

# ASPEN Update

Aspen Academy Weekly Newsletter

August 23rd, 2024

**Today's newsletter contains extremely important information!**  
**Please make sure to click the button to read it in full!**

If you have any questions, feel free to email Lydia Theis at  
[Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org).



8/28.....Back to School - Picture Day - 9:00am - 6:00pm  
Uniform Required\*\*  
8/29.....Back to School - Picture Day - 8:00am - 4:00pm  
Uniform Required\*\*  
9/03.....First Day of school for Middle School  
9/04.....First Day of grades K-5

A big thank you to Liliya Tsibulko and Dr. Jackie Miaffo for hosting our family playdates this summer! We appreciate your time and effort in making these gatherings so special!

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## Note from Mrs. Jiskra

Greetings Aspen Families,

Welcome back to another fantastic school year full of potential, excitement, challenges, and successes! A couple **Aspen Accolades** to our building and grounds team of Mr. Tom Foust, Mr. Tom McEachen, Ms. Neddie Mena, Ms. Rachel Humensky, Mr. Noah Jiskra, and Mr. Phillip Poole for their exceptional work in preparing our building and grounds to have everything sparkling clean for everyone's return and to our Administrative Support Team of Mrs. Julie Martini, Mrs. Lydia Theis, Mrs. Jean Brening, Ms. Kortney Kampotich and Mr. Jed Martini, who worked throughout the summer in preparation to have everything prepared and completed for staff and students! They've truly earned GOLD for being the Summer Aspen Academy Dream Team!

Our theme this year for our staff is "*Where courage meets wisdom Aspen Academy shines.*" It is certainly a fitting theme as we delve deeper into our professional development with the Read Act legislation this year. It will take courage as almost all of our teachers and administration will embark on the intense study on the Science of Reading. Through this learning and application, we will gain new wisdom and therefore our scholars will shine even brighter!

You will see some new faces on our Aspen Academy teaching staff this year, and some familiar faces in different roles. Please stop by to welcome them and find out about their new assignment and/or location:

- Kindergarten Teacher: Mrs. Amber Mattson-Johnson
  - First Grade Teachers: Mrs. Emily Dalsin and Ms. Brenna Tillman
  - Second Grade Teachers: Mrs. Christine Mensing and Ms. Kaitlin Christenson
  - Third Grade Teachers: Mrs. Konkol
  - Fifth Grade Teachers: Mrs. McGregor
  - Sixth Grade Teachers: Mrs. Sara Berge (AM only)
  - Seventh/Eighth Grade Teachers: Mrs. Sara Berge & Mrs. Cindy Carey (returns!!)
  - Special Education Teachers: Mrs. Marta Nelson & Mrs. Misty Waldron
- Mrs. Anne Keroff moved to Special Education Coordinator  
& Mrs. Jodi Herlick is the Evaluation Specialist

Specialists:

- Ms. Carsten - Media Specialist/Tech Integrationist
- Ms. Paulson - Elementary Spanish (PM only)
- Mr. Senum - Band
- Mr. Kolumbus - PE
- Mrs. Noer (Caldwell) - EL

Support Staff: Ms. Fischer - TOSA-SEL

Ms. Theresa Scales - Paraprofessional

Administration:

Mr. Rob Essig, Assistant Principal - his office has moved downstairs to the computer lab

We continue to increase enrollment as currently we have over 650 scholars enrolled!

A few notable changes that you are aware of, but want to reiterate for their importance:

Breakfast - will be served in the cafeteria this year, Breakfast service ends at 8:50am sharp!

Arrival - Late arrival, either in carline or just arriving, past 8:55am, will require parent/caregiver to pull into parking spot, park and escort scholar into school to sign them in.

AAA - will start earlier this year - the first week in September (Sept 9th)

Cellphones and smartwatches - will not be allowed on a student or in any classroom, hallway, or common area during the school day. Any messages that need to reach your child should go through the office or be emailed to the teacher if School Dismissal Manager cannot be updated by 3:00 PM.

In our continued quest for courage meeting wisdom, the Aspen Academy roundtable of staff, will continue to strive for equality and to meet the needs of all scholars, in partnership with our families and community. Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year. Stop by anytime, you will witness miracles in action!

In partnership,

Mrs. Melanie Jiskra  
Executive Director/K-8 Principal

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## Picture Day

Picture days will take place during Back to School Days (8/28-29). See the important dates for specific times!

Photographers will be in the cafeteria this year.

**\*\*Scholars must be in uniform to have their photos taken; if a scholar is not in uniform, their photo will not be taken.\*\***

\*\*If your scholar does not have assessments on these days or are absent they will still need to come in to have their photo taken or attend retakes on 9/25.\*\*

Families can contact Lifetouch Customer Service with questions regarding packages or payments at 1-800-763-4753.

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## Photo Opt-Out Form

Dear Parents/Guardians,

If you do not want your child's photo to be included in newsletters, promotional materials, family communications, or on social media, please complete this form:

<https://forms.gle/Ckt13T1a8cuy3sd27>

If you have multiple children enrolled at Aspen Academy, please complete a separate form for each child.

If you have any questions, please email [Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org)

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## Note from Mr. Sandberg!

1) Arrival Dismissal instructions [LINK](#)

2) Bus Information is now available! To view this information, sign into the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. On the home screen click "More" on the left side of the screen. Next Click "Transportation." There you will find the bus number, bus stop location, and pick up/drop off times.

3) School Dismissal Manager will be live starting 8/26. You will be able to log in and make adjustments. New families will have a welcome letter from School Dismissal Manager with information in regards to how everything works. Returning families have the same password and carline pickup number as last year. It is very important returning families update School Dismissal Manager with bus information as the number may have changed from last year.

If you have any questions, please email EricSandberg at [Eric.Sandberg@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:Eric.Sandberg@aspenacademymn.org).

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## School Calendar

Please take a look at our annual calendar! It's color-coded and highlights all the important dates. Click [here](#) (click blue word) to view it!

First days of school: MS - September 3rd, K-5 - September 4th

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## Student/Parent Handbook

Please take a moment to go through our Student/Parent Handbook. It provides crucial information for both your family and scholar(s).

You can access the handbook [here](#) (click blue word).



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## Uniforms

With summer upon us and fall on the horizon, please take a moment to review our Uniform Guidelines before you begin your back-to-school shopping. We have also created a new PowerPoint for families, which includes helpful links to make shopping easier.

Please note that there are new changes to the layering options and pants!

Questions? Reach out to Lydia Theis, [Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:Lydia.Theis@aspenacademymn.org)

[Uniform PDF](#)

[Uniform PowerPoint](#)

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## Aspen After School Activities

Explore our Exciting After-School Activities!

Take a peek at the PDF below to see what we have in store for our 5-week Fall session, running from the week of September 9th through the week of October 7th. There's something fun for everyone!

Payment Options:

- Online: <https://orgsonline.com/> (Under the Enrichment Module)
- Checks: Please make them payable to Aspen Academy.
- Cash: Drop it off at the front office.

Note: If you are paying online, by check, or by cash, and your scholar is going to participate in basketball, they will still need to drop off a paper copy of the completed Basketball Registration form at the front office.

We can't wait to see your child in one of our fantastic activities!

If you have any questions, please email Lydia Theis at [lydia.theis@aspenacademymn.org](mailto:lydia.theis@aspenacademymn.org).

[AAA PDF](#)

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## Medication Permission Forms and Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes and Seizure Action Plans

Physician medication permission forms are required for any student that takes medication at school including over the counter medications. These forms are renewed annually. Your physician may have their own form or please use the one included below,

which is also available on the school website.

If your child has asthma, anaphylactic allergies, seizures or diabetes please contact your doctor to obtain the appropriate action plan for school. Forms and medications should be brought to school on the school registration days.

If you have questions, please contact Gail Setterstrom RN LSN at [gail.setterstrom@aspennacademymn.org](mailto:gail.setterstrom@aspennacademymn.org)

**Medication Form**



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