



*A 2019 National Blue Ribbon School
Academic Excellence*

2022 Kindergarten Welcome



Awards:

- ✓ 2022 US News & World Report “Best Elementary School”
- ✓ 2022 US News & World Report “Best Middle School”
- ✓ 2021 High-Quality Charter School
- ✓ 2021 STEM Innovation Award
- ✓ 2021 Edtech Award – Trendsetter finalist
- ✓ 2019 National Blue Ribbon Award
- ✓ Top 5% North Star Award Recipient:
(Top 5% of schools in MN)
 - Excellence in Reading
 - Excellence in Attendance
- 2022 #1 Best Elementary School in Scott County (Niche.com)
- 2022 #2 Best Public Elementary and Public Middle School Teachers in Minnesota (Niche.com)
- A+ Rating for teachers



Important Summer Dates:

PTO Meetings (Aspen's parent teacher organization): look for announcements on Aspen PTO's facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/AspenCharterPTO> or their Aspen webpage: <https://aspenacademymn.org/pto/>

July 27, 2022: 9:00-9:45am: New Family/Scholar Playdate at Aspen Playground (Pending Weather)

August 3, 4-7pm: Used Uniform Sale, Aspen Gym

August 10, 9:30-11:30 am: Middle School Summer Camp

August 19, 6-6:45pm: New Family/Scholar Playdate at Aspen Playground (Pending weather. Note, building and bathrooms will be closed)

August 25-26: Back to School and Assessments

August 29: 1st Day of School, Middle School (grades 6-8)

August 31: 1st Day of School, Elementary (grades K-5)

General School Information

Dismissal Manager: Dismissal Manager is used:

- To notify the school how you would like your child to be dismissed from the school (for example, walk, bus, car pool)
- If you need to pick up your student early (for example, Dr. appointment)
- If there is a change from their regular dismissal routine (for example, car pool pick-up instead of riding the bus)

Infinite Campus: Is Aspen Academy's online portal to access grades, bus information, classroom assignments, and communication with teachers. Infinite Campus will go live during the summer. You will receive a link with instructions to set up your account.

Attendance:

If you need to report an absence for your scholar, please email:

1. attendance@aspenacademymn.org - Please list the reason for absence. If your scholar is sick, please mention specific symptoms.
2. Please CC the Health Office:
maureen.stevenson@aspenacademymn.org
3. Please CC your scholar's teacher/middle school advisor

Illness: Please keep your child home if he/she is showing any of the following symptoms:

- sore throat
- earache
- rash
- headache
- nausea/diarrhea
- inflamed/matted eyes
- temp. over 99
- live lice or nits

If you have any concerns or questions, contact the school nurse at 952-226-5940

Ext. 181.

It is imperative that if your student has been home due to an illness, they should not return to school until symptom and fever free for a full 24 hours.

Labels: Label clothing such as jackets, coats, caps, gym shoes, backpacks, water bottle, etc. Gym shoes are to be worn for gym classes and can be kept at school. Note: A silver sharpie works well on black or dark colored items.

Student Directory: Aspen will be putting together a student directory in the fall for parents to get in touch with each other. To respect your privacy, we will only ask for email addresses this year. An email will go out in the fall to sign up for the directory.

Bus: For the 2022-2023 school year, Aspen Academy will be partnering again with the Prior Lake-Savage School District to use their buses. The passengers will be 100% Aspen Academy students. Information on bus stops and times will be sent home this spring.

Car line: Detailed information on car line drop-off and pick-up times will be sent home in August.

Lunch: Students may choose to order hot lunch through Lancer Food Services in advance online or they may bring their own lunches from home. If you are bringing a home lunch, please pack utensils and condiments. No microwave is available. Hot lunch must be ordered the month prior. Menus and account instructions are on our Food Services webpage: <https://aspenacademymn.org/current-families/resources/lunch-menus/>. Menu options include vegetarian, gluten-free, salad, and traditional. **FAST FOOD IS NOT ALLOWED** to be brought into school. Chocolate and white milk are available every day. Students can purchase milk to go with a home lunch if desired. Information will be sent home this summer with links to the registration system.

Snacks – Students have a snack break during the day in their classrooms. We encourage healthy snacks such as apple slices, grapes, crackers, carrots. Water bottles are also welcomed in our classrooms. Snacks should not include pop, candy or potato chips. (Baked chips are okay!)

Recess: Students need to be prepared for recess and outside breaks daily. For winter weather, this includes coats, hats, gloves, snow pants, and boots. Students will go out for recess daily unless the temperature is 0 degrees or below with or without wind chill. If it is raining, students will remain inside for recess. In the fall and spring, please send a jacket.

Uniforms: Aspen Academy has a Uniform Policy for students. All parents and students are expected to know the full policy and following policy 504 and uniform guidelines. The uniform policy can be found at <https://aspenacademymn.org/current-families/resources/uniforms/>.

Homework: Aspen Academy’s mission, “To provide students with a well-rounded, Core Knowledge-based education which meets the intellectual, creative and social needs of each child” requires that the rigor of academics may, at times, include homework. Expectations are for kindergarten students to read for 10 minutes and practice sight words.

PTO: The Aspen Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is open to any and all Aspen Academy school parents, guardians, and staff members of Aspen Academy. For more information, email: pto@aspennacademymn.org

School Values: The Aspen community follows THINK values; Tenacity, High Expectations, Integrity, No Excuses and Kindness. Students are taught how these values sound, look and feel. Students are recognized through Super Thinker Slips with monthly assemblies celebrating successes!

Volunteering: Aspen welcomes volunteers and provides many different opportunities for volunteering to happen – whether it is on-site, take-home projects, watching another Aspen family’s child so they can volunteer, or field trips, we will tap into your time and talent! Families are asked to volunteer for 40 hours throughout the year.

Volunteer training is required and can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19QWvEIQsJbJKT4zO-PwKR-udjONdKsfUYOAgRQMFYVo/edit?usp=sharing> Please review all of the slides and link through the last slide to take the assessment.

A background check is also required every 2 years. After you finish your online training, the school will contact you with information on the background check. Aspen will cover half the cost of the background check.

Eagle’s Nest: Eagle’s Nest is our before and after-school care option. It is available starting at 7:00am in the morning and is open until 5:30pm after school. Days must be scheduled and paid for in advance. For more information, please visit: <https://aspennacademymn.org/current-families/resources/before-and-after-care/>

After school clubs/activities: Aspen Academy offers many after school clubs throughout the year such as open gym, problem solvers, and Aspen Girls’ club. There is a nominal fee. Fall clubs will be announced after school starts in September.

Contact Information:

Facebook:

Aspen Academy Charter School - @AspenAcademyMN

Aspen Parent Teacher Organization - Aspen PTO

Important Contacts:

office@aspenacademymn.org

enroll@aspenacademymn.org (enrollment questions)

lunchprogram@aspenacademymn.org

melanie.jiskra@aspenacademymn.org (Principal)

james.jotter@aspenacademymn.org (Assistant Principal)

eric.sandberg@aspenacademymn.org (Dean) - Transportation

christi.heizman@aspenacademymn.org - Communications

maureen.stevenson@aspenacademymn.org - Health Office

Components of a Typical Kindergarten Day

8:40-9:00 Arrival/Morning Journals

9:00-9:25 Morning Meeting

9:25-9:45 Literacy

- Shared Reading
- Handwriting
- Flex Time/Independent Check-In

9:50-10:50 Small Group Reading

10:55-11:15 Lunch

11:15-11:35 Recess

11:40-12:00 Individualized Daily Reading - Quiet Time

12:00-12:10 Calendar

12:10-1:20 Math

1:20-2:09 Specialists

2:10-2:25 Snack - Making Meaning & Vocabulary -
Literacy

2:25-3:00 Being A Writer/Social Studies/Science

3:00-3:10 Planners & Pack Up

3:10-3:25 Second Recess

3:45 Bus Dismissal

4:00 Car Line Begins

*Times are subject to change



Pre-Kindergarten Activities

Word Play

Play with familiar words (your child's name, pet names, family names, etc.)

Change the words by changing the beginning letter to form new words.

Ex: Mike, bike, like, trike, spike, hike

Rhymes All Around

While you are walking or driving in the car, try to make rhymes for the things around you. They can be nonsense and silly words, too!

Magnetic Letters

Boxes of magnetic letters can be found at most grocery and discount stores.

Put your child's name on the refrigerator and label photos and other drawings with the beginning sounds or the whole word. Point out the letter names and sounds and let your child play with the letters.

Sounds & Letters All Around

Use old newspapers and magazines to pick a "special letter" or letters with your child. Have your child identify the letter by circling or cutting out every special letter they can find. Have your child find a certain letter or sound on cereal boxes, cans and other things around the house. Teach the names and sounds in your child's name and the names of his or her family members, friends and pets.

Play With Letters and Sounds

Make up ways to remember the sounds of the letters such as "mmmm...mmmmm good" for the letter m.

Literature/Books

Library Books: Check out the alphabet books from the library—some of the favorites, Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Dr. Seuss's ABC, and Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten.

Tell me what you see...

Look at pictures in books, photo albums, magazines, or newspapers and have your child describe what he or she sees in the pictures. Have him or her make up a story to go along with the picture and tell it to you.

Add On

Count objects and ask child to 'count on' when adding more objects.

Math Word Problems

Ask your child to solve a 'math story' you create and model thinking aloud how you solved it.

Pattern Blocks

Have your child create a pattern with blocks (ABAB and move into ABCABC)

How Can You Help?

1. The MN State Standards have increased the rigor of our curriculum. Please practice numbers, letters and sounds to increase the ease of success for your child.
2. Prepare your child for kindergarten by talking to them about school in a positive manner, encouraging independence and helping him/her develop good personal habits.
3. Please teach your child how to tie shoes and get dressed independently; practice opening milk cartons and packages (fruit snacks, GoGurt, etc.)
4. Help your child understand the meaning of good behavior by:
 - Being respectful of adults and peers
 - Being respectful of school materials and property
 - Demonstrating how to act in public areas
 - Letting him/her know your expectations regarding school behavior
 - Showing “THINK” values: Tenacity, High Expectations, Integrity, No Excuses, and Kindness
5. Assist your child in completing tasks instead of doing it for him/her:
 - Give encouragement to try new things
 - Get started right away on tasks
 - Complete tasks that were started
 - Complete tasks in a timely fashion and to the best of their ability
6. Read to your child for at least 20 minutes per day.
7. Show interest in your child’s school work by having a place in your home to display papers, drawings, etc. Attend parent/student/teacher conferences and keep in communication with the teacher. Build on your child’s own strengths.

Fall Fundraiser—We need your help!

In the fall, Aspen Academy holds its big fundraiser of the year. The fundraiser is run and planned by Aspen families so that we can keep 100% of raised money (minus expenses). We need your expertise and help!

The fundraiser starts in late September so most of the planning happens late August/early September. We have the following committees that need leaders and volunteers:

- Prize Distribution Team
 - Coordinate volunteers and schedule times to hand out prizes during the fundraiser.
- Decorating Team
 - Plan school decorations and coordinate volunteers to decorate school entry, media center wall and/or gym.
- Pledge Packet Team
 - Coordinate items that should be included in pledge packets. Coordinate team to assemble (preferably done in the late August/early September).

If you can lead or assist in a committee, please email the Christi Heitzman at Christi.heitzman@aspenacademymn.org.

Thanks!

Planned Aspen Fundraisers

Big Fall Fundraiser



Late September through Mid-October

Box Tops for Education



The Box Top Program is a coupon-based program found on the packaging of various brands.

Read-a-thon Fundraiser



February

Aspen is now a charitable organization on Amazon Smile!



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. Visit www.smile.amazon.com