



**STUDENT/PARENT/GUARDIAN  
HANDBOOK  
2018-19**

## ADMINISTRATIVE WELCOME TO ASPEN ACADEMY

The purpose of this Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook is to familiarize you with the policies of Aspen Academy. In order to best serve the intellectual, creative, social and physical development of all students, a school must maintain an appropriate and safe learning atmosphere. This handbook will provide you with information on our procedures and programs which help to make a positive and successful environment. This handbook also contains resources that you can use to help you get the most out of your student's education. If you have any questions about how to find these resources, please ask any staff member for assistance.

Please keep this handbook and use it as a reference for the year. It provides an overview of district policies, procedures, and regulations about student rights and responsibilities. This handbook is periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Updated policies will be available to you at the beginning of each school year through the school's website. If at any time you would like more information about a specific issue, contact the Principal or Director. To obtain the most current copy of the parent/student handbook, download it online at [www.aspenacademymn.org](http://www.aspenacademymn.org).

Kind regards,

Dr. Connie Gayle, Director

Ms. Melanie Jiskra, Principal

### MAIN CONTACT INFORMATION:

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<b>Schmitty's</b>	<b>Bus Company</b>	<b>952-985-7514</b>	

**Please keep this handbook and use it as the reference guide it is intended to be.**

# General Information

## ASPEN ACADEMY

### “Enriching students from the roots up”

#### **Mission and Vision: Intellectual, Creative, and Social**

Our mission is to provide students with a well-rounded, Core Knowledge-based education which meets the intellectual, creative and social needs of each child.

Our vision is to prepare our students for future educational opportunities and life in a global society by creating an academically rigorous, literature-rich environment where class sizes are small and a strong sense of community is built and valued.

**Charter:** Our Charter with Friends of Education requires us to follow the Core Knowledge Curriculum, Singapore Math, offer Spanish starting in Kindergarten and Latin starting in fourth grade. We also use DDI, Data Driven Instruction, in math to ensure our students meet Minnesota State Standards and are on track to out-perform the resident district.

#### **Aspen Core Values: Drivers of our Words and Actions - THINK**

##### **Tenacity**

- Act courageously, fulfill our responsibilities and collaborate with all stakeholders to bring valued perspectives to our decision making.

##### **High Expectations**

- Decisions, actions and words portray the soundness of moral character and center around what is best for all students and are the responsibility to be modeled by every school employee at all times.

##### **Integrity**

- Continuous learning in knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs that impact outstanding instruction.

##### **No Excuses**

- A continuous pursuit of the highest standards of rigor and relevance while being held accountable to each other in all we do.

##### **Kindness**

- Actions that demonstrate empathy, respect and caring towards each other. Assume the best at all times.

#### **Board of Directors:**

Ms. Misty Schutrop, Chair

Mr. Robert Allison, Vice Chair

Mr. Wade Phillips, Treasurer

Ms. Stephanie Smitley, Secretary

Mr. Andrew Price

Ms. Victoria Regehr

Ms. Diane Sterna

#### **Executive Director:**

Dr. Connie Gayle

#### **Principal:**

Ms. Melanie Jiskra

**Authorizer:**

Friends of Education  
 200 East Lake Street  
 EXO-01-A  
 Wayzata, MN 55391

To email staff, use the following format:

**\*\*email address format – [first.last@aspenacademnymn.org](mailto:first.last@aspenacademnymn.org)**

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY**

### **STUDENT RIGHTS**

#### **Students have the right to:**

1. Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by other students and school staff, according to Aspen's Core Values.
2. Attend school and receive a free and appropriate public education as provided by law.
3. Be taught in a safe learning environment.
4. Receive an electronic copy, also available on the school website, of select district and school policies and procedures at the beginning of the school year.
5. Bring complaints or concerns to the school principal or staff.
6. Request, or challenge, in writing, an explanation of anything in their education records.
7. Be told, orally and/or in writing, the reason(s) for any disciplinary decisions.
8. Have a parent attend applicable disciplinary conferences, re-entry conferences, and hearings.
9. Have school staff or an administrator present when police are called, and notify a parent.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Students have the responsibility to:**

1. Behave respectfully toward everyone in the school community, according to Aspen's Core Values.
2. Attend all classes daily and be prepared.
3. Complete assignments to the best of your ability.
4. Do assigned homework and ask for help when needed.
5. Read outside of school every day.
6. Bring only those materials to school that are allowed.
7. Know and follow school rules and expectations.
8. Notify school staff about any dangerous behavior or activity that occurs on school grounds or off school grounds that may result in disruption to the educational setting.
9. Keep parents informed of school-related issues.
10. Follow uniform policy and guidelines at all times.

### **SCHOOL STAFF RIGHTS**

#### **School staff has the right to:**

1. Work in a safe and orderly environment.
2. Be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully by students, parents or guardians and other school staff, according Aspen's Core Values.
3. Communicate concerns, suggestions and complaints to the principal, director or HR coordinator.
4. Receive professional and supportive development training.
5. Use available resources for quality instruction.
6. Modify instruction to connect with the learner, when appropriate, and be consistent with the policies of the Board of Directors and Aspen Academy goals.

## **SCHOOL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **School staff has the responsibility to:**

1. Attend work daily, be punctual and use well-planned, creative and engaging instructional plans every day that align to state standards.
2. Maintain a safe and orderly school by using prevention and intervention strategies, and by following Aspen's Core Values.
3. Be respectful and courteous to students, families and each other, while serving as role models for students.
4. Be knowledgeable about the rules, policies and procedures of Aspen Academy and enforce them fairly and consistently.
5. Be knowledgeable about federal and state laws and regulations about the disciplinary process for students with disabilities.
6. Communicate policies, expectations and concerns, and respond to communication from students and parents or guardians in a timely manner.
7. Keep families informed of student academic progress and behavior; create meaningful opportunities for their participation and regular communication. Grades will be kept current on student management system.
8. Provide makeup work for students with excused absences, including those students who are absent for disciplinary reasons upon return.
9. Participate in professional development opportunities.

## **FAMILIES' RIGHTS**

### **Families have the right to:**

1. Be actively involved in their children's education.
2. Be treated courteously, fairly, and respectfully by all school staff, in accordance to our Core Values.
3. Receive information about the policies of the Board of Directors and procedures that relate to their children's progress.
4. Receive regular reports, whether written or oral, from school staff regarding their children's academic progress or behavior, including but not limited to mid-term reports, report cards, behavior progress reports and conferences. Receive information from staff about ways to improve their child's academic or behavioral progress, including but not limited to counseling, tutoring, after-school programs, academic programs, and mental health related services within the community.
5. Receive information and prompt notification of inappropriate behaviors by their child when a formal disciplinary action is taken by school staff.
6. Receive information about due process procedures for disciplinary matters concerning their child, including information on conferences and appeals.
7. Receive information about services for students with disabilities and English Language Learners when applicable.

## **FAMILIES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Families have the responsibility to:**

1. Make sure their children attend school regularly and on time.
2. Notify school promptly why their children are absent.
3. Updated contact information to the school student management system (Synergy).
4. Create and update information in the Student Dismissal Manager system.
5. Communicate with school officials about any concerns or issues in a respectful and timely manner.
6. Work cooperatively with school staff to address academic or behavioral problems their children may experience.
7. If a concern arises, please proceed through the following chain of command for communication:
  - a. Contact child's teacher
  - b. If still not satisfactorily resolved, contact Principal and/or Dean for discussion/meeting
  - c. If concern still exists, Principal will contact Director.

d. Director will contact Principal and parents for next steps.

This protocol is put into place to facilitate open, respectful dialogue between all stake holders to achieve our common goal – student success. Thank you for following this.

8. Support Aspen Academy by being a role model for their children, attending conferences and school events, and talking to their children about school expectations.
9. Read and become familiar with the policies of the Board of Directors and related Administrative Procedures.
10. Give their children a space to complete their homework or allow participation in after-school programs that permit the completion of homework.
11. Be respectful and courteous to staff, other families, and students, in accordance to Aspen's Core Values.
12. Encourage your child to read daily at home.
13. Promote wellness and daily physical activity outside of school.
14. Follow Aspen Academy uniform policy and guidelines at all times.

## **TOPICS ARE LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

### **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

We believe that having a broad range of after-school activities that appeal to a variety of interests is important to keep students engaged and active. As we create these programs, along with committed staff to coach/staff/supervise them, we will post them on the school website. We also invite our parents to lead clubs and activities, following volunteer training and background check. Please contact Community Ed Coordinator if you are interested in helping with or supervising an activity.

Some school sponsored competitive teams include middle school boys' basketball, grades 3-5 boys' basketball and middle school volleyball. Watch for information from head coaches regarding these activities. Students must maintain passing grades, be in positive standing with THINK principles and attendance for daily practices of activity.

### **AGE REQUIREMENT FOR ADMISSION**

Under existing state law, a child must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the current school year to enter kindergarten.

### **ANIMALS/PETS**

Pets or other animals are not allowed at school without obtaining prior permission from administrator. Many students are allergic to animals and we need to be respectful of their health concerns. Animals and/or pets are not allowed on school buses.

### **ARRIVAL/EARLY PICK UP/ DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL**

School Hours: 8:30am-3:17pm

School Supervision is not available before 8:10am unless the student is registered for Eagle's Nest. For safety reasons, students should not be at school before this time. Students will not be allowed into the building until 8:10am unless participating in a before school activity for which they are registered or arrangements have been made with teacher. Parents with students needing supervision before school may wish to contact the Eagle's Nest Program. The program operates beginning at 7:00am.

If parents are in the building for any reason other than dropping off their child, **SIGNING IN AT THE OFFICE IS REQUIRED**. Thank you for your cooperation as we strive to create a safe and pleasant school day.

### **CARPOOL DROPOFF AT BEGINNING OF DAY**

Drop off begins at 8:10am and ends at 8:25am. Please form two lines in front of the building for drop off. The staff will allow students to enter the building in groups. Do not let your child exit your vehicle until you are in the front of the building and staff have indicated that it is safe to do so. For the safety of students and staff, ***cell phone use is not permitted during this process***. If you are arriving after 8:25am, you must park your car and escort your student into the building.

### **PICKING UP A STUDENT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

If you are picking up your child before the end of the scheduled school day, you must email or call both the office and classroom teacher/advisor indicating the time your child will be picked up. You will need to update their status in School Dismissal Manager system as well. While we understand emergencies arise, it is expected that you contact the office and classroom teacher as soon as possible for a nonscheduled pick up. Teachers and staff check emails twice a day, once before students arrive and then again during their prep time. Messages sent between those times may not be received. Scheduled appointments need to be communicated with office and classroom teacher by 8:30am and students may not be leave or be picked up after 2:55pm.

You must park in the parking lot, not the front of the building in pick up and drop off lanes, and come into the building to the office to sign out your child. Your child will be called for pick up when you arrive. Instruction is occurring until the last minutes of the scheduled day. Please plan appointments accordingly. Students who are being picked up before school time is over will have absences marked towards truancy statute. Pick up for appointments cannot be after 2:55pm.

### **STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Students who are bus riders will be called by bus number for dismissal first. Due to the congestion of the bus lines, parents will need to use their assigned time and PIN number for pick up. If there has been a change of transportation, it is the parent's responsibility to update the online School Dismissal System.

The congestion of parents picking up students without notice and continually not using the carpool pick up assigned time causes disruption and creates interruption in instruction and end of the day routine. The office is not equipped to be calling multiple students for pick up due to parents not wanting to go through carpool line. We realize the carpool is full, but the efficiency for the amount of parent pick-ups, demands that it is followed.

In the event of a sibling having a program or end of the day activity, parents often request to pick up their other children at that time. Please note that students to be picked up need to have updated this change in School Dismissal System and notify classroom teacher.

***Cell phone use is not permitted during dismissal process.***

All students must be picked up by 4:00pm otherwise emergency drop in fees for Eagle's Nest will apply. See Eagle's Nest for fees and registration information.

**PLEASE NOTE**

Students may use the telephone at school for emergencies only. If a parent needs to make a change to the end of the day pick up plans this must be updated in the School Dismissal System.

If your child has preplanned to go home with another student, both students' parents must send a note indicating this to both office, classroom teacher and update Student Dismissal System. If communication is not received, the student must go home as they usually do. There is no riding the bus home with another student due to capacity of buses.

**ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE (TRUANCY POLICY)**

Good attendance contributes greatly to a child's academic achievement in school. Regular attendance is directly related to the students' success in academic work; benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communication between teacher, student, and parent/guardian; and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student.

The purpose of our Student Attendance policy is to encourage regular school attendance; it is intended to be positive and not punitive. Minnesota Statute requires that all children between the ages of seven and sixteen must receive instruction unless excused according to law. In accordance with the regulations of the **Minnesota Department of Education** and the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minnesota Statute 120.101, the students of the school district are **REQUIRED** to attend school every day school is in session, unless the student has a valid excuse for absence. Perfect attendance indicates that a student has not been absent from school during a given period of time. We will not allow any variances from the policy. If a student is not present during the school day he/she will be marked absent. We realize that circumstances occasionally arise that force a student to be absent when he/she does not wish to be gone (doctor appointments, funerals, etc.) and this will jeopardize their perfect attendance. A perfect attendance record is commendable, but should not be sought at the expense of the child's or other's health. We understand their concern but our policy will be "either you are in school or you are absent" which follows the typical attendance policies in the workplace.

Arrangements should be made by the parent with student's teacher, principal, dean or receptionist if it is necessary for the child to be away from the classroom during the course of the school day.

A note should be sent with the child explaining his/her absence when he/she returns to school. At that time, teachers will send home make up work with expected due date noted.

If you have a need to pick up your child during the regular school day, please inform the office and classroom teacher. We will call your child for you when you arrive to sign them out. A ¼ day absence is based on arriving or leaving time. A ¼ school day is marked for every two hours student is gone.

The following will be the practice of Aspen Academy:

**Excused Absences:**

1. Illness. After repeated absence due to illness, the school may choose to require a doctor's note for any further excused illness. Doctor excused notes may be limited to ten days.
2. Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
3. A death in the student's immediate family or of a close friend or relative.
4. Medical or dental treatment.



5. Court appearance occasioned by family or personal action.
6. Catastrophic emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
7. Family trips or vacation days, up to ten consecutive days per year, need to be requested at least 3 days before trip is to begin. Up to 3 vacation days are excused. Days not approved are unexcused. Absences that total 15 days consecutive will result in student being unenrolled per state statute.
9. Removal of student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions will be handled as excused absences and students will be expected to complete make-up work/assignments. Student attendance will be coded OSS/ISS.

\*\* Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Statute 127.26-127.39.

\*\* Special Note: If a child is absent because of a communicable disease, the school should be notified as soon as possible. Contact the school nurse at 952-226-5940 Ext. 181. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to call or email the attendance line if your child will be absent from school.

#### **Unexcused Absences:**

1. Truancy. An absence by a student, which was not approved by the parent/guardian and/or the school.
2. Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures.
3. Failure to present a doctor's note after being notified to do so by the school regarding any further absences.
4. Excused doctor's notes totalling ten or more may be unexcused.
5. An absence excused by the parent but not excused according to the handbooks excused absences.
6. Any other absence not included under the attendance procedures set out in this policy.
7. Principal has sole discretion on excusing/not excusing absence.

#### **Consequences of Unexcused Absences:**

In cases of three (3) unexcused absences, the administration may request the County Attorney to file a petition with the Juvenile Court, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, or may seek the assistance of Scott or Dakota County Human Services in regards to educational neglect.

A student's parent/guardian will be notified by mail that his or her child has a total of three (3) unexcused absences and that, after the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, the student will be reported to the County Attorney for truancy or Scott or Dakota County Human Services for educational neglect.

#### **Tardiness:**

Students are expected to be in school, in their classroom ready for class by 8:30am. This means a student is in their seat with all materials put away from hallways and lockers with materials ready for class. A student is considered tardy when:

- Arrival to school is between 8:30-8:45am
- Leaving school after 2:55pm.

When a student is tardy he/she must report to the office before going to class to receive an admittance pass. Teachers will send students down to office to get admittance pass if reporting to class without one. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should contact the school when their child is going to be late.

If student is tardy, a parent must enter into school with their child to sign student in. This will prevent a tardy or unexcused absences from being recorded.

Parents/guardians of habitual tardy students will be notified. Repetitive tardiness may be counted towards full day absences and handled as unexcused absence(s). The following are examples of excused, unexcused and repetitive tardies; this is not an all-inclusive list.

**Excused Tardies:**

- Appointments
- Late bus
- Illness of the student
- Weather conditions
- School Business

**Unexcused Tardies:**

- Overslept (student or parent/guardian)
- Missed bus
- Car problems
- Out of class without a pass or permission from teacher
- In hallway or cafeteria rather than classroom at beginning of class time

**Repetitive Tardies:**

- Defined as 3 or more tardies. Students may receive detention, and/or parent conference, and/or suspension at the discretion of the principal.

Minnesota Statute 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirement of Minnesota Statute 120A. and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minnesota Statute 12A.05 without valid excuse within a single year for: three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school. The school partners with appropriate counties of residence's Department of Human Services on truancy and educational neglect concerns. Parents will be required to complete an attendance plan with school administration.

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minnesota Statute 260A.03 provides that the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by US mail or other reasonable means, such as email, of the following:

- 1) that the child is truant;
- 2) that the parent/guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the absences;
- 3) that the parent/guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minnesota Statute 120A.22 and parents/guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minnesota Statute 120A.34;
- 4) that this notification serves as the notification required by Minnesota Statute 120A.34;
- 5) that alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district;
- 6) that the parent/guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;

7) that if the child continues to be truant, the parent/guardian and child may be subject to juvenile court

A habitual truant is a child under the age of 18 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high, or high school; or, a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school. A school district attendance officer shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures under Minnesota Statute Chapter 260A.

### **BAND/ORCHESTRA**

Aspen Academy offers an orchestra program for fourth grade and a beginning band program starting in fifth grade as enrichment opportunities. Information is sent to students the spring before third and fifth grade that explains the cost and instrument rental options.

Middle School band is an intermediate band for students who have either taken fifth grade band at Aspen or have taken one or more years of private lessons on their own. Students who have taken private lessons must consult with the band teacher prior to enrollment in band.

The middle school band is an elective that meets during the day and students are continually enrolled from one year to the next unless schedule changes are arranged through administration. Students who do not elect to take band will be placed in an assigned advisory group.

### **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

The staff at Aspen Academy spend time discussing behavior expectations so we can be consistent in conveying and following through on expectations with students. We strive to make Aspen a place where students feel safe and respected. Our discipline system strives to give students the words, strategies and tools they need to be responsible, respectful and caring individuals. Instead of only assigning consequences, we also believe in taking the time to teach the students how to handle the situation for themselves. Please see the progressive discipline matrix attached at the end of the student handbook. Responses are tiered for varied level of support based on behavior.

Aspen Academy uses a Re-Think process when redirection has not deterred behavior choice. Five Re-Think slips result in a discipline write up and requires a visit with the dean and/or administrator. Parents will be sent a copy of the discipline slip and may be required to attend a conference with teacher, student, counselor, dean and/or administrator.

When a student has three or more discipline slips, a conference with parents is required and Tier II responses will be implemented.

THINK principles will continue to be focused on including Tenacity, High Expectations, Integrity, No Excuses and Kindness. Parents are expected to work in partnership with the teacher so all students are successful and learning is not interrupted for any students.

## **BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAYS**

Aspen Academy's wellness policy no longer allows for birthday food treats in the classroom. Treats in the classroom can be harmful to students with food allergies and sensitivities. No holidays will be celebrated, although cultural holidays and traditions will be taught through approved curriculum. Consider donating a birthday book, pencils or classroom game in lieu of edible treats.

Party invitations are not allowed to be distributed at school. Parents may not request student contact information for sending invitations from school staff. Those interested in adding their name to the ACC family directory can contact ACC. Sending flowers or balloons to school is discouraged. If the school receives deliveries of these items, they will remain in the office until the end of the school day at which time your child may pick them up.

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Bullying and harassment are governed by Board Policy 514 and Board Policy 526.

## **BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Building security is an important element in any public building and of utmost priority in school. The staff at Aspen Academy will take security very seriously and will implement the following precautions. All outside doors will remain locked during the school hours with the exception of the front doors. The front doors are open to the office area and vestibule. Visitors must enter the main entrance and check in at the office in order to gain entry. A Government issued photo ID is required at time of sign in.

### **Visitor Procedures:**

Visitors are defined as any person not assigned to the Aspen Academy staff. This includes, but is not limited to, parent volunteers, student volunteers, contractors, visiting district staff, school board members, parents, siblings and relatives not attending Aspen Academy.

The following procedure will be used as it relates to school visitors:

1. Visitors are required to report to the office, have government issued photo ID and sign in.
2. Upon sign in, a Visitor Badge/Label will be issued and needs to be worn in a visible location at all times.
3. If a staff member does not see a Visitor Badge, they will stop you and ask you to return to the office to check in.
4. Even if you are just 'running in' to a classroom for a brief time, you will be required to sign in and follow visitor procedures.
5. Before leaving the building, it is required to report back to the office to sign out.
6. There may be times when there is classroom event, concert, etc., you may be asked to sign in and out with classroom teacher or office.

### **Safety Drills:**

Per state statute, the school will practice fire, tornado and lockdown drills throughout the school year. We urge you to talk to your children about these drills at home. These are scheduled drills but not announced to students so we can practice and make adjustments in real time.

Lockdown drills include two types:

**Hard Lockdown:** A situation where an unknown person or person(s) are either inside or outside the building or on the school grounds. Students and staff are required to stay in their classrooms

or nearest room until danger or threat is contained. Dependent on situation, classes outside may be asked to remain outside or enter back into building. There is no movement throughout building during a hard lockdown.

**Shelter In Place (Soft Lockdown):** A situation which may include a medical emergency, elopement, community notification of event or threat, location of student or staff member, etc. Dependent on situation, if students are on the playground or outside for gym, they may be required to enter back into the building. Instruction continues during a Shelter In Place lockdown.

If you are in the building during a drill, you will be expected to participate and follow the directions of Aspen staff. If outside during fire drill, you will be required to stay with the class and not leave to another class or go to another staff member.

### **BUS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Failure to comply with the posted rules on the school bus, as well as any other rules established by the bus driver, may result in suspension from bus services and/or school for a specified period of time. Students will be written up and discipline will follow based on a Class I or Class II infraction. Please see the attached sample letter outlining Class I and Class II infractions and progressive discipline with each infraction. This protocol will be followed.

If a student has lost busing privileges due to behavior, families who have paid for bus services do not receive a refund. Safety is our priority and transporting children with full bus capacity is taken seriously, therefore bus expectations are firmly enforced.

If a student has lost busing privileges, this will apply also to school field trips or events in which a bus is needed. Parents will need to arrange alternate transportation for these events.

#### **Busing Questions Contacts:**

##### **Call Schmitty's Bus Company at 952-985-7514**

- \*to verify bus pick up and drop off times
- \*check on status of late bus
- \*to change location of drop off or pick up
- \*to share concerns regarding driver, routes, etc.
- \*with questions regarding school attendance boundaries

##### **Call Aspen Office at 952-226-5940**

- \*to add a student to a bus route
- \*questions about bus payment

Students may only ride their assigned bus. If plans have been made that include other students not assigned to your student's bus, alternate transportation will be required.

### **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS**

IPods, video games, cell phones, smart watches, or other expensive items are not allowed at school without permission by the principal. Aspen Academy is not responsible for lost or damaged items that are brought to school. Cell phones and the above items will be locked in a teacher's possession until the end of the school day.

Middle School students are allowed to bring their cell phones, and must be turned into their advisor. If misuse of cell phones is reported, consequences include not being allowed to bring cell phone to school and/or phone kept until a parent can pick up at front office.

Cell phones may be allowed with specific exceptions and in special circumstances. This would need pre-approval via the principal. Should students with parent permission, need a cell phone for before or after school communication (not to be used on buses including regularly scheduled routes and field trips) must first receive permission from the principal.

At no time should calls be made from a cell phone to home. For emergency calls, student must use teacher phone.

Parents, we ask that while you are inside the building you silence your cellphones, including while in the lobby. We further ask that there be no cell phone use (including texting) in the carpool line at any time. Such use distracts parents from driving safely and paying attention to line movement during pick up time.

Cell phones may not be used to take photos or videos of students at lunch, recess, during field trips and if you are visiting. Many of our families elect not to have their student's photo released or taken and we respect those requests.

### **CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS**

To maximize instruction time and minimize classroom disruptions, please observe the following:

- If students forgot their lunch, homework or band instrument, bring it to the office with your child's name and teacher noted. Please do not deliver to the classroom while class is in session. The office will make sure the student receives their item.
- Please plan ahead and communicate plans to your child before school.

Parents who wish to contact a classroom teacher during the day should be prepared to leave a voicemail requesting that the teacher contact the parent at the teacher's convenience; E-mails are the preferred method of communication. Teachers are generally not available to come to the telephone during the time school is in session, nor check their emails other than before school, during prep periods and after school, as they are teaching and giving their full attention to their students.

Teachers have up to 24 hours to respond to email or voicemail during normal school hours and within 3 days over a weekend.

### **CONFERENCES**

Parent/Student/Teacher conferences are held twice a year to communicate your child's academic and social strengths and needs. Please see the calendar for dates and times. Please be sure to sign up through Synergy for conference date and time. Teachers are not required to schedule conferences at alternate times if families choose to use conference dates for vacations instead. If a scheduled conference is forgotten, missed, etc. the teacher will contact parent. Please make sure you are respectful of appointments as time is limited.

Teachers will notify parents whenever a student is having difficulty with school work or his/her behavior has changed. Parents are encouraged to discuss their questions and concerns with their child's teacher(s) and set up additional conferences if necessary.

### **CUSTODY INFORMATION**

Custody and restraining orders must be on file in the district office. It is vital that parents keep the school informed in writing if there is a legal ruling that an individual is restricted from seeing a child during the school day or picking up a child. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to supply the district with the most up to date court orders. Non-custodial parents may receive school bulletins, report cards, and other school communications upon request.

### **DISCIPLINE PROCESS**

The goal of progressive discipline is to explicitly teach, model and reteach to maximize instruction time. Teachers operate under the belief that we “Assume Nothing, Model Everything” and the consequences are logical and a deterrent to repeated unproductive behavior. It is our responsibility to teach expectations and students' responsibility to be held accountable. It takes partnerships to enhance and maximize instructional opportunities. We follow the THINK principles and demonstrate actions that reflect those principles in all areas. Student dignity and due process are priorities.

The THINK principles categorize infractions through the Tiered System, which inappropriately behavioral responses correlated to aligned tiered consequence. See Code of Conduct with detailed information found at the back of the handbook. Teachers reach out early and frequently to partner with you in the celebration of successes and support areas of growth.

### **DISCRIMINATION**

Aspen Academy will provide all vocational and educational opportunities for students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, creed or disability. (Aspen Policy 102)

Aspen Academy will identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of Section 504/ADA, need special services, accommodations, or programs, in order that such learners may receive a free, appropriate public education. The Principal is designated as the school's disability discrimination officer to receive reports, complaints, or grievances.

Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. See Aspen Policy 522. Aspen Academy provides equal opportunity of all students and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex. No student will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex under any educational program or activity operated by the school district. The director is designated as the school's Title IX officer to receive reports, complaints, or grievances.

**EAGLE'S NEST**

Eagle's Nest is our program that provides before and after school care for students. To participate, parents must pre-register, and must sign up for days of attendance in advance. Calendars are due the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior. Parents picking up their child late will be charged \$5.00 for every 5 minutes late. **For staffing purposes, Aspen Academy no longer provides drop-in care.** For registration information, please see our website or contact the business office at 952-226-5942.

If a student is not picked up by 4:00pm, they will be sent to Eagle's Nest. At this time, additional fees will incur. Students not following Aspen THINK principles are subject to losing the option for Eagle's Nest care. See Eagle's Nest page on school website.

**ESCORTS TO CLASS**

During the first full week of school, it is permissible for parents/caregivers to walk their primary elementary (K-1) students to their classroom. Following this time, students are familiar with the routine of going to class and are gaining independence in their preparation for the day with their backpacks and materials. Elementary teachers continue to be ever vigilant and supportive during arrival and dismissal times.

We request that parents/caregivers refrain from escorting students into their classes or to their hallway hooks after the initial week.

**EMERGENCY CLOSING/LATE START/EARLY DISMISSAL**

School may be closed, start late or dismiss early at times due to inclement weather or other emergencies. If such a closing should occur parents will be notified in one of four ways:

- Via the homepage of our website
- Via TRZ (our emergency phone notification system)
- Via local TV stations
- Via Aspen Facebook page

For this reason, it is important that you keep your phone numbers up to date. If we have to make the decision to close, start late or dismiss early, you may get the call very early in the morning, and for this we apologize in advance. However, some staff and families have to leave extremely early in the morning and so must be notified in time. Please make sure your child knows the family plan in the event of an early dismissal.

**FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITY FUND**

Field trips are not required, however we encourage all students to attend. Teachers tie experiential learning into their state standards and field trips offer this opportunity. Field trips are educational days, therefore all students are able to attend, unless parents opt out. If parents opt out, the student will attend school and attend the classes the homeroom teacher has prepared.

Signed parental permission slips are required for all field trips. They will be sent home with the children before each planned field trip informing you in advance as to the educational purpose, date, times, destination, cost and any other specific arrangements that are made. Students who do not return parental permission slips will not be permitted to go on the field trip.



Although we ask parents to pay for these activities, students will not be denied the opportunity to participate if they cannot afford to pay. When permission slips are sent home, there is a line allowing for a contribution, if you wish, to support the cost of the trip. Your assistance is appreciated. If you need assistance in paying, please contact the Business Manager at 952-226-5942 or email at [diane.hummel@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:diane.hummel@aspenacademymn.org)

Classroom teachers appreciate the extra help that adult chaperones can offer during these field trip times. Often, the trip may have a limit as to the number of chaperones needed. Due to the safety and liability that is encountered from leaving school premises, we ask that younger siblings not accompany chaperones on field trips. All chaperones are required to attend a volunteer orientation, inclusive of a background check, prior to chaperoning. Chaperones may drive separately for a field trip, but their child must ride the bus from field trip back to the school.

### **FORGOTTEN LUNCHES/HOMEWORK/INSTRUMENTS/ETC.**

Teaching and learning will not be interrupted to deliver forgotten lunches, homework, band instruments, etc. If these are delivered, they must remain in the office. We will notify the teacher and they will send the student up to retrieve them when it is not during their learning time.

### **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Aspen Academy and its faculty and staff are devoted to resolve concerns and complaints of its students and parents when they arise by following the Chain of Command. Aspen Academy has provided opportunities for students and parents to express their concerns through processes established in the Aspen Academy Grievance policy 103.

The policy outlines that concerns are to first be addressed directly with those involved. An example includes a parent has a concern with an issue in class, the chain of command would include communication in the following order:

- Classroom teacher/Case Manager
- Principal or Dean of Students
- Building Principal will contact Director
- Executive Director to contact Principal and parents
- Board Chair

If the issue or concern was not addressed directly to the appropriate level, you will be asked to revisit the chain of command. We believe that with proper communication with appropriate person(s), most concerns can be resolved.

### **HAZING/BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

Hazing is defined as committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or any other purpose. (Board Policy 526)

Bullying is defined as intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power that exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or

2. materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. The term, "bullying," specifically includes cyberbullying as defined in this policy. (Board Policy 514)

Harassment is defined as a continuous pattern of intentional behavior that takes place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored function. This includes, but is not limited to, written, electronic, verbal or physical acts that are reasonably perceived as being motivated by any characteristic of a student, or by the association of a student with an individual who has a particular characteristic defined in the local board's model policy. Different categories of harassment in the school environment are outlined in the statute. The statute prohibits harassment, intimidation, violence and states that no student should be subjected to such treatment. It prohibits reprisal, retaliation or false accusation against a victim, or other person who has reliable information about an act of harassment, violence or threat of violence. These above three statements include Cyber Bullying as well. Interruption of learning, disruption or causing unsafe environments through internet posting, texting, videoing, etc. will be followed with the following policies and procedures. Investigations that show misuse and hazing, bullying or harassment through technology device may result in students losing technology privileges and devices.

### **Policy**

1. No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
2. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate hazing.
3. Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
4. This policy applies to behaviors that occur on or off school property, inclusive of school property that is inappropriately used or in possession of, during and after school hours.
5. A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
6. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.
7. No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district will neither harass/bully another person nor will they tolerate bullying of another person.

## Reporting Procedure

1. Any person who believes he or she has been a victim of hazing/bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing and/or bullying, shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.
2. The Principal, school social worker or dean of students, are the people responsible for receiving reports of hazing/bullying at the building level. Any person may report hazing/bullying directly to the director.
3. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors and other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing/bullying. Any such persons who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing/bullying shall inform the building Principal immediately.
4. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing/bullying will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

Sometimes students will say they “were only joking.” It is NOT A JOKE to harass or bully someone. Play fighting is not allowed at Aspen Academy and we do not excuse such behavior “as kids being kids.” If a parent feels the actions of another child have infringed upon the rights of his or her child, they should approach the classroom teacher to seek resolution to the situation. Under no circumstances shall a parent approach that child while at school.

Policy 514 is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the education environment.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### **PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS HAVE OCCURRED:**

- If your child was vomiting or had a temperature of 100 degrees or higher the night before or in the morning before school. Students must not have had an episode within 24 hours to return.
- Students who have been diagnosed with, or exhibit pink eye symptoms such as a thick white discharge or yellow drainage. Students with pink eye are to stay home for a full 24 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.
- Students diagnosed with strep throat must be kept home for a full 24 hours after starting antibiotic.
- Uncontrolled cough
- Undiagnosed skin rash

Students are NOT to come to school ill. If a child is too ill to go outside, they are too ill to be in school. If a child has a medical problem that necessitates they be kept inside, a note from their doctor is required. Only students who have a medical reason with a doctor's note will be permitted to use the nurse's office bathroom, or in the event of an emergency.

If a student has any of the following symptoms, a call will be made to the parent/guardian with a recommendation that the student be sent home:

- has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- has been vomiting and/or diarrhea
- if there is serious bleeding from an injury, a serious head trauma, a suspected bone break or
- any time when a student may need the services of a medical center.
- any other reason that would be deemed necessary -- decided on a case by case basis.
- staff will contact parents/caregivers of students who have been in the nurse's multiple times in one day

Students will not be sent home from school unless an adult accompanies them. It is the responsibility and expectation of the parent, or someone designated by the parent, to pick up an ill child when called and arrangements need to be made for student pick up.

It is imperative that contact information is completed and kept current at all times. Parents can update their information through ParentVue online. Parents of students with excessive absences from school related to illness may be contacted by the school staff for follow up information.

### **HEAD LICE**

Our school has a policy of notifying parents when there is a head lice problem. When a child is found to have head lice, the child is discreetly removed from the classroom and the parent is called. When cases of head lice occur, the Health Staff may check siblings. The child can return to school when he/she has received an appropriate lice treatment. After treatment, the student may be rechecked in 7-14 days at the discretion of the school nurse.

### **COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS/DISEASES**

It is a state requirement that the health department record all reportable communicable diseases. Therefore, we must have this information to facilitate keeping accurate records, to inform the appropriate public health agency and to identify any clusters of illness in the classroom. When you notify Aspen Academy regarding illness, please inform the school as to the reason for your child's absence from school.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

- The school will attempt to contact parents at home immediately in the event of an emergency, such as an illness or accident.
- The parent or guardian will be called at his/her place of employment if no one is at home.
- The name(s) designated on the emergency card filed in the office will be called if we are unable to reach parent or guardian.
- The school will call for emergency service if it is impossible to reach someone in a reasonable length of time or if the illness/accident is severe enough to warrant such service immediately.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION OR TREATMENT**

The administration of medication (both prescription and over-the-counter) or treatment to students by school personnel should be discouraged, including ibuprofen, cough drops, etc. Staff will not put sunscreen on any student unless written direction from physician. Since giving medication to students

presents some potential problems, it is preferred that medication be given at times outside of school hours, if possible. If not possible, trained school staff will assist students and parents with this responsibility.

Regulation A: Students requiring medicine at school shall be identified by parents to the nurse, health coordinator, secretary, or Principal.

Regulation B: The “Medication Physician Order and Parent Authorization Form” must be completed by the parent/guardian and physician *before* any medication will be given at school. All medication must be accompanied by this written physician’s order and parent authorization form, which must be updated every school year.

Regulation C: The parents of the student shall assume responsibility for informing the nurse of any changes in the student’s medication. Medication dosage changes must be prescribed and documented in writing by the physician. When circumstances warrant, the physician may provide verbal medication orders or changes of dosage to the nurse only. Verbal orders must be followed by written authorization.

Regulation D: For the parent and child’s protection, the medication shall be brought to the school office by an adult. (*If there is a reason this is not possible, the nurse should be contacted.*)

Regulation E: All prescription medications must be brought to the school in a prescription bottle, as issued by a pharmacist. If needed, most pharmacists will provide an extra container to be kept at school if requested. The label on the bottle must match the doctor’s order. If the medication dosage means that pills need to be cut in half, the medication must be brought to the school already cut. Some medications (*i.e. Ritalin, Dexedrine*) are “controlled substances.” Parents may be asked to bring in only a one month supply at a time to the school since the bottle of medication needs to be counted once a week. Controlled substances must be delivered to the school directly and not through a child.

Regulation F: All written medication authorizations are effective for the current school year only.

Regulation G: Medications will be kept in a locked cabinet, file, or drawer. Any exceptions to this rule must be cleared with the school nurse.

Regulation H: Bronchial inhalers, for students requiring this breathing assistance, may be carried with the student, upon the written doctor’s order, parent permission, and health office notification. Teachers will be informed.

Regulation I: Requests for self-administered medications and approval will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the school nurse. These students must have the “Medication Request and Authorization Form” filled out and on file in the health office.

Regulation J: Students without prior approval, observed by school personnel self-administering medications, will be reported to the Principal.

Regulation K: Any medication given by school personnel, other than oral or inhalers, must be dealt with on a case by case basis with the school nurse, parents, physicians, and school personnel (*ex. eye drops, injections, etc.*). The school district retains the discretion to reject requests in administration of medication.

Regulation L: Planning for students with conditions that require medication on field trips will be done on an individual basis *prior* to the day of the field trip with the help of the parent/guardian. It is the teacher and parent’s responsibility to inform the health office in advance of the field trip. The teacher or responsible adult can carry and administer the medication on the field trip as necessary, following school procedure.

Parents of students with known food allergies which require an Epi-pen and Benadryl must complete an allergy action plan and provide these medications.

Aspen Academy does not provide Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Tums or cough drops. Parents must provide those medications and a separate over the counter form will need to be filled out. Any infirmity items used in the office require yearly written authorization.

### **IMMUNIZATION LAW**

Aspen Academy complies with the State of Minnesota Immunization Laws. Immunizations are required for measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, hepatitis B, meningitis, and Chickenpox vaccine or evidence of disease. Plan to have your child properly immunized before they start school. Each student must supply written evidence (month, day and year) of the minimum required doses of immunization or have a properly signed and notarized medical or conscientious exemption on file with the school. Please contact school nurse with immunization questions.

### **HOMEWORK GUIDELINES**

Homework assigned is purposeful and relevant. Students will have work time within class to complete assignments and may not have homework daily.

- Homework is designed to support student learning in their subject areas. Homework should average about 10 minutes per grade. If your student is taking longer, please contact the teacher to seek support before they fall behind.
- When teachers assign homework, it is usually due the next day. Use of daily agenda planner will support the due date of homework.
- Teachers at Aspen do not post homework on their web pages because this puts homework in the hands of teachers and parents instead of developing student independence and responsibility. Teachers will, however, work with students at the end of the day to make sure assignments are listed in your child's planner. If you feel your child is not listing enough information in his or her planner for you to understand what is due, please speak with your child and/or your child's teacher to remedy this. It is the student's responsibility to make sure homework comes home and is returned.
- Homework, other than general reading and items already prepared, will not be given in advance for students going on vacation, etc. Doing so requires the teacher to put the rest of the class' learning needs aside. All homework missed will be provided upon student's return.

### **ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS:**

**Grades K-1** Read for 10-20 minutes and practice math facts and sight words every night.

**Grades 2-5** Read for 20 minutes and practice math facts every night.

**Grades 6-8** In addition to their daily homework, students are expected to read for 30 minutes every night. In middle school student homework requirements increase and an emphasis on student responsibility for their own learning becomes an expectation.

### **THINK HOMEWORK**

#### **Tenacity:**

- **Accept only your best**
- **Focus your attention on each task and work on them one at a time**
- **Ask questions after you've tried more than once**

#### **High Expectations:**

- **Always read the directions**
- **Bring home the materials you need**
- **Show your best work**

**Integrity:**

- **Always show your thinking/learning, that's what we care about most**
- **Hand materials in on time**

**No Excuses**

- **Accept responsibility, that's how we learn to improve next time**
- **Accept help from your parents/school staff and listen to feedback**

**Kindness:**

- **Accept only your best, you are worth it**
- **Helping others is okay, doing things for them is not**

**HONOR ROLL**

Students in grades 3-8 are acknowledged as earning honor roll status. Honor Roll assemblies are held twice a year. Criteria includes:

- Students in grades 3-5 must have 90% of scores in MATH and READING at M's or E's.
- Students in grades 6-8 must have all course grades as A's or B's and MATH and READING standard grades are 90% M's or E's.
- **Students in grades 6-8 eligible for high honor roll must have all course grades are A's and MATH and READING standard grades are 90% M's or E's.**

**INSURANCE**

The school does not carry insurance to cover student injuries while attending school. Any injuries that happen on school property or while on a field trip should go through the parent's insurance.

**INTERNET USE**

Use of the school's computer systems and the internet is for legitimate educational and business needs of the school only. All other uses are strictly prohibited. Use must be in compliance with school board Policy 524: Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy. Inappropriate use of the district electronic technologies may result in the limitation or revocation of access. Users have no expectation of privacy when using school computer systems as use of the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. All students must sign the Technology Use Agreement as discussed in school board Policy 524.

Electronic communications are governed by Policy 406, Public and Private Data, and Policy 515, Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records. Should the user violate the school's acceptable use policy, the user's privileges may be suspended or revoked, school disciplinary action will be taken and appropriate legal action may be taken. All provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state, and federal laws.

**LOCKERS AND DESKS**

Lockers, desks and cubbies are the property of the school and students may use them to store their personal and class possessions.

Lockers, desks and cubbies may be subject to search by school personnel at any time it is deemed necessary for the maintenance of the health, safety, and welfare of all students. If a school official or

employee determines that a locker search is necessary and appropriate, the school official or employee may conduct a locker or desk search without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a locker or desk may be searched only when school authorities have reasonable grounds to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. Students do not have an expectation of privacy in school lockers or desks. All school lockers and desks are the property of Aspen Academy, and the school retains ownership and possessory control of all school lockers and desks assigned to students.

At the end of the year, each student is responsible for cleaning their locker and desk and returning it to its original condition. Failure to thoroughly clean writing and other material from one's locker and desk at the end of the school year can result in a fine that will be assessed to the student.

Damage to one's locker and desk will also be assessed to the student in the amount of repair. Aspen Academy is not responsible for any theft from a locker, desk or cubby. Students need to report any damage to locker or desk to their advisor immediately who will notify the custodian.

Middle School students are assigned one locker by their advisor – it is not permissible to use another locker as a garbage, extra storage, etc. or to share with another student. Only items school related are to be stored in the locker. No outside locks permitted. Any item found in a locker assigned to a particular student may be deemed to be in the possession of that student.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

A Lost and Found area is located at Aspen. Your child should check this area for lost items. Any items that are found should be turned in to the office. Be sure to check for lost items at conference times and at the end of the school year. Aspen Academy is not responsible for missing or lost items.

To help avoid losses, **label** all clothing, shoes and school supplies with your child's name. Unclaimed items are donated to clothing collection agencies at random times throughout the year and at the end of the school year.

### **LUNCH**

Lunch is served in the cafeteria. Students may choose to order hot lunch through Lancer Food Services in advance online or they may bring their own lunches from home. Menus are posted online typically around the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior. Hot lunches **must** be ordered the month prior. Please see our website for ordering instructions. Menus include vegetarian, gluten free, salads and traditional meals. Milk may be purchased for the month through Lancer Food Services.

Aspen Academy is not an allergen-free school, although our lunch caterer does guarantee that hot lunches are pork and peanut free. The lunchroom will provide a separate table for children with allergies and are not able to sit near a student's lunch that may create an allergic reaction.

If a student forgets his/her lunch, we will provide an alternate option and the parent will be charged. Due to the number of students who forget their lunch on a given day, we do not allow students to call home from the office or classroom. If you find a lunch left at home, you will need to bring it to the office and we will see it gets delivered to your child at lunch. No soda is allowed for lunch.

**Fast Food is not allowed in the lunchroom or school building.** If you are purchasing lunch to bring in to your student, we only accept healthy options such as sub sandwiches or salads. There is no



refrigeration or microwave available for student use. If a student is having lunch from home, please send appropriate eating utensils for your child. Condiments are not available for home lunches.

To make your experience dining with your child extra special, there is a designated GUEST TABLE that we request you sit at with your child. The purpose of this designated table is to ensure allergy concerns are taken into account and also the physical space at the various times in the lunchroom. Your child may bring two friends to join you at the GUEST TABLE. Reminder that no photographs of groups of students are to be taken at lunch time.

Please call or email the lunchroom ahead of time if you are planning to dine with your child. You can reach the nutritional manager at 952-226-5940 Ext. 137 or email at [lunch@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:lunch@aspenacademymn.org). The notice is appreciated to ensure adequate seating.

### **FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH**

Free or reduced lunches are available for those families who are eligible according to the Federal guidelines published each fall. Each student will receive an application for free or reduced lunch. These forms are to be returned to the Business Office as soon as possible. Applications will be approved or denied by the Business Office according to Federal guidelines and parents/guardians will be notified of eligibility. If you transfer to Aspen during the school year and have been eligible to receive free or reduced lunch at previous school, a copy of the acceptance letter from previous school can be turned in to Business Office. Information regarding free and reduced priced lunch is available to all Aspen Academy families upon request from the business office at 952-226-5942.

### **NUTRITION BREAK**

Elementary teachers usually provide a nutrition break during the day. Snacks are encouraged to be healthy ones, like fruits and vegetables. We do not allow candy, chips, desserts or sugary snacks. Students may have a water bottle in the classroom, but no pop or juice. Please do not send products with peanuts or tree nuts. The office will not be responsible for snacks for children during the day.

### **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Some of the most important principles upon which Aspen Academy is founded and the basis for school rules that students at school are expected to follow are centered on respect for others and personal responsibility. Parents play a formative role in the development of their child's sense of justice, equity, and the dignity and worth of all members of our school community. As one of the most influential role models in a child's life, one of the best ways for a parent to teach is to lead by example. Accordingly, Aspen Academy expects the behavior of each parent and responsible adult with children enrolled in our school to adhere to the standards of conduct set forth below.

- A. When visiting or volunteering at the school, parents should observe all rules of the school, including checking in and out at the office. This includes times directly before or after school.
- B. If a parent feels that the actions of another child have infringed upon the rights of his or her child, under no circumstances shall the parent or guardian approach another child while at school. The parent should address concern with the classroom teacher.
- C. If a parent has questions or issues relating to the classroom or a class, they should first be directed to the classroom teacher or staff member.
- D. All communication regarding issues with other parents or staff at the school or school events shall remain respectful and address the issues at hand. Yelling, taunting, threatening or abusive behavior, cursing, foul language or derogatory remarks are not acceptable means of

communication. Parents are expected to resolve issues through calm dialogue between parties directly involved while respecting the dignity and privacy of others.

- E. We do not interrupt class time for parents to discuss evening plans, birthday parties, play dates, etc. Please make sure these conversations and plans are taking place at home prior to coming to school.
- F. Parents shall uphold Aspen Academy in all conversations in the community. If there are concerns about an issue, we ask they are brought to Aspen's attention rather than discussing them negatively in public. This does include the Aspen Facebook and Aspen Classroom Facebook as well. Negative comments or unfounded postings disrupt teaching and learning.

### **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

We believe parents and teachers are partners in your child's education. To maximize communication and respect for the earth, we send the majority of information electronically. Please contact the office if you are unable to access communication. Make sure to check your spam folder as well if there is no correspondence. If you have any suggestions to improve parental communication please let us know.

For questions on how to access ParentVue, please contact Maggie Rowan, Curriculum Coordinator. There is much information available specific to your child through ParentVue. Please allow up to 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) for a staff/teacher response.

### **ASSIGNMENT PLANNERS**

Assignment planners are used daily for all students in grades K-8. Each day your child will write down reminders and assignments that need to be communicated to you. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher any time in the assignment planners. This habit of becoming organized and responsible is an essential skill for our students.

### **ASPEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

The Aspen Community Council (ACC) is open to any and all Aspen Academy school parents, guardians and staff members. You are invited to attend meetings listed on the calendar on the website (typically the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month). Meetings begin at 4:00pm. The ACC provides meaningful contributions toward the development of our school's learning programs. Partnering with school administration, the ACC promotes progressive actions for continuous improvements at the school to support the whole child.

### **ASPEN WEEKLY UPDATE**

In addition to classroom newsletters, the office sends out a weekly update electronically. Typically, these are on Fridays. There are many items covered each week that may include deadlines, ordering, etc. Please take the time to read this update each week.

### **REFLECTIONS AND PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS**

We want to know what you think about Aspen Academy. Please call or email at any time to share your thoughts about our school. When you are especially pleased about something a teacher or the school is doing, it would be great to hear from you. If your child tells you something about school that leaves you with a question, please contact the classroom teacher. This type of communication helps prevent misunderstandings and offers clarification.

If you are concerned about a situation in your child's education, please follow the chain of command as outlined and talk directly with the staff member involved. Thank you for not posting concerns before

there has been communication with staff. Most concerns can be resolved at this level. If you cannot resolve the conflict or answer the questions, please contact the office and they will direct your question to the appropriate person.

### **PARKING**

Aspen Academy assumes no responsibility for damage to vehicles or for theft of vehicles or articles from vehicles. Please follow the noted parking lot signs and cross in the designated cross walks.

### **PAYMENTS AND DEADLINES**

All deadlines are firm (for example: yearbook orders, t-shirt orders, field trip permission slip, field trip payment, Eagle's Nest schedule and payment and lunch ordering.) Please take the time to return all payments and forms in a timely manner. We set the deadlines due to staffing needs, staff schedules and vendor contracts. If you have a concern about sending payment in via your student, please bring it in or mail to main office. Note the weekly update for due dates of events.

### **PLAYGROUND/ELEMENTARY RECESS**

K-5 students will have daily outdoor recess except in extreme weather conditions such as rain or severe cold/wind chill. It is expected that students dress appropriately for outside recess and weather conditions. Aspen's cold weather policy is:

- If the temperature is 0 degrees F or below, the students will not go outside for recess.
- If the wind chill is colder than 0 degrees F, the students will not go outside for recess.
- If it is raining, the students will not go outside for recess.
- Decision for indoor or outdoor recess is made by 10:30am. In the event of a noticeable weather change during recess schedule, there may be a decision made to have outside recess later in scheduled time.
- If an event or weather conditions create unsafe playground equipment, students will not go outside for recess.

Please consider these factors related to weather as you and your child make your daily decisions on outerwear. Hats, scarves, boots, snow pants, mittens and gloves are necessary. Most playground games are played in the snow. If students do not have boots on, they are restricted to play on the cement areas. Also, as the snow melts, the grassy areas of the playground can become muddy or soggy, so boots and snow pants are required.

Students are not permitted to stay indoors during recess, except at the teacher's request, during recess time without a written request from a physician. If your student is too ill to go outside, they are too ill to be at school.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Aspen focuses on the intellectual, creative and social learning of each student. We report formally on their learning three times per year using our Standards Based Report Card and/or progress reports. Standards Based Report Cards enable us to state specifically what students have learned according to the Minnesota State Standards, Core Knowledge Curriculum Standards, National Standards in Specialist areas and our Aspen THINK values. Report cards are available through the student management system, Synergy.

**SCHOOL BOARD:**

Parents interested in having input on school matters can best do so at board committee meetings. The committee meetings is where the discussion of ideas and policy takes place, much more than at board meetings which is a reporting on, and summary of, the committee meetings. Through the committee process, the school board better understands the needs of the Aspen community and makes decisions. For a full description of committee commissions, committee chairs and committee meeting agendas, please see Aspen website.

**SCHOOL PICTURES:**

Each fall and spring arrangements have been made with Lifetouch to provide individual student pictures. This service is provided on a voluntary basis to students. Each parent has the option of ordering the package of their choice from the options listed. If a parent is not fully satisfied with the pictures, he/she may have their picture re-taken during an all school retake day. **On the fall picture date, students are required to wear the school uniform. All students will have their picture taken on fall picture day.** Participation in spring pictures is optional. Those taking spring pictures may be out of uniform in accordance to out of uniform day guidelines. Students not participating in spring picture day must wear uniforms.

**SEAC**

SEAC is the Special Education Advisory Council comprised of administration, parents, teachers, and paraprofessionals. SEAC meets three times per year and is a representative group that brings information to the school board.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Aspen Academy does have a Facebook page. Many times parents want to connect with other parents via social media and start their own group pages. We are a close knit school and encourage parents connecting with other parents. If you do so, please remember to be respectful of other students' privacy. If there are specific concerns, we encourage you to help us keep our school positive by sharing those concerns with appropriate Aspen staff best able to address them in person or through email. Do not post pictures of students other than your own, unless you have parental permission.

**SPECIALISTS ROTATION DAYS**

Students are on a 4-day specialist rotation, known as A, B, C, and D days. Please note the rotation day and ensure appropriate gear and items are sent for specialist classes including PE, Music, Art and Spanish. If there is an unscheduled day with no school due to inclement weather or event, the rotation continues on to the next assigned rotation day.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

As a public school, Aspen Academy is required to evaluate students who are referred for services and provide services for students who meet defined criteria. We have licensed special education teachers and paraprofessionals on staff and contract with outside service providers as needed.

**SST**

Aspen Academy has an SST, Student Support Team, to identify and intervene early for students needing support in academic, social and/or emotional needs. The team consists of teachers, principal, dean, school psychologist and interventionists. Specific interventions are developed to meet the needs of the student and progress is monitored. Evidence of interventions are prerequisite for special education assessment referral.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records, including grades, may contain notes on conduct, attendance records, standardized test results, medical reports, general family data, date of birth, etc. Students or parents/guardians who wish to review a file may do so by submitting such requests to the Principal in writing. Access to the files will be granted within 24 hours of the written request during normal business hours. Copies of information may be requested in the same manner with duplicating costs paid by the students or parent/guardian. See website for data request procedure and forms.

Aspen Academy, pursuant to the US General Education Provisions Act and Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, declares the following as directory information and that information relating to students may be made public if said information is in any of the following categories:

Student's name	Student's address/telephone listing
Dates of enrollment/attendance	Date and place of birth
Gender	Participation in recognized events
Weight and height of members of athletic teams	Current grade level
Degrees and awards received	Permission to release photograph
Most recent school attended	

Directory information does not identify data that references religion, race, color, social position or nationality. Any parent/guardian of any student in the district may notify the district of their desire that some or none of the above information is to be released without their consent by contacting the Principal. This notification must be given within (30) days of this publication notice.

It is the practice of Aspen Academy to share data with appropriate representatives from County Human Services, County Corrections, County Attorney's Office and local law enforcement on a need to know basis for the sole purpose of coordinating services to support the education of a student at Aspen Academy. Parents will be provided written notice of this practice at the beginning of each year. (MN Statute 626.558)

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Aspen Academy places great emphasis on the healthy development of the mind, body and spirit of all its students. Substance abuse includes tobacco, drugs, controlled substances or alcohol. Contact with dangerous drugs/controlled substances and/or alcohol is a detriment to a child's growth and development. Being in the possession or under the influence of drugs, alcohol or controlled substances on school property or at any school related functions will have serious consequences as outlined in the code of conduct, including suspension and law enforcement involvement. This also includes the possession of related paraphernalia, including vape pens, and the abuse of prescription and over the counter drugs.

Tobacco, drugs or alcohol are not allowed by anyone, not even adults, on school property, on field trips, or at any activity of which the school is responsible. Field trips and after-hours events are considered an extension of the school day and any parent participating in these events must respect all school policies with regard to alcohol, tobacco and drugs and serve as a role model for our students.

Any adult who has information regarding student use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol should inform the Principal or other employee of the school. Refer to policies 417, 418, and 419.

### **TEACHER REQUESTS**

Aspen Academy has highly qualified teachers on staff. Teachers and administration make up class lists. Many factors are considered when there are multiple sections offered of the same grade level. Balanced classrooms include factors of equal numbers of boys and girls, various learning styles, ability levels, special needs in academic and/or behavior areas, etc. Specific teacher requests are discouraged and cannot always be honored due to the many factors in classroom placements.

If you are feeling you need to request a teacher for the upcoming school year, you will need to complete the request form completely and return to Principal no later than May 31, 2019 by 4:00pm. Forms are available at front office.

### **TESTING**

Aspen Academy follows the Minnesota Department of Education, in alignment with ESSA and authorizer, Friends of Education, requirements for assessments. Full testing schedule is found on Aspen website.

### **TWO HOUSEHOLD FAMILIES**

A parent may not ask us to withhold information from the student's other parent, deny the other parent the right to visit the school, or deny the other parent the right to pick up the student from school. We cannot legally do so unless there are court documents that prohibit it. In custody hearings, a parent will sometimes ask a teacher or other school employee to testify on their behalf. In most instances, the teacher is not witness to the parenting that takes place in the home and therefore will not testify unless subpoenaed.

The parent requesting or arranging for optional, fee-based services at Aspen Academy (e.g. hot lunch, after or before care, etc.) will be responsible for payment of the services provided to their child. Any arrangements beyond that are between the student's parents/guardians and our staff will not get involved or mediate to determine who is financially responsible. If payment is not made, your child may be removed from the optional program(s). If court documents exist that we need to be made aware of, please contact the Principal or Business Manager. If there are updated changes to existing court documents, it is the sole responsibility of the parent to provide school with updated copies. If no court documentation is received, the Academy assumes the situation to be a family matter.

### **UNIFORMS**

Aspen Academy has a Uniform Policy for students. All parents and students are expected to know the full policy and follow policy and uniform guidelines. Specific details (colors, styles) are listed in the

guidelines. Students may not wear shoes with cartoon characters, wheels or lights. No baggy pants/tight fitting or cargo shorts or yoga pants. Knit pants will not be allowed at school. Clothing that is ripped, torn or dirty is not acceptable. Students who are cold should have an appropriate sweater following uniform guideline policy. Students not following guidelines and policy will be issued a Uniform Infraction Slip. If necessary, administration may have the student call home to bring appropriate uniform clothing to school.

### **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

Aspen Academy encourages each family to volunteer 40 hours over the course of each school year. There are many opportunities to share your time and talents, both at school and at home.

We welcome volunteers at Aspen Academy and require they attend an orientation meeting and complete a background check prior to volunteering for the first time. Each time you volunteer, you must sign in at the office, have a government issued ID and wear the volunteer badge at all times. Volunteer training opportunities are posted on the school website and weekly newsletter.

Volunteers who have already completed the volunteer training will need to complete a background check.