.

Health and Nursing Services

The Area Learning Center does not have on-site nursing staff but a licensed school nurse is available if needed on a consulting basis.

Medication

Nonprescription/over-the-counter (OTC) medications: The school will not provide OTC medications. A secondary student (grades 7-12) may possess and use non prescription pain relief in a manner consistent with the labeling, if the school district has received written authorization from the student's parent/guardian and physician orders permitting the student to self-administer the medication.

Prescription medications: The administration of prescription medication at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent/guardian. A "Prescription Medication Administration" form must be completed annually and/or when a change in prescription or requirements for administration occurs. The Prescription Medication Administration form requires a physician's signature and dosing instructions. 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 to be carried by the student, but will be kept in a locked location. 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.

Immunization Records

All students must provide proof of immunization or submit appropriate documentation exempting them from such immunizations. 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 parent/guardian 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 5 years after the student reaches age 18. West Central Education District will request immunization records from the member school district upon student enrollment.

Leaving Campus

West Central Education District programs are closed campus programs. Students are not permitted to leave campus during the school day without prior approval. Permission must be obtained by checking in and out through the office.

If a student leaves without parent/guardian permission, their parent/guardian will be notified, and disciplinary action will be determined by the school administrator. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, law enforcement may be contacted.

Students who leave without permission may not return to campus until the following school day unless accompanied in person by a parent or guardian.

Lockers

School lockers and/or cubby space 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 authorities 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 authorities 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 authorities must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials. Minn. Stat. §121A.72

Students are expected to put coats, backpacks, purses, and other items not needed for classroom activity in their locker. Students may not switch lockers and are recommended not to share. Individuals are responsible for what is in their locker and how it looks at all times. A combination lock is provided by the district. If a combination lock

has been removed and not returned, the student/family will be responsible for paying a replacement cost. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items: it's best to keep your locker locked and not share the combination with others.

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the West Central Education District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity) 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, 9 2nd ST So W Melrose, MN or to the office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

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 qualification 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. whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher;
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 does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

Permissions

Students enrolled at the West Central Education District Area Learning Center who have not yet reached their expected graduation year (completion of their senior year) are required to have a parent or guardian sign permission and other documents and verify absences.

If a student does not have an active parent or guardian in their life, the school district will work with the student to identify and appoint an appropriate advocate who can act in the best interest of the student and support their educational needs.

Students enrolled as "Senior Plus" — those continuing to work on graduation requirements beyond their expected graduation year — may sign their own permission forms and verify their own absences.

Photo Release

The West Central Education District may take photos or videos of students during school-related activities and events. These images may be used for educational, informational, or promotional purposes, including but not limited to:

- The district website
- Social media accounts
- Campus displays
- Local newspapers or other media outlets

Student names will not be used in any public materials. Permission is obtained upon student enrollment. A

parent or guardian may change their permission at any time by contacting the office.

Pledge Of Allegiance

In accordance with state law, the Pledge of Allegiance will be recited weekly. Participation is voluntary; students who choose not to participate are expected to remain respectful during the pledge. Likewise, all students must respect the rights of others to either participate or abstain.

Searches and School Safety

The West Central Education District Area Learning Center is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and drug-free learning environment. To ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff, school officials may conduct searches on campus when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation of school rules or the law.

Search Authority and Procedures

In accordance with state law and district policy, school officials may search student property, lockers, desks, vehicles on school property, and other areas within the school setting. These searches may include, but are not limited to, inspections of:

- Student lockers
- Desks
- Backpacks and personal items
- Vehicles parked on school grounds
- The student's person (when justified by reasonable suspicion)

Searches will be conducted based on reasonable suspicion and will be appropriate in scope and intrusiveness. When necessary, law enforcement will be contacted, and legal officials may become involved.

Contraband

Students violate school policy when they possess contraband on their person, in their personal possessions, or store such items in desks, lockers, or vehicles on school property. "Contraband" includes any unauthorized item prohibited by school district policy or law. If a search yields contraband, the item(s) will be confiscated by school officials and may be turned over to law enforcement for appropriate legal disposition. Students found in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school district's Student Discipline Policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and legal referral.

Use of Detection Dogs

To take a proactive and preventative stance on the presence of prohibited items, trained detection dogs may be used to conduct random searches throughout the school year. These searches are scheduled in collaboration with law enforcement and do not require prior notice.

Lockers and Desks

Lockers and desks are the property of the school district and are provided for student use. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control over them.

- Lockers: May be inspected at any time, without notice, student consent, or a search warrant.
- Personal items within lockers: May be searched when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation. Students will be notified of such searches as soon as reasonably possible, unless doing so would impede an ongoing investigation.
- Desks: May be inspected at any time, without notice, student consent, or a search warrant.

Vehicles on School Property

Routine patrols and exterior inspections of vehicles in student parking areas may be conducted without notice or consent.

- The interior of a student's vehicle may be searched with reasonable suspicion that a violation has occurred. This includes the glove compartment and trunk.
- Refusal to unlock or grant access to a vehicle may result in disciplinary action and loss of parking privileges.

Personal Searches

A student's person and personal possessions may be searched when school officials have reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence of a violation of law or school policy. All searches will be conducted respectfully and appropriately based on the circumstances.

Student Conduct, Behavior Expectations, and Disciplinary Actions

This is an abridged version of the West Central Education District's policies related to student conduct and discipline. The full version of applicable policies are available on the school website.

The West Central Education District Area Learning Center is committed to providing a respectful, safe, and secure learning environment where all students can thrive academically and socially. Bullying, harassment, violence, hazing, and other behaviors that interfere with learning, safety, or the rights of others are prohibited. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible behavior, academic honesty, respect for others, and compliance with school rules and applicable laws. Violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with district policies.

Malicious and sadistic conduct involving race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, sexual harassment, and sexual orientation and gender identity as defined in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 363A is prohibited. This prohibition applies to students, independent contractors, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel.

For detailed information, please refer to:

- WCED Policy 506 – Student Discipline
- WCED Policy 514 – Bullying Prohibition
- WCED Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence
- WCED Policy 526 – Hazing Prohibition

Expectations for Behavior

Students are expected to:

- Attend regularly and engage actively in learning.
- Respect the rights of peers, staff, and visitors.
- Follow school rules, staff directives, and all applicable laws.
- Maintain a school environment free of violence, harassment, and illegal or harmful substances.

Students are encouraged to demonstrate self-respect, self-regulation, and positive citizenship. Disciplinary efforts will focus on positive interventions and restorative practices whenever possible.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Rights:

- Freedom of expression within appropriate boundaries.
- Safety and protection from threats or harassment.
- Fair treatment and due process in disciplinary matters.

Responsibilities:

- Respect the learning environment and all individuals within it.
- Follow school rules and procedures.
- Cooperate with staff and peers to maintain a positive atmosphere.

Behavior Violations

Behavior that undermines the educational environment, threatens safety, or disrupts school operations will result in disciplinary action. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Insubordination, harassment, bullying, or physical aggression.
- Use or possession of illegal substances, tobacco, weapons, or imitation items.
- Vandalism, theft, or other violations against property or persons.
- Repeated classroom disruptions or refusal to comply with staff requests.

Consequences will be progressive and may include conferences, detention, loss of privileges, removal from class, suspension (in-school or out-of-school), and in severe cases, expulsion. School authorities retain the right to notify law enforcement as appropriate.

Removal from Class or School

Period of Time for Which a Student May Be Removed from Class

A teacher may initiate the removal of a student from class when the student's behavior disrupts instruction or interferes with learning, endangers themselves or others, or willfully violates school rules or policies. Brief removals of less than one class period may be utilized as a classroom management strategy. The Program Administrator or designee shall determine the length of any formal removal from class in consultation with the teacher. No removal from class shall exceed five (5) class periods for a violation of a rule of conduct, unless otherwise permitted by law.

When a student is removed from class, the student shall report to a location designated by the teacher or administrator. Designated locations may include the main office, Program Administrator's office, school social worker's office, or another supervised area determined appropriate for the student's needs.

Students will generally proceed independently to the designated location unless the teacher or administrator determines that an escort is necessary for safety, behavioral, or supervision reasons.

During the removal period, the student may be assigned academic work, regulation activities, restorative tasks, problem-solving activities, or other interventions intended to support the student's successful return to the learning environment.

The student shall remain under the supervision and authority of designated school staff while removed from class.

Procedures for Return of a Student to Class

The Program Administrator or designee shall determine the conditions for a student's return to class on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered may include the nature of the behavior, the student's readiness to return, and the impact on the learning environment.

Requirements for return may include, but are not limited to:

- Student conference with staff;
- Parent/guardian conference;
- Completion of restorative or problem-solving activities;
- Development or review of a behavior support plan; and/or
- Other interventions deemed appropriate by school administration.

Students removed for assaultive, threatening, or dangerous behavior may be required to satisfy additional re-entry conditions before returning to class.

Procedures for Notifying Students and Parents/Guardians

Students shall be informed of the behavior that resulted in disciplinary action and any expectations for returning to class.

For minor infractions resulting in removal of one class period or less, the classroom teacher shall notify the student's parent or guardian. For more significant disciplinary incidents, removals exceeding one class period, or incidents involving safety concerns, the Program Administrator or designee shall notify the parent or guardian.

Notification may occur through telephone contact, electronic communication, including Remind, written correspondence, or a parent conference. Documentation of disciplinary actions and parent communication shall be maintained in accordance with district procedures.

Students with Disabilities; Special Provisions

When a student with a disability is removed from class or otherwise disciplined, the student's case manager and Program Administrator shall review the circumstances to determine whether the behavior may be related to the student's disability or whether additional supports may be necessary.

Repeated removals, patterns of disciplinary incidents, or concerns regarding a student's educational needs may result in referral to the district's Child Find process, review of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), consideration of additional assessment, development or revision of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), or convening of the IEP team.

Students suspected of having a disability who are not currently identified for special education services may be referred for evaluation in accordance with district Child Find procedures and applicable state and federal laws.

Procedures for Detecting and Addressing Chemical Abuse Problems

West Central Education District shall maintain a Chemical Health Team in accordance with Minnesota law.

Any staff member who has reason to believe a student may be using, possessing, distributing, or under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on school premises or participating in school activities shall report the concern to the school social worker or designated team member.

The Chemical Health Team shall review reports and determine appropriate next steps, which may include student interviews, parent/guardian contact, referral for a chemical health pre-assessment, referral to community resources, or other interventions designed to support student health and safety.

The district recognizes that disciplinary responses should be paired with non-exclusionary interventions designed to teach, restore, and support positive student behavior. Depending on the nature and severity of the behavior, interventions may include:

- Restorative conversations or restorative practices;
- Behavior contracting and problem-solving activities;
- School social work services;
- Mini-courses or targeted instruction addressing specific behavioral concerns;
- Schedule adjustments;
- School-wide social-emotional learning instruction;
- Restitution or restorative actions;
- Alternative programming or alternative schedules; and
- Other individualized interventions deemed appropriate by school staff.

The district shall seek to implement interventions that address the underlying causes of behavior while maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment.

For serious infractions, or when non-exclusionary discipline measures have been ineffective, the district may pursue detention and/or suspension.

- Lunch Detention: Students attend classes as scheduled;
- In-School Suspension (ISS): Students remain at school under staff supervision and complete coursework in a separate setting.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): Students are temporarily removed from school. A re-entry meeting with school staff and family is required.

Certain behaviors, such as bringing a firearm to school, result in mandatory expulsion under state law. Other serious or repeated offenses may result in expulsion, subject to administrative and school board review.

Additional Notes

- Confiscated nuisance or illegal items may be retrieved by a parent/guardian. Students 18 or older may retrieve legal items if not using district transportation.
- Students are expected to cooperate in all investigations and will be informed of any violations and corresponding actions.
- Violations may affect extracurricular eligibility per MN State High School League rules.

Discipline Complaint Procedure (DCP)

Students, parents and other guardians, and school staff may file a complaint and seek corrective action when the requirements of the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, or the implementation of the behavior and discipline policies are not being implemented appropriately or are being discriminately applied.

The process is initiated by submission of a complaint in writing to the West Central Education Director. The complaint must be submitted in writing and dated by the person making the complaint.

A Discipline Complaint form is on the District website, in the handbook appendix and is available in administration offices. The process is initiated by filling in the form and submitting the form to the West Central Education Director.

1. Upon receipt of the complaint, district representatives will investigate the complaint. The investigation will commence within three school days of receipt of the complaint. The Director will direct the investigation. The District may use outside counsel as it sees fit. The Director may designate staff responsible for any aspect of the process.
2. Upon completion of the investigation, written determination will be provided to the complainant addressing each allegation. The determination will contain findings and conclusions, with appropriate application of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
3. If the investigation finds the requirements of Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.40 to 121A.61, including any local policies that were not implemented appropriately, the Director will require a corrective action plan to correct a student's record and provide relevant staff with training, coaching, or other accountability practices to ensure appropriate compliance with policies in the future.
4. Reprisals or retaliation against any person who asserts, alleges, or reports a complaint is prohibited. District administration will apply appropriate consequences for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.

Student Records

West Central Education District has the responsibility to give notice to parents of students currently in attendance of their rights regarding pupil records. Annual notification of rights will be provided to those enrolled at the West Central Education District Area Learning Center. While enrolled at the Area Learning Center, records of course completion, behavior reports, attendance, and any special education records will be maintained. Once a student is no longer enrolled, a transcript is sent to the home district, which maintains the student's permanent record. If a student received special education services, those records are also returned to the home district. The West Central Education District will maintain a summary of enrollment, transcript, and last IEP/ER when applicable. If you are seeking a copy of your official transcript, you need to contact your home district.

JMC

Parents/guardians can access student's in progress grades through our student information system, JMC. Login information is shared with parents/guardians and students at the intake meeting.

Student Surveys

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students. For complete information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students about conducting surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical examinations, see West Central Education District Policy 520 Student Surveys.

Telehealth Space

West Central Education District provides a designated space for secondary students to access telehealth appointments for mental health care. To request access to the space, a student must:

- Provide a signed Release of Information to confirm the student is currently receiving mental health care.
- Request access to the space by contacting the school social worker.
- Space availability is on a first come first served basis.
- Students may utilize a school chromebook to access their telehealth appointment.
- In the event of behavioral or safety concerns, West Central Education District may determine, with input from the mental health provider, that the student is not able to access the telehealth space.

Tobacco Free Grounds

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. Refer to Board Approved Policy 419: Tobacco-Free Environment for additional information.

Transportation

Students riding district transportation are subject to local district policies. If a student loses transportation privileges they are still obligated to attend school. Students who ride the bus/van to school must ride the bus/van home from school unless permission is communicated to the office by 9:00 AM from parent/guardian. 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.

The transportation contract will be enforced until the parent/guardian provides written notification on the change.

Parking

Students who drive to school must park in the designated area. Responsible driving behavior is expected at all times when entering, exiting, and navigating the parking lot. All vehicles must be parked in an orderly manner. Parking on the street is not permitted.

Student drivers are required to follow Minnesota state laws and school guidelines regarding safe and respectful driving practices. Vehicles must not block other cars, encroach on snowbanks, or be parked in a manner that obstructs traffic or access.

Students who fail to park appropriately may face consequences, including but not limited to:

- A phone call to a parent/guardian
- A requirement to immediately move the vehicle into an appropriate space
- Notification of law enforcement if necessary

Repeated or serious violations may result in the loss of parking privileges.

Visitors

All visitors, including parents/guardians and former students, need to stop in the office to sign in and receive a Visitors Pass.

Weather-Related Closures and Delays

The West Central Education District Area Learning Center follows all weather-related decisions made by the Melrose School District. If Melrose announces a weather-related closure, late start, or early dismissal, the Area Learning Center will follow the same schedule.

Transportation for students will be provided based on the weather-related decisions of each student's home district. If a student's home district cancels transportation due to weather, the student will not be expected to attend in person that day.

In the event that the Melrose School District is not in session, weather-related decisions will be made by the West Central Education District Director.

All weather-related announcements will be communicated to families and staff via the **Remind** messaging system.

West Central Education District will utilize E-Learning Day instruction when appropriate. A copy of West Central Education District's E-Learning Plan can be found on the district website and in the appendix.

Appendix

Board Approved Policies

Full language of approved policies can be found at www.wced6026.org

[101-1 Name of the School District](#)
[102 Equal Education Opportunity](#)
[208 Development, Adoption, and Implementation of Policies](#)
[214 Board Travel](#)
[401 Equal Employment Opportunity](#)
[402 Disability Non-Discrimination](#)
[403 Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of School District Employees](#)
[404 Employment Background Check](#)
[405 Veteran's Preference](#)
[406 Public and Private Personnel Data](#)
[406 Staff Form](#)
[407 Employee Right to Know - Exposure to Hazardous Substances](#)
[408 Subpoena of School District Employee](#)
[409 Employee Publications, Instructional Materials, Inventions and Creations](#)
[410 Family and Medical Leave Policy](#)
[412 Expense Reimbursement](#)
[413 Harassment and Violence](#)
[414 Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse](#)
[415 Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults](#)
[417 Chemical Use and Abuse](#)
[418 Drug Free Workplace/Drug Free School](#)
[418 Drug Free Form](#)
[419 Tobacco Free Environment](#)
[427 Workload Limits for Certain Special Education Teachers](#)
[501 School Weapons](#)
[502 Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student's Person](#)
[503 Student Attendance](#)
[506 Student Discipline](#)
[506 Discipline Form](#)
[507 Corporal Punishment and Prone Restraint](#)
[514 Bullying Prohibition](#)
[515 Records Protection And Privacy of Pupil Records](#)
[515 Records Protection Form](#)
[516 Student Medication and Telehealth](#)

[516.5 Overdose Medication](#)
[520 Student Surveys](#)
[520 Student Survey Form](#)
[521 Student Disability Non-Discrimination](#)
[521 Non-Discrimination Form](#)
[522 Student Sex Nondiscrimination](#)
[522 Student Sex Nondiscrimination Form](#)
[524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy](#)
[524 Internet User Agreement](#)
[526 Hazing Prohibition](#)
[529 Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students](#)
[529 Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students - Notice](#)
[531 Pledge of Allegiance](#)
[532 Peace Officers](#)
[533 Wellness](#)
[534 School Meals Policy](#)
[601 School District Curriculum and Instruction Goals](#)
[603 Curriculum Development](#)
[612-1 Development of Parental Involvement Policies for Title I Programs](#)
[616 School District System Accountability](#)
[620 Credit for Learning](#)
[621 Literacy and The Read Act](#)
[701 Establishment and Adoption of School District Budget](#)
[701.1 Modification of School District Budget](#)
[702 Accounting](#)
[704 Development and Maintenance of an Inventory of Fixed Assets and a Fixed Asset Accounting System](#)
[705 Investments](#)
[709 Student Transportation Safety Policy](#)
[709 Student Transportation Form](#)
[714 Fund Balance](#)
[721 Uniform Grant Guidance Policy Regarding Federal Revenue Sources](#)
[722 Public Data Requests and Form](#)
[722 Public Data Form](#)
[802 Disposition of Obsolete Equipment and Material](#)
[806 Crisis Management Policy](#)
[806 Emergency/Disaster Preparedness](#)
[903 Visitors to School District Buildings and Site](#)

