

Student

Handbook
2023-2024



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WELCOME



Welcome to Achieve Language Academy! We are glad that you have chosen Achieve for your child's education. We hope this will be a rewarding and enjoyable year for everyone in your family. As a Minnesota public charter school, it is our responsibility to follow all rules and regulations that apply to all state public schools.

This handbook has been prepared to share information about our school and our policies and procedures with you. This handbook is only a starting place for two-way communication between the school and your home. Please keep it in a handy place for easy reference. Please sit down with your child and review the information. When you have finished, please locate the Parent/Child Sign-Off form at the back of this handbook. The form should be signed and returned to the students' homeroom teacher by October 1 of the school year. Your signatures acknowledge that you have received the handbook and agree to the policies and procedures included.

Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission Statement

Achieve Language Academy provides students with a program of academic excellence that emphasizes Hmong and Spanish language and culture.

Vision Statement

The vision of Achieve Language Academy is to provide a rigorous education that values diversity and embeds Hmong and Spanish language and culture into our learning environment and school community for students in PreK through 8th grade.

Core Values

Achieve Language Academy students will learn to uphold the core values of Work, Respect, and Belong in an academic environment with the goal of demonstrating these same values within the broader community.

Student Outcomes

- Work: To achieve rigorous academic goals.
- Respect: All diverse members of the school community, including fellow students and staff.
- Belong: By embracing the uniqueness of all cultures represented within the school.

Community Outcomes

- Work: To apply the skills and knowledge learned through academic growth, language and cultural education, and social development towards the improvement of the broader community.
- Respect: By supporting and celebrating the diverse cultures and languages of the broader community.
- Belong: By making contributions to the social awareness of the broader community through diversity and inclusion efforts and the sharing of unique personal ideas and opinions.

SCHOOL HOURS

School Day 7:45 am to 2:35 pm

School Office Hours 7:15 am to 3:45 pm

Extended Care hours 6:45 am to 7:25 am

Doors to the school are open to walkers and students that are dropped off by parents at 7:25 am Only those students that are registered for the extended childcare program or have permission from one of the teaching staff and in a supervised activity are allowed in the building prior to 7:25 am or after 2:45 pm. Breakfast is served from 7:25 am to 7:45 am.

EXTENDED CARE

Achieve Care is our on-site fee for service school age childcare program. Childcare is offered on site before school for students attending Achieve. The hours are 6:45 am until school starts. Please call the school office for more information. *(Note: Ramsey County will provide child care assistance to qualifying families who complete the appropriate forms.)*

FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES

Our classrooms are involved in one or more field trips during the school year. These trips are outings facilitated by Achieve to complement learning at locations outside the school such as museums or zoos. Students are able to walk to some locations, but often transportation is provided on a school activity bus. Teachers and chaperones supervise the students on the buses and during the field trip.

Parent/guardian permission is required for student participation on field trips. A permission slip for all field trips is included in the registration packet. There are also times when an additional permission form may be sent out just before a special field trip. Please sign and return when needed. **We must have a signed permission slip on file before any trip for a student to participate.** Students will not be able to attend any field trips unless a permission slip is on file.

Parents, grandparents and guardians are often encouraged to help on field trip outings as chaperones. Watch for information on the field trips and opportunities to help out. This is a fun way to get involved! Prior to chaperoning, a background check must be completed at least one week prior to the event. Please contact the office to get the necessary forms.

There may be a small fee to help defray the cost of field trips. If a field trip will take place during lunchtime, students may bring a lunch from home or request a school lunch.

COMPLAINTS

The school takes all concerns or complaints by students, employees, parents or other persons seriously. School Board Policy 103 details the Complaint policy and procedures followed by Achieve Language Academy.

Students, parents, employees or other persons may report concerns or complaints to the school. While a report may be made orally, written reports are necessary. Any employee receiving a complaint shall advise

the Executive Director of the receipt of the complaint. The Executive Director shall make an initial determination as to how to proceed.

The Executive Director shall respond in writing to the complaining party concerning the outcome of the investigation or follow-up, including any appropriate action or corrective measure that was taken. The response to the complaining party shall be consistent with the rights of others pursuant to the applicable provisions of Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act) or other law.

Anonymous complaints will only be acted upon if enough information is provided to allow for follow up.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found box is kept in the Commons Area for lost clothing (smaller or more valuable items are kept in the office). Parents/guardians and students should label possessions, especially books, lunch boxes, coats, sweaters and backpacks. Each teacher may also have a lost and found box in his/her room.

STUDENT TO STUDENT SALES AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Students are not allowed to advertise and/or sell any items to students during the school day. Under no circumstances is fundraising to be undertaken without the written consent of the Executive Director nor should any outside fundraising items, including candy/soda, be brought into the school for the purpose of sale.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

Students should be in school every day. Please contact the school office before 7:45 am at (651) 738-4875 (Main Line) or (651) 583-6787 (Attendance Mailbox) if your child will be tardy or absent. When you call, please provide your name, your child's name, their teacher's name, and the reason your child cannot be at school. If your child will come to school late, include what time they will arrive. When your child returns to school after an absence, send a note to the office explaining the reason for the absence. **If families do not communicate with the school regarding an absence/tardy, it will be considered unexcused.** A doctor's slip is required for any absence that is 3 or more consecutive days, or where excessive absences occur.

Attendance is taken before/during the Morning Meeting time. All students are required to report to their classrooms by 7:45 am. Students arriving after 7:45 am are required to report to the office with their parent/guardian.

Valid excused absences from school include: Sickness/hospital, death in the family, cultural ritual, divorce/separation of parents, birth/adoption. Other valid excuses may be discussed with the Executive Director or Social Worker. Achieve Language Academy strongly discourages parents/guardians from taking children out of school for vacations, trips, etc. during the school year. Typically, such absences are unexcused. See Board Policy 503 for more information about Student Attendance.

STUDENTS LEAVING/ENTERING THE BUILDING

Whenever a parent/guardian/adult is picking up or bringing the student to/from school during the school day they are required to come into the office to sign the student in or out.

If you need to pick up your child during the school day for an appointment or other appropriate reason, please send a note to the office with your child that morning stating the reason that your child will be leaving school

and the time you expect to pick them up. We will not release your child from school to anyone other than an authorized person unless we have received written consent from the custodial parent. (If you are not the individual picking up the child, please include a phone where you can be reached if needed.) **Also, a form of picture ID will be asked for before releasing the student.**

If you bring your child in late, you will be asked the reason for being tardy. The child will be given a pass to give to their teacher. The office staff will determine whether or not the reason given is excused or unexcused. Oversleeping or missing the school bus is not an excused tardy or absence.

Students may not leave the school grounds without the Executive Director's or a designee's permission. If a student leaves the school grounds without permission, their parent/guardian(s) will be called. Every attempt will be made to ensure the student's safety. If there is any concern for the welfare of the student, the St. Paul police department will be contacted to assist in the return of the student to school.

TRUANCY AND EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT

According to Minnesota's Compulsory Attendance Law, children in Minnesota between the ages of seven and 17 are required to attend school. The school is required by law to report cases of 5 or more unexcused absences to the proper authorities (Ramsey County Attorney's Office). Achieve will follow the procedure outlined below to address unexcused absences. If you have any questions regarding this policy and the procedures, please call the school social worker at (651) 738-4875.

Number of Unexcused Absences	Achieve Actions	Ramsey County Attorney's Office Actions
3 days	School mails mandatory 3 day attendance alert letter to family	
5 days	School mails mandatory 5 day attendance alert letter to family AND Referral to the Ramsey County Attorney's SAM Program	Student and parents/guardians attend Informational Meeting with the Ramsey County Attorney's School Attendance Matters (SAM) Program
7 days	School mails mandatory 7 day attendance alert letter to family AND Student and parents/guardians sign SAM In-School Attendance Contract	
10 days	School mails mandatory 10 day attendance alert letter to family AND Referral to the Ramsey County Attorney's SAM Program	Student Attendance Review Team (SART) Meeting scheduled. SART Meetings are facilitated by an Assistant Ramsey County Attorney and also include Ramsey County Child Protection (if student is 11 years of age or younger), Ramsey County Youth Engagement Program (if student is 12 years of age or older), and a representative from the student's school.
11 or more days	Referral to Petition for Court and referral to Child Protection	Ramsey County Attorney's Office may bring the matter to court for Educational Neglect (students under the age of 12) or Truancy (students aged 12-17)

ABSENCES AND SCHOOL WORK

If your child is absent and you would like for the teacher to send work home, please contact the front office. We will arrange with your child's teachers to provide work for them to be picked up.

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

Each teacher will let parents know the best ways to contact them throughout the school year.

- o Teachers check their email regularly and generally find it convenient to correspond that way. All email addresses have the following format: [firstinitiallastname@achievemn.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@achievemn.org). Teachers will respond to emails within 2 school days.
- o You are also welcome to leave notes in the teacher's mailbox in the school office or leave a voicemail message. (Office staff will only forward calls to the teacher's voicemail during the school day.) Please be aware that the teachers' primary focus during the school day is on the students. Teachers will respond to messages within 2 school days.
- o Teachers have a school issued phone number that you can call to leave a voicemail or send a text message. Teachers will respond to messages within 2 school days.
- o Morning drop-off time is generally a time for teachers to prepare for their day and greet and settle students; this is not a great time to try and engage a teacher in a conversation about an important matter. Please contact your child's teacher ahead of time to set up an appointment if you have concerns to discuss.
- o Check that backpack! Important notes, forms and other materials are often sent home in your child's backpack. You may wish to develop an early routine at home for where children should leave their backpack contents.
- o Students in grades K-1 have Friday folders (please check and return) and students in grades 5-8 have school planners that should be checked regularly.

TELEPHONES-STUDENT USE

Students may make phone calls from the office phone or classroom phone with permission from a staff person. Students may not leave a class to make or take a phone call unless it is an emergency. If parents need to contact a child, they may leave a message in the office and the student will be notified in a timely manner. Bus changes, or parent pick-up changes, should be called in before 1:00 pm to guarantee that the child gets the message. If there are excessive requests, the administrator may request a parent conference to discuss this issue.

STUDENT CELL PHONES

Cell phone use by students during the school day is prohibited. Students can turn in their cell phone to the office at the beginning of the day and pick it up at the end of the school day. If students are caught with a cell phone throughout the school day, it will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or guardian.

SCHOOL VISITORS

ALL visitors must check in at the school office. For security reasons, all visitors are required to wear a visitor's pass.

Parents are encouraged to visit classrooms and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prearrange any classroom visit with either the classroom teacher or school administrator.
- Register at the office and put on a name tag.
- Limit visit to any one class to 45 minutes.
- Avoid distracting your child and the classroom in their daily work. Do not engage in conversation while the teacher is teaching; do not interrupt a group of students involved in an activity.
- If you have any questions, please ask at the office.

VOLUNTEERING

When students see parents, grandparents, and guardians assisting in the school, they feel special and they see first-hand the value your family places on education. Achieve welcomes families and community members to work with our students and staff.

- All volunteers and visitors must register at the school office and pick up a badge to wear.
- Volunteers are expected to follow school policies and the guidelines set by individual teachers and staff members, and also to respect the right of confidentiality.
- There are many opportunities and many different ways to volunteer, such as assisting in the classroom or media center, chaperoning field trips, helping with Picture Day, or working on an event.
- Consider volunteering in a classroom other than your child's; it can provide needed support for other teachers and give you a glimpse of what's going on in other grades.

In whatever way you choose to help, your participation will lead to increased student achievement. Call Kathy Oelze, the School Social Worker for more information.

SCHOOL SPONSORED FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

See Board Policy 511 for more information about Fundraising.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Even though Achieve Language Academy is a public school, an application must be filled out and submitted before starting school. Admission is limited by grade level. The deadline for application (for the upcoming school year) is April 1. If there is space available, new students will be enrolled by the date of application prior to the April 1 deadline. If there are more students than the number of spaces available on April 1, a lottery (by grade level) will be held, which includes all students with current applications. Families who submit applications after the April 1 application deadline will be placed on the bottom of the waiting list in the order received. If openings are available, and there is no waiting list, students will be enrolled on a first come, first serve basis.

Enrollment priorities:

Once enrolled, a student must fill out a re-admission form on a yearly basis.

- o Requests for admission shall give priority for attendance to siblings and foster children in the household of children currently enrolled.
- o Employees of the school shall receive priority admission after all above enrollment requests.
- o Transportation: It shall be at the discretion of the school to provide transportation outside the school's attendance area.

Once your child is accepted, staff will review the application with your help in order to determine the best placement for your child. No placement will be considered finalized or may be held up until all necessary information has been received. Due to the Minnesota State law regarding immunizations, if your child is not current with their immunizations, you may be asked to complete this process before your child starts at Achieve Language Academy.

At the time of enrollment, it is important for both parents/guardians and students to understand their responsibilities to the Achieve Language Academy Community. It is our expectation that parents/guardians will fully support all policies and participate in all school procedures outlined in the handbook.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Each student shall:

1. Come to school prepared to learn;
2. Actively participate in classroom activities and take responsibility for own learning;
3. Participate in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for all students and staff;
4. Interact in a courteous, respectful way without bothering others;
5. Demonstrate appropriate behavior during lunchtime by eating properly, talking quietly, participating in clean-up activities, and leaving the lunch area in an orderly manner;
6. Pledge that the hallways at Achieve Language Academy will be safe and quiet where people interact with courtesy and respect;
7. Work at keeping the restrooms at Achieve Language Academy quiet, safe, and used as intended; and
8. Arrive and depart each day in a safe and orderly manner.

RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

Achieve Language Academy uses a school-wide program called Responsive Classroom. Responsive Classroom is based on teaching and modeling behaviors where **children can learn to care about themselves and how to treat others.**

There are six central components that integrate teaching, learning and caring in the daily program. Students spend time learning about and sharing values, such as honesty, fairness and respect, and developing social skills, such as cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. The six components are:

1. Classroom organization
2. Morning meeting
3. Rules and logical consequences
4. Academic choice

5. Guided discovery, and
6. Assessment and reporting.

At Achieve, we focus on the Morning Meeting and Rules and Logical Consequences. The Morning Meeting provides a daily opportunity to practice greetings, conversation, sharing, and problem-solving, and encourages students to meet the academic challenges of each day. Rules and Logical Consequences allow children to share in responsibility and decision-making in developing behaviors that will be conducive to learning. Teachers help students to learn, modify, and regulate their behavior throughout each day.

In addition to Responsive Classroom, we will continue to implement a school-wide set of rules (see Discipline and Student Code of Conduct below) and procedures that we will teach and model for our students throughout the year. This discipline plan will focus on fostering consistency and collaboration between staff members and students. Though we recognize that the issues of all students are many and varied, our emphasis will be on building self-esteem and self-discipline through behavioral success in the school setting.

To assure a safe learning environment, we will focus our efforts on positive, constructive ways to address behavior. We will also be using Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice to help create a positive climate and behavior management with a focus on “restoring.”

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Minor and Major Infractions

Minor infractions will be handled at the classroom level. Teachers focus on logical consequences and creating positive learning environments. There may be times that your child’s teacher may call you or write a note asking for your help/support in resolving an issue or to inform you of what and how infractions have been resolved.

Administration will handle major infractions. Four categories of severe misbehavior will result in the student being sent immediately to the office:

1. Physically dangerous behavior: fighting, assault, or physical intimidation.
2. Illegal acts: stealing, damaging property, or drug/weapon violations (possession or use of drugs, and possession of a weapon, or facsimiles of).
3. Insubordinate behavior: defiance of any rightful authority, overt defiance and/or disrespect. *Insubordinate behavior is defined as the direct and immediate refusal to comply with a reasonable staff instruction within a specified period of time.*
4. Repeated Minor Infractions: students who have been given logical consequences in the classroom but continue to exhibit the undesired behavior(s).

The Executive Director reserves the right to determine more serious levels of enforcement, including extended out of school suspension or expulsion, should the situation warrant.

Explanation of Discipline Terms

In-school time out of class means that a student spends time in a supervised, designated area outside of the classroom, sitting at a desk doing regular classroom assignments. A student who is spending time out of class is not in contact with other students during this time.

Examples of Minor Infractions:

Uniform/inappropriate dress

Tardies

Public display of affection

Inappropriate student contact

Gum chewing/candy

Disruptive classroom behavior

Insubordination

Disruptive hallway/bathroom behavior

Examples of Major Infractions:

Severe insubordination

Assault (sexual or physical)

Possession of a weapon or facsimiles

Stealing/damaging property

Drug/tobacco/alcohol possession or use

See Board Policy 506 for more information about Student Discipline. Policy 506 also contains the Discipline complaint procedure which students, parents and other guardians, and school staff may use to file a complaint and seek corrective action, including when the implementation of the local behavior and discipline policies are not being implemented appropriately or are being discriminately applied.

STUDENT AND LOCKER SEARCHES

Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of Achieve Language Academy. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by a school administrator or designated staff for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

It shall be a violation of this policy for students to use lockers for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. It shall be a violation for students to carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions. See Board Policy 502 for more details about searching student lockers, personal possessions, and the student's person. If a search yields contraband, the administrator will seize the item and, where appropriate, turn it over to legal authorities for ultimate disposition.

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

The personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when the school administrator has a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. School personnel may search students for items that may be harmful to them or to others and/or to detect items that are prohibited from being on school grounds or other places under supervision of school personnel (i.e. busses, field trips).

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Personal equipment, toys, and all types of electronic devices (including, but not limited to, headsets, headphones, cell phones, and portable electronic games) are a distraction to the learning environment and are not to be brought to school. Any staff member can and will confiscate them. These items also create a

temptation for theft. Achieve will not be responsible for any item that is lost or stolen on school property. Such items brought to school may be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian. Repeat offenders could have additional consequences.

TRESPASSING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students or adults found on school premises after hours or in areas authorized only for school employees will be considered to be trespassing. Students or adults on school premises when they have been instructed to not be there by the Executive Director shall be deemed trespassing and police will be informed. Any visitor to the building who has not checked in at the front office will be considered trespassing as well.

WEAPON POSSESSION AND DISTRIBUTION

The school takes a "No Tolerance" approach in regard to the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students. No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in the school or school grounds. Students who become aware of a weapon being brought to school or on school property, must immediately notify an adult staff member. Students should not, however, pick up or transport the weapon. The consequences for students possessing, using, or distributing weapons may include:

1. Confiscation of the weapon;
2. Immediate out-of-school suspension and notification of parent or guardian pursuant to the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act;
3. Notification of police;
4. An investigation conducted by the administrator or administrator's designee;
5. Notification of parent or guardian of school sanctions; and
6. Recommendation to the School Board for further disciplinary action, which may include expulsion for up to one calendar year.

See Board Policy 501 for more information about weapons.

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE PROHIBITION

Board Policy 413 states: "Achieve Language Academy prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability." See Achieve Language Academy Board Policy 413 for more information, definitions of various types of harassment and violence, and reporting forms.

Achieve will investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, and discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

Reporting Procedures

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence by a pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel at Achieve, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence toward a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel should report the alleged acts immediately to the Executive Director. Upon receipt of any report, the Executive Director must notify the School Human Rights Officer immediately, without screening or investigating the report.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, the School Human Rights Officer shall immediately undertake or authorize an investigation in compliance with Board Policy 413.

BULLYING

Achieve Language Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. A student shall not bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors (including when done from school, or from a school-related event over the internet, or via cell phone); and social isolation or manipulation. See Board Policy 514 for more information about bullying.

What is Bullying?

“Bullying” means any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to a student or a group of students and which substantially interferes with another student’s or students’ educational benefits, opportunities, or performance.

TRANSPORTATION

DROPPING-OFF AND PICKING-UP STUDENTS

To help ensure the safety of our children and help manage traffic congestion, please follow these guidelines:

- Students may be dropped off and picked up in the parking lot at the west side door (next to the parking lot) of the School Building. **Please do not park on the driveway, in handicap parking, or in the fire lanes at any time.**
- If you plan to pick your child up before 2:30 pm, you must come into the office to sign your child out. The office will call your child's teacher and have them report to the office. Do not go to the classrooms.
- If an individual other than the known parent/guardian is picking up a student, they will be asked for a photo ID for the safety of our students AND must be included on the student’s approved list of alternate pickup contacts.
- Parents/guardians are not to pick up their children at the classroom doors or in the hallways. They should meet their children outside or in the commons area.
- If you would like to talk to your child’s teacher regarding a specific issue or schedule a conference, please call ahead rather than dropping in or calling during the school day. Teachers are more than willing to talk to you, but if they are preparing for the children, or have children in the classroom, it is difficult for them to give you the attention you deserve.
- **End of Day Pick up.** Parents picking up their child at the end of the school day must drive/wait in the designated lane between the cones. Parents coming into the building to get their child(ren) must park their car in the parking lot – not in the pick up lane.

Please note: under state law, all vehicles are prohibited from going past the parked buses when they are dropping off or picking up students.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation will be offered to students attending Achieve Language Academy. Achieve Language Academy also provides van service for select students. Transportation services are a privilege, not a right and any family has the option of providing their own transportation to and from school if their needs cannot be met by the services of Achieve Language Academy or the Centerline Bus Company. **In case of an emergency, please contact the bus company, Centerline, directly at (651) 482-1794.**

You will receive a list of buses and bus stops set up through Centerline Bus Company prior to the start of each school year and the learning year (summer) school schedule. Be sure that your child(ren) will not have to cross any busy streets to get to the bus stop that you are assigned. Bus routes are established to keep walking distance to the bus stops short. Any variation in the stop should be requested by a written note from the parent/guardian turned in to Achieve Language Academy office, and the office will forward the request to Centerline. Temporary changes to bus stops, or multiple pickup and drop-off locations will not be honored by Centerline. *Neither the bus company nor the school can control unknown circumstances that may delay scheduled pick-ups or drop-offs of students.*

To help assure that your child(ren) get(s) to and from school safely please read and follow these guidelines:

1. Each child will receive a Bus Pass at the beginning of the school year. Have your child(ren) hook this card in a safe place on their backpack. During the first weeks of school, you might also want to pin the bus number on the outside of your younger (grades K-1) child's shirt/jacket.
2. Please remind your child(ren) that more than one bus may stop at their stop and be sure that they know the bus number of the bus that will bring them to Achieve Language Academy.
3. **Each bus rider is responsible to be at their stop at least 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up and should remain at the stop for at least 10 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up.**
4. Our school day ends at 2:30 pm. Achieve Language Academy staff will monitor our students at the bus loading area and assist them every day in getting on the right bus. Usually, all children should be home by 3:45 pm In some cases, it may be later for the first week or two until drivers learn their routes. The time could also vary due to weather conditions. If, for any reason, you are concerned because your child is later than 20 minutes beyond their scheduled arrival at home, please call the school. If the school is aware of a later than usual bus departure, students will be asked to call home to alert parents.
5. The first week of school, the staff will be making a list of all students that ride each bus. If your child's bus riding arrangement changes, please be sure to inform the office.
6. Please advise your child(ren) that they should go directly home each day after school to report in. This will help to alleviate false alarms of missing children to the school and bus company.
7. If the bus you are expecting does not come, please call the school and we will report it to the bus company. If possible, you might want to have an alternative ride for your child(ren) as an option.

Consequences for any student who violates the bus/van rules may include:

- o A written bus conduct report
- o Removal from the bus/van for a period of time (parents/guardians are required to meet with administration after a suspension of two or more days)
- o Loss of bus/van privileges for the remainder of the school year

WALKERS

Even though transportation is available to all students that live within a 1-mile radius of school, these students may elect to walk to school. Achieve asks that if students are going to walk, we have written permission from parents, which will be kept in the office. We do provide walking patrols at the corner of

BICYCLE SAFETY GUIDELINES

Students who ride their bicycles to school are to put them in the bicycle racks next to the school. Bicycles should be locked to prevent theft. Bus riders who wish to ride bicycles should provide a written permission from a parent or guardian. Kindergarten students are not permitted to ride bicycles to school. First grade students are not permitted to ride unless a note is received from parents/guardians stating that the child has the physical skills, knowledge, and good judgment necessary to ride a bicycle safely to school.

DRESS CODE FOR SCHOOL

Uniforms are a requirement for attendance at Achieve Language Academy:

All students in grades K – 8th are required to wear uniforms to school every day except on Wednesdays (see below for Wednesday guidelines). If your child is not in the proper uniform every day (except Wednesdays and other designated days), you will be called to bring in a proper uniform. If there are multiple incidents of improper dress, additional measures will be taken. Special exceptions may be discussed with the school administrator regarding children with special needs.

Acceptable uniforms are:

- Plain navy blue, black, or khaki pants or shorts.
- Plain navy blue, black, khaki, or hunter green and navy plaid jumper, skirt or skort.
- Plain hunter green, navy, or white collared shirt or approved Achievewear t-shirts.
- Plain navy blue, hunter green, or white sweaters or sweatshirt. No logos with the exception of Achievewear.
- Rubber soled shoes (not black soles) are required for the gym. Shoes will be available for students that do not have appropriate footwear.

Wednesday guidelines:

On Wednesday (Free Day), clothing should be appropriate for the active school day. Shorts and skirts should be of appropriate length (minimum of mid thigh). Shirts should cover the stomach and should not have suggestive or inappropriate decoration or logos. Shirts must have sleeves. Caps, hats, and head-coverings may not be worn indoors except for religious and cultural requirements.

Our students go outside on a daily basis, unless weather conditions prevent it, so provide your child with appropriate outdoor clothing. Warm hats, boots, and mittens are a must. Snow pants are suggested. Please mark all clothing, so misplaced items can be returned to your child. An extra set of clothes at school is particularly helpful for some of our youngest students.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

Both lunch and breakfast are offered every day at Achieve Language Academy. Menus are sent home with your child on a monthly basis and are available on the school website. Breakfast is served between 7:25 am and 7:45 am. Eating a healthy breakfast helps your child to do their best in school. Encourage your child to eat a healthy breakfast at home or at school each day.

Staff members are always present to oversee the cafeteria while children are eating. Parents, guardians or grandparents are welcome to occasionally join their child for breakfast or lunch. (Parents/guardians are charged at the adult prices.) This is a great opportunity to provide additional adult support and supervision in the cafeteria, as well as see what goes on during your child's day. Call the school office for more information on times and to let us plan ahead.

Every family must fill out the application for educational benefits at the beginning of each school year. All students will receive breakfast and lunch at no cost regardless of household size or income.

IMPORTANT: Our academic program and food service programs receive additional state and federal funding based on our free and reduced lunch percentages. **It is important that every family fill out the Application for Educational Benefits, even if your family chooses not to participate in the food program.**

BRINGING FOOD AND DRINK

If you choose to pack a bag lunch for your child, be sure to provide food that is portable, easy for your child to manage, and does not need heating. Lunches are kept in the student's locker until lunch period; no refrigerators are available. Milk is available for purchase. Pop/soda is not allowed.

Achieve encourages healthy eating habits. Snack foods, candy, and soda drinks should not be included as a part of your child's daily lunch. Please limit lunch snacks to fruit drinks, fresh fruit, and other healthy choices. Students may not bring snacks or candy to share with their tablemates at lunch. No breakfast, lunch food, or snacks from home, may be taken to the classroom unless for an approved class function or approved activity. We encourage you to send healthy individually wrapped snacks for parties and other classroom parties. No chewing gum.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

CURRICULUM AND STUDENT EVALUATION

Achieve Language Academy staff work hard to develop an educational program that will challenge your child academically and will also prepare them for the social and emotional challenges they may encounter after leaving our school. It is our goal to meet each child where they are at in the learning process and move them forward.

1. Our classroom teachers' primary role is to provide instruction in the academic areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. It is our goal that every child at Achieve Language Academy makes a minimum of one year's academic growth in each of these areas.
2. At each grade level our teachers will incorporate the Minnesota State Standards into the appropriate curriculum area.
3. All of our students participate in learning a second language. The language choices are Spanish and Hmong.
4. All of our students attend specialist classes each week in music and physical education. In addition, computer and library skills time is scheduled throughout the year.
5. All students in grades K-8 will take either the NWEA Reading and Math Measurement Assessment Progress OR the Fastbridge EarlyReading and EarlyMath assessment test in the fall, winter, and spring of each year. Our students in grades 3-8 will also take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in April

and May.

6. Achieve Language Academy has an innovative English Language Learner (ELL) program that is available to all qualifying students. Each student whose first language is not English will be assessed on their English language skills and will receive additional services as needed.
7. Each classroom will also spend time teaching social skills. Achieve Language Academy has adopted the Responsive Classroom Program (see the Responsive Classroom section in handbook for more information).

HOMework

Homework is any extra learning assigned by a teacher and is an extension of school learning time. Homework encourages students to be responsible for some preparation and practice and helps foster independent learning. It can provide an opportunity for parents to be involved and informed first hand about what is being learned in the classroom. We ask that you support and encourage your child to complete homework on a daily basis.

COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET GUIDELINES

Students have daily access to computers and to the internet. The internet is an information system with great educational potential. The use of the internet is a privilege. It is the school's responsibility to teach students the skills to be responsible users of the internet and adopt guidelines for student use of the internet. Achieve staff work to control the internet environment to provide access to the most appropriate educational sites and materials for students and staff. Board Policy 524 outlines the computer and internet guidelines for students.

The Achieve network and computer storage systems may be treated like school lockers. Designated Achieve staff may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are using the system responsibly. Material stored on any computer is not private. Achieve will not provide access for recreational computing during school hours.

Student responsibilities:

1. Use only Internet sites that are connected to what is being studied in class, or that a teacher has approved for use.
2. Respect school rules and behavior standards.
3. Use the computer network in a manner that does not violate any laws, regulations, or copyright.
4. Accurately represent yourself. That means using only your own name (not someone else's) and never using your whole name, or giving your address or telephone number.
5. Remember that email is not private. That means the teacher, or other people who operate the network, can read it.
6. Respect the privacy of others. Do not use someone else's password to open or change anyone else's files.
7. Respect computer equipment and the use of the network, and share computer resources and time with other students.

Violations may result in the loss of access as well as other disciplinary and/or legal action.

REPORT CARDS

- o Parents/guardians will receive report cards at three regular intervals (November, March, and June). Parents may request more frequent updates as needed.

- o In addition to these report cards, parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled to discuss students' progress in October and March.
- o Teachers will meet with parents/guardians whenever necessary to constructively discuss the child's rate of progress in school and other matters of mutual concern.
- o If there are additional concerns during the year, teachers will make every effort to keep parents/guardians informed regarding their child's progress.

STUDENT RECORDS

Board Policy 515 (Student Directory and Privacy of Student Records-Annual Notice 2019-2020): The following "directory" information refers to information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to: the student's name, address, telephone listing, email address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended. Achieve Language Academy may disclose directory information from the education records of a student and information regarding parents without prior consent of the parent of the student or eligible student, unless notified of their intent to refuse to allow such disclosure. An opt-out form will be provided at the beginning of the school year should you wish to complete it.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotion or retention of each student is carefully considered. In February 2001, the School Board adopted the following procedure regarding promotion and retention. At least one conference with parents/guardian will be held concerning such intentions and prior referrals through the school's child find committee will be required prior to any final decision regarding retention.

The school board expects all students to achieve at an acceptable level of proficiency. Communication skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and mathematical skills are basic skills needed by all citizens in a changing society. Parental assistance, tutorial and remedial programs, counseling, and other appropriate services shall be coordinated and utilized to the greatest extent possible to help students succeed in school.

School Board Policy 513 details how decisions are made regarding promotion, social promotion, and retention.

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health of our students is of the utmost importance. The following crisis resources are available to all Minnesota residents:

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK(8255)** – The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.
- **Crisis Text Line - Text MN to 741741.** The Crisis Text Line provides free crisis support 24/7 for any crisis.
- **State Mobile Crisis Services** – Every county in Minnesota provides Mobile Crisis Services for both children and adults that may be experiencing suicidal feelings or mental health crisis. Crisis services are available within each county 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. County crisis teams are available for

phone support as well as face-to-face crisis help.

- Dakota County: 1-952-891-7171
- Ramsey County: 1-651-266-7878
- Washington County: 1-651-275-7400

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Medications will be dispensed by the school nurse or their designee. School personnel are not authorized to administer any type of medication, including over-the-counter medication (such as Tylenol or cough syrup) unless the following conditions are met:

1. **All medication, including non-prescription varieties, must be kept in the nurse's office.**
2. All medication should be brought to school in original packaging and/or a pharmacy-labeled container.
3. For prescription medication to be given for longer than 2 weeks, we must have a medical form signed by a physician.
4. All medications must be accompanied by a signed parent permission form. School personnel will "supervise" students taking medication according to the directions on the form.

INJURIES OR ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

When minor injuries occur at school, trained school personnel will provide first aid treatment. A parent/guardian will be called if there is a serious injury. Achieve Language Academy does not provide insurance for injuries that occur at school.

Parents/guardians will also be called to pick up a child who has a temperature above 100 degrees, or diarrhea, vomiting, or a contagious disease. Please be sure we have your daytime phone number and at least one backup emergency number.

If a child is sent home for a temperature above 100 degrees or diarrhea, vomiting, or a contagious disease, they may not return to school until they have been free of the condition for a minimum of 24 hours.

An "Emergency Medical Plan" form should be on file for any child with an existing medical problem and/or allergy (such as asthma, seizures, allergy to bee stings, etc.). 911 will be called to transport a seriously ill or injured child. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately so that they can meet the paramedics at the hospital indicated on the Student Emergency Form.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A student suspected of having a communicable disease, or living with persons thus affected, shall not be permitted to attend school unless a physician specifically approves attendance. The parent/guardian should notify the school office when these types of diseases are discovered.

TOBACCO

Achieve Language Academy is a tobacco/drug free environment. It is unlawful for a student under the age of 21 to possess or use any type of tobacco product. The exception to this rule is that an American Indian student may carry a medicine pouch containing loose tobacco intended as observance of traditional spiritual or cultural practices. It is also unlawful to use tobacco products on school property by either a student or an adult.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND ALCOHOL

Contact with controlled substances or marijuana/alcohol is detrimental to a student's growth and development and is illegal. Being in possession or under the influence of controlled substances or marijuana/alcohol on school property or at a school function will have serious consequences. This also includes the possession of related paraphernalia and the possession and/or use of prescription and over the counter drugs (unless prescribed by a physician and administered by the school nurse).

Consequences for any possession or being under the influence may include any/all of the following:

1. Short-term suspension from school and expectation of chemical evaluation for drug and alcohol violations;
2. Parent conference;
3. Law enforcement agency notification; and/or
4. Extended suspension from school with an investigation that could lead to expulsion.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

As professionals, all school staff are, by law, required to report all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Neither the individuals reporting suspected child abuse, or the school, is obligated to inform parents/guardians that a report is being filed.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements of school closings, delayed opening or early closing of Achieve Language Academy due to snow, or hazardous weather conditions can be found:

- Achieve Language Academy website (www.achievemn.org)
- WCCO 830 AM Radio
- TV Channel 4 (WCCO) and 11 (KARE)
- Email (parents/guardians with emails provided in Infinite Campus)

School delays and closings will be shared beginning at 6:15 AM. Listen for Achieve Language Academy.

If snow or bad weather begins after school is in session, school may be closed early to permit bussed students to be driven home before the roads become dangerous. Please check the sources listed above rather than calling the school, so that phones at the school can remain open for emergency calls. *Note: If the school is closed, the before-school childcare program and all after-school activities will also be closed.*

E-LEARNING DAYS

When severe weather occurs in the winter with prior notice, and Achieve determines that travel to schools and buildings may be unsafe, Achieve may choose to send Chromebooks and e-learning materials home with 5th through 8th grade students. Because Achieve students do not bring Chromebooks home on a daily basis, e-learning days will only occur when the weather forecast allows the school to determine ahead of time that these materials should be sent home.

Confirmation of the decision to move to e-learning will be announced no later than 5:30 a.m. on the day of an

e-learning day. Information will be shared via all major news media, the Achieve homepage, Achieve social media, and emails, robocalls, and texts to families. Please ensure that your family's contact information is updated by contacting the school office.

All students will be provided with an alternative to online work to ensure that students who may not have reliable internet access at home can still participate in learning activities during an e-learning day.

Student lessons will be posted on online platforms by the start of each e-learning day and e-learning schedules will be displayed on the school website.

Devices must be returned to school when students return to school after the e-learning day. Families with devices that are not returned by the end of the second school day after an e-learning day will be held responsible for the cost of a replacement device. Students utilize devices throughout their regular school day, and if devices remain at home it has a negative impact on their ability to participate and learn.

Students are expected to complete and return all work assigned during e-learning within five school days in order to be counted as in attendance during the e-learning day.

SAFETY DRILLS – CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills will be held periodically according to state law. Students will be instructed in the proper procedures, which are posted in each room. Achieve Language Academy maintains a Crisis Management Plan (available on the school website) that details procedures to follow in case of emergencies, such as fire, tornado, and other dangerous situations. Families may contact the school to opt their students out of lockdown drills.



The Achieve Language Academy Student Handbook identifies the responsibilities parents, guardians and students must accept in order to have a safe and positive place where all students can learn. Parents/Guardians are asked to read this handbook with their children. You will find answers to questions you may have had and you will see guidance about how our school handles behavior, food service, transportation and more.

The Student Handbook is posted on our website www.achievemn.org. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact our office (651-738-4875). We will be happy to help.

Dr. Curtis G. Windham
Executive Director

IMPORTANT

The Student Handbook is available on-line at <https://www.achievemn.org/students-families/handbook-forms>.

We agree to read and abide by all the rules and procedures set forth in the Achieve Language Academy Student Handbook. This form should be returned to your child’s homeroom teacher the first week of school – no later than September 8, 2023.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Signature of student(s) attending Achieve Language Academy:

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ I do not have access to the on-line version of the handbook. I request a hardcopy.