

# 2023-2024

## Willmar Middle School - Student Handbook



### WELCOME TO WILLMAR MIDDLE SCHOOL

The entire staff of Willmar Middle School welcomes all students and parents as members of our learning community. Students attending WMS will share in the tradition of outstanding achievement, positive school spirit, and a sense of belonging.

This handbook includes information about the major components and expectations of student life at WMS. Your teachers and all staff members are here to give you the best education possible. If we all work together, we can ensure that your learning experience here will be a positive one.

Mark Miley, Principal  
Amy Sack, Assistant Principal  
Jennifer Sabol, Assistant Principal



# Contact Information

- [Willmar Middle School Website](#)

- [Willmar Public Schools Website](#)

- **Main Line**

320-214-6000

- **Attendance Line**


320-214-6006

- **Mailing Address**

209 Willmar Ave SE  
Willmar, MN 56201



# WMS Belief Statements

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1. We believe that high quality instruction provided by caring staff will improve student learning.
  2. We should constantly seek to increase our capacity to accommodate the needs of all learners.
  3. We believe that successful learning is possible for all students.
  4. We believe professional decisions should be based on both past practice and valid research data.
  5. We believe that students should face the natural and logical consequences of their actions.

All of the above are possible under the conditions created by a three-way partnership between the school, the parents, and the students.



# 2023-2024 DISTRICT CALENDAR

| AUGUST 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S           | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|             |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6           | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13          | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20          | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27          | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

| SEPTEMBER 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S              | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|                |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3              | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10             | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17             | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24             | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| OCTOBER 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
| 1            | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8            | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15           | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22           | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29           | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |

| NOVEMBER 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|               |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5             | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12            | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19            | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26            | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |

| DECEMBER 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|               |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3             | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10            | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17            | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24            | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31            |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| JANUARY 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|              | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7            | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14           | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21           | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28           | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |

| FEBRUARY 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|               |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4             | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11            | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18            | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25            | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |    |    |

| MARCH 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S          | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|            |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3          | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10         | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17         | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24         | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31         |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| APRIL 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S          | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|            | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7          | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14         | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21         | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28         | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    |

| MAY 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S        | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|          |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5        | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12       | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19       | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26       | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |

| JUNE 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2         | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9         | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16        | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23        | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30        |    |    |    |    |    |    |

| JULY 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7         | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14        | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21        | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28        | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |

## KEY DATES

Aug. 21 & 25 \_\_\_\_\_ New Teacher Induction  
 Aug. 22 - 24 \_\_\_\_\_ Standard Based Learning Teacher Workshop Days  
 Aug. 28 - 31 \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Workshop (PreK-12)  
 Sept. 4 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Labor Day (Holiday)  
 Sept. 5 \_\_\_\_\_ First Day of School (6-12)  
 Sept. 7 \_\_\_\_\_ First Day of School (K-5)  
 Oct. 18 \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Teacher Conferences (K-8);  
 NO SCHOOL for K-8 students only  
 Oct. 19-20 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Fall Break  
 Nov. 3 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Term 1  
 Nov. 15 \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Development; 2 - hour late start for students  
 Nov. 22 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Teacher Conference Comp Day  
 Nov. 23 - 24 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break  
 Dec. 6 \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Development; 2-hour late start for students  
 Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Winter Break  
 Jan. 2 \_\_\_\_\_ School Resumes  
 Jan. 15 \_\_\_\_\_ PreK-12 Teacher In-Service; NO SCHOOL for students  
 Jan. 19 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Term 2  
 Jan. 31 \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Development; 2 hour late start for students  
 Feb. 16 \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Teacher Conferences (K-12); NO SCHOOL for students  
 Feb. 19 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Standards Based Learning Teacher Workshop Day  
 Mar. 22 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Term 3  
 Mar. 25 - 29 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Spring Break  
 Apr. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ School Resumes  
 Apr. 10 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Teacher Conference Comp Day  
 May 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Development; 2-hour early dismissal for students  
 May 27 \_\_\_\_\_ NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day (Holiday)  
 May 30 \_\_\_\_\_ Last Day for Seniors  
 May 31 \_\_\_\_\_ End of Term 4  
 June 2 \_\_\_\_\_ WHS Commencement  
 June 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Standards Based Learning Teacher Workshop Day  
 June 4 \_\_\_\_\_ PreK-12 Teacher Work Day

NOTE: Inclement weather days will be e-learning days and in June (if additional days are needed).

NO SCHOOL

Late Start/Early Dismissal



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Throughout the day, student information will be displayed on the television monitors in the hallway and cafeteria. This information includes, but is not limited to, extra-curricular information, lunch menus and important upcoming dates.

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## **ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL**

Our day begins at 8:00 at Willmar Middle School. Students who arrive at school before 7:30 will wait in the entryway. At 7:30 students will report to the following areas:

- **6<sup>th</sup> grade**- cafeteria: iPads will be distributed and breakfast served at 7:45 am.
- **7<sup>th</sup> grade**- gymnasium
- **8<sup>th</sup> grade**- academic hallways

Students should report to their first hour class when released from their supervised areas.

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## ATTENDANCE

Learning is increased by regular attendance. Students have the responsibility to maintain punctual, regular attendance. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to work cooperatively with the school and to inform the school in the event of a student's absence.

In Minnesota, if a student is absent from school, without a valid excuse, they are considered truant. Some important points about this definition are:

1. A student does not have to be absent for an entire day to be considered truant. The school reserves the right to determine if an absence is excusable.
2. Valid excuse from attendance at school is limited by the State of Minnesota to the following:
  - a. Illness, verified by the parent or guardian. A physician's verification will be needed after the tenth illness.
  - b. Health appointments, verified by a note from the visited professional, stating the date and time of the visit
  - c. An extreme family emergency, at the discretion of the school principal
  - d. Religious observance i.e., funeral, wedding, etc.
  - e. Appearance in court, verified with proper documentation

When your child is absent please refer to the following;

- ❖ Call the **Attendance Office** answering service available 24 hours a day at **320-214-6006**. If you would like homework, make the request at this time. All requests should be made by 10:30 a.m.
- ❖ When reporting an absence, please include the following information:
  1. Child's name
  2. Date of absence
  3. Reason for absence
  4. Name of person reporting the absence
- ❖ Homework can be picked up in the office between 2:30 and 3:45 p.m.
- ❖ If you do not have a phone, parents may send a signed note with your child when he/she returns to school or come directly to the school office to report the absence.
- ❖ Parents or guardians who choose to have their son or daughter absent from school for an extended period of time must make prior arrangements with school administration.

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## **ATTENDANCE - MAKE-UP WORK**

Arrangements for make-up work are to be made with each teacher. For pre excused absences, make-up work will be arranged with each teacher prior to the period of absence. An incomplete will be placed on the report card for work not made up.

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## **ATTENDANCE -TARDINESS POLICY**

If you are tardy to 1st hour, you should report directly to the student service desk for a pass. Oversleeping, missing the bus, or not having a ride to school will be considered an unexcused tardy. Although our school day begins at 8:00 am, students need to arrive by 7:55 am to allow time to go to their lockers. Morning tardy passes will be issued beginning at 7:57 am. If you are tardy between classes, you are to go to your next class rather than report to the office for a pass. Arriving to class on time is important so that you do not miss out on learning.

1. Students who receive 10 or more tardies during the term a WMS dance/activity night is being held will not be allowed to attend. Each term will be a fresh start.
  2. Parent meetings are set up with administration if a student is tardy more than 15 times in a term.
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## **ATTENDANCE - UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

**Three Unexcused Absences:** Students are referred to the Kandiyohi County Truancy Mediation Program, other appropriate agencies may be notified, and alternative placement may be made.

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## **BULLY PREVENTION**

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and or a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, the school intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond to, and to remediate, and discipline for those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation, and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior. (Please refer to Policy 514 on the District Website for more details).

Students, staff and parents may report bullying to WMS staff or by using our confidential **Bully Prevention Hotline (320)214-6003**.

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## **BUS SAFETY**

Buses will load and unload on the north side of the building according to the plan established by the bus manager. Each year, our students participate in bus safety week. During that week, Willmar Public Schools' Bus Transportation is



reviewed and a Bus Safety Test is administered.

Please refer to *Bus Safety Competencies* at the end of the handbook for more information.

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## CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE

Students who have a change of address or telephone number during the school year are to report the change to the Guidance Office immediately at 214-6012. If you move in or out of School District No. 347, report this change to the office. Additionally, proof of address is required before the change can be finalized. **It is of the greatest importance to report the correct school district in which you live.**

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## CLOSED CAMPUS

This means that students may not leave the school grounds after they arrive in the morning without a pass. This includes walking to Cashwise, DQ, Burger King or other area businesses.

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## CONDUCT OF STUDENTS

Students of the Willmar Public Schools will be expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will reflect credit upon themselves and their school. They will be expected to show respect for all school personnel and fellow students, and for both public and individual property. District policy will be referenced and followed for any serious misconduct while lesser offenses will be at the discretion of the principal.

Please refer to [District Policy 506](#)

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## **COUNSELING/SOCIAL WORKER SERVICES**

Our school is proud of its guidance and counseling programs. Services offered are social and emotional, academic, and career counseling and guidance.

In addition, the counselor or school social worker can assist in referrals to other agencies. Students wishing to see the counselors or social worker are encouraged to stop by and sign up for an appointment.

The Guidance Office telephone number is **214-6012**. The telephone number for the school social worker is **214-6015**.

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## **DRESS AND GROOMING**

Dress, grooming, and appearance should not interfere with or disrupt the educational process, distract from school

activities, or provide a hazard to students' safety or to the safety of others. The following are not allowed:

1. Hats, hoods, capes, and coats, except in extenuating circumstances.
2. Clothing with abusive, suggestive, or exploitive language or symbolism or reflecting gang affiliations.
3. Clothing which allows undergarments and/or midriffs to be seen.
4. Skirts and shorts that have an inseam less than 7 inches.
5. Hair covering the eyes.
6. Sunglasses, unless medical documentation is provided.

If the administration believes a student's appearance, grooming, or mode of dress interferes with or disrupts the educational process or school activities or poses a threat to the health or safety of the student or others, the student will be directed to make modifications or will be sent home for the day. A parent or guardian will be notified.

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## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, ETC.**

The school is concerned for the health, safety, and well-being of the students, and about the problem of alcohol and drug abuse by some elements of the community; further, the school recognizes that the use, possession, distribution, or sale of alcohol or dangerous, illegal, or controlled substances constitutes a hazard to students and a disruptive effect on the school.

Thus, the student use, possession, distribution, or sale of alcohol or dangerous, illegal, or controlled drugs or drug paraphernalia is prohibited in all schools, on school grounds at school-sponsored activities, on student trips, or when students are being transported in vehicles dispatched by the district.

Students selling, in possession of, or under the influence of any of the above will be subject to immediate suspension and other disciplinary action deemed necessary to maintain a safe environment (i.e. referral to law enforcement, expulsion.)

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## **ELECTRONICS**

Students shall turn off and place in their lockers any and all electronic devices upon arrival to school. They may use these items at the end of the school day. Failure to follow this policy will result in the confiscation of the item. Parents will be expected to pick these items up at the main office.

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## **FEES**

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own pencils, pens, paper, erasers, notebooks, and other personal items. Students may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including (not an inclusive list):

- Admission fees or charges for extracurricular activities, where attendance is optional and where the admission fees or charges a student must pay to attend or participate in an extracurricular activity are the same for all students, regardless of whether the student is enrolled in a public or a home school.
- Cost for materials for a class project that exceeds minimum requirements and is kept by the student.
- Security deposits for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- Personal physical education and athletic equipment and apparel.
- Items of personal use or products that a student has an option to purchase such as student publications, class rings, annuals, and graduation announcements.
- Field trips considered supplementary to the district's educational program.
- Admission fees or costs to attend or participate in optional extracurricular activities and programs.
- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Use of musical instruments owned or rented by the school district.
- A school district-sponsored driver or motorcycle education training course.
- Transportation to and from school for students living within two miles of school.
- Transportation of students to and from optional extracurricular activities or post-secondary instruction conducted at locations other than school.

Students will be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact the building principal.

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## **GANG AWARENESS**

Clothing, writing, hand signs reflecting gang affiliations will be dealt with accordingly:

1st Offense - Conference with student. Parent is notified.

2nd Offense - Dismissed for the day. Parent is notified.

3rd Offense - Conference with student. Two-day out-of-school suspension. Parent is notified.

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## **HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE PROHIBITION**

The school district strives to maintain a learning and working environment free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

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## **HAZING PROHIBITION**



Willmar Public Schools Definition: “Hazing” means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, including initiating or harassing students by means of horseplay, practical jokes, or other acts often in the nature of humiliating or painful ordeals.

Examples of hazing may include but are not limited to:

- a. 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 to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or for any reason.
- b. taping, marking, name-calling

“Student organization” means a group, club, or organization having students as its primary members or participants.

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## **HOMEWORK/PRACTICE/GRADING**

- The assignments we give have value for learning and are attached to goals and standards.
  - The homework we give is relevant to improve, practice, or review learning goals and standards.
  - We only grade assignments that have value for learning and are connected to learning goals and standards.
  - Reteaching as well as redoing and retesting are necessary to ensure student success.
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## **ILLNESS WHILE IN SCHOOL**

If you become ill while in school, ask your teacher's permission to go to the nursing service. The school nurse will help you decide what will be best for you. If the school nurse is not in, report to the principal's office. Under no circumstances, may you leave the building without receiving proper clearance from the school nurse or the principal.

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## **LOCKERS**

A numbered locker with a permanent combination lock will be assigned to you when you register. We strongly urge you **not** to share your combination with anyone.

1. Under Minnesota law, school lockers are school district property. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for students' convenience. School officials may inspect the interior of lockers for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Students' personal possessions within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials will provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched, unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

2. Excessive slamming of the doors and abuse to lockers result in damage. Lockers should be kept neat and clean. Stickers or other items are usually permanent and are damaging to lockers. Students may be fined for damage caused to their lockers.

3. Students are not allowed to share lockers.

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## **MEDICATIONS**

No medication of any kind can be dispensed by the office staff. Medication should be brought to school in containers appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician with the name of the student, medication, dosage, and time to be administered. Written permission should be provided by the parent or guardian requesting the school comply with the orders of the physician regarding the medication. Only prescription medication as indicated above will be administered by school personnel.

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## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The school district is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, or age in its programs and activities. The school board has designated Liz Windingstad, HR director, as the district's human rights officer to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination.

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## **NOTICE OF VIOLENT BEHAVIOR BY STUDENTS**

The school district will give notice to teachers and other appropriate school district staff before students with a history of violent behavior are placed in their classrooms. Prior to giving this notice, district officials will inform the student's parent or guardian that the notice will be given. The student's parents/guardians have the right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

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## **OFFICE HOURS**

Office hours are between 7:15 am and 4:00 pm. The number is 214-6000. Individual teachers can be contacted via phone or email; all contact information is listed on the [District Web Site](#).

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## **PARENT RIGHT TO KNOW**

If a parent requests it, the school district will provide information regarding the professional qualifications of his/her child's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional licensing status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
4. whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, the school district will provide parents with information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments. The school district will provide notice to parents if their child has been assigned to, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

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## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

WMS students are required to wear uniforms during all Physical Education classes. The PE uniforms (shirts and shorts) will be provided by the school and will be paid for out of the student's registration fee.

All students are expected to participate in Physical Education. If an injury or illness prevents a student from participation, a doctor's note is required. Swimming is a valuable skill and all students are expected to participate. If a student cannot

swim for personal reasons, a parent note is required for exemption.

Each student is assigned a locker in the locker room. It is the student's responsibility to keep personal belongings locked up at all times. The middle school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

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## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Students will recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America weekly. Any person who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice. Students will also receive instruction in the proper etiquette toward, correct display of, and respect for the flag.

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## **SEARCHES**

In the interest of student safety and to ensure that schools are drug free, district authorities may conduct searches. Students violate school policy when they carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions or store contraband in desks, lockers, or vehicles parked on school property. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item, the possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item(s) and, when appropriate, give the item(s) to legal officials for ultimate disposition. Students found to be in violation of this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and, when appropriate, the student may be referred to legal officials.



The personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

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## **STUDENT PICK UP**

Parents picking up students after school hours should do so in the circle drive in front (south) side of the school. The back (north) side is used for bus loading.

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## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND MATERIALS**

The school district's policy is to protect students' free speech rights while, at the same time, preserving the district's obligation to provide a learning environment that is free of disruption. All school publications are under the supervision of the building principal and/or sponsor. Non School-sponsored publications may not be distributed without prior approval.

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## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records are classified as public, private, or confidential. State and federal laws protect student records from unauthorized inspection or use and provide parents/guardians and eligible students with certain rights. For the purposes of student records, an "eligible" student is one who is 18 or older or who is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary

education. For more information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students regarding student records, see “Student Records” (*Appendix 3*). A complete copy of the school district’s “Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records” policy may be obtained at [www.willmar.k12.mn.us](http://www.willmar.k12.mn.us).

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### **STUDENT SURVEYS**

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students. For complete information on the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students about conducting surveys, collection, and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical examinations. A complete copy of the school district’s “Student Surveys” policy may be obtained at [www.willmar.k12.mn.us](http://www.willmar.k12.mn.us).

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### **TOBACCO/VAPING**

MN Statute 144.4165: No person shall at any time smoke, chew, otherwise ingest tobacco, or carry or use an activated electronic delivery device in a public school, or on public school grounds. Students selling, in possession of, or under the influence of the above will be subject to disciplinary action deemed necessary to maintain a safe environment.

Minimum Action: notification of police who will issue a citation and notification of parents/guardians.

Maximum Action: repeated violations may result in suspension or expulsion.

## VISITORS

All visitors are required to check in at the Student Services Desk. All visitors to WMS will receive a visitor's badge and are required to wear it throughout their visit.

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### School Nutrition Programs (Breakfast and Lunch)

The Willmar Middle School has a closed lunch period. Students must have a student Personal Identification Number (PIN Number) to eat in the cafeteria. Breakfast and Lunch Menus are planned by the Director of Food and Nutrition Services, Assistant Director, and Head Cooks at each site. Input for menus is received from students, parents and school staff. Menus are planned to meet the Meal Pattern Requirements for Breakfast and Lunch established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Our goal is to serve quality, nutritious meals to all students and to encourage healthy eating habits. **Please let us know by calling 231-231-8473 if your child has any special dietary needs.**

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### PIN Numbers:

Each Student has their own PIN Number that they are given at the start of their school career. Your student will use the same PIN number every school year. Students enter their PIN Number into a keypad, which is matched with a student photo. **Your PIN Number is confidential – please do not share this number with other students.**

**2022-2023 Pricing:**

Pricing:

|                     |           |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Breakfast - Paid    | No Charge |
| Breakfast - Reduced | No Charge |
| Breakfast - Free    | No Charge |
| Lunch - Paid        | \$2.25    |
| Lunch - Reduced     | No Charge |
| Lunch - Free        | No Charge |
| Milk                | \$0.40    |

Adult Price Meals    \$2.00 - Breakfast  
                              \$4.00 - Lunch  
(May Change Based on MDE Requirements)

Ala Carte Pricing    Price Range \$0.25-\$2.50

**Free and Reduced Meal Applications:**

**A new application MUST be completed EVERY YEAR (even if you received free and/or reduced benefits last school year)! Families are required to pay for meals eaten by their student(s) prior to the submission of an application or until the application is approved.**

Please help generate state aid for your school by completing the Application for Educational Benefits (Free and Reduced Price Meal Application) and return it to your school or to Food and Nutrition Services at WEAC.

**Every Free and Reduced Application the district received helps provide educational dollars for the school district to use in the classroom.**

You can get an application from your school office, District Office (WEAC) or online at [www.willmar.k12.mn.us](http://www.willmar.k12.mn.us). You can also complete the Application for Educational Benefits (Free and Reduced Meal Application) online through your Parent Portal Account.

**Meal Account Balances:**

We operate on a prepaid system, meaning that meal charging is not allowed by School Board Policy. Second meals and ala carte items must be paid for by depositing money into the student's meal account or the student having cash in hand before meals are served. It is very important to stay current on your meal account. **Students with a negative balance will not be allowed to charge 2<sup>nd</sup> meals or ala carte items to their account.**

**Managing Meal Account Payments:**

You have several options when it comes to managing the payment method on your meal accounts. Each student has their own meal account. **All payments will be distributed equally between your students unless you notify Food and Nutrition Services otherwise.**

**Parent Portal** – You will need a Parent Portal in order to make on-line payments. By signing up for Parent Portal you will be able to view the balance, check the activity of your student's meal account and make on-line payments. If you do not have access to the Parent Portal, please pick up an application at your student's school office or print one off from the District Website, under the Parents section, select Campus Portal, then scroll down to select the Parent Portal Activation Request.

**WEAC (District Office)** – You may drop off payments at our District Office between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday at 611 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Willmar, MN. In most cases this payment is applied immediately, but it can take up to 24 hours to be applied.

**WEAC (District Office) Drop Box** – We have a drop box located at the front of the building where you can drop off meal



payments anytime. In most cases all payments received by 9:30 a.m. will be on your student's account before Lunch, but it can take up to 24 hours to be applied so please plan accordingly.

**Student's School Office** – You may send money with your student to school. These funds need to be brought to the office before 9:00 a.m. in order to be entered on your student's account the same day. If your payment is received after 9:00 a.m. it will take up to 24 hours to be applied.

## **Auto Withdrawal**

### **Breakfast Option:**

Students and staff can access Breakfast in the Cafeteria or the classroom (if this option is available) each morning.

Students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are given time to eat Breakfast by grade level according to the school schedule.

### **Lunch Site Options:**

We hope to have all serving line choices available for SY 2023-2024 which may include: Two Main Lines with a Second Choice and an Alternate Line for an additional choice or Salad and/or Sandwich options. However, serving lines options will depend on

COVID-19 restrictions and food safety regulations.

Students may purchase a second meal at the current adult meal price or additional Ala Carte item price (prices vary).

**Snack Bar purchases are Cash Only.**

### **Meals from Home:**

The School District encourages parents, if you want to send a meal from home, to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value per the District's Wellness Policy.

The Policy can be found on the District Website under Policies.

If a Fast Food meal is brought in, the parent/guardian and child will eat in a designated area outside of the Cafeteria. If you bring a meal from home you may purchase milk for \$0.40 per carton.

### **Special Dietary Needs:**

If your child has any special diet needs, please have your medical provider fill out a special diet form and review our special Dietary Needs Policy found on the district website under our Food and Nutrition page.

Special diet forms do not need to be renewed annually unless something has changed.  
Lactose Reduced Milk will be provided upon receiving a written request from parents and/or guardians.  
Contact the Assistant Director of Food and Nutrition Services at 320-231-8473 with any questions.

**Unpaid Meal Charging Policy:**

The United States Department of Agriculture and Minnesota Department of Education, who oversee the School Nutrition Programs, require a copy of the school district's Unpaid Meal Charges Policy #534 be shared with you for your reference. Please find a copy on the following three pages. The School District's Unpaid Meal Charges Policy can also be found on the District's Website under Food and Nutrition Services, then Policies.

**For more information regarding School Nutrition Programs and forms you might need, please call the Food and Nutrition Services office at 320-231-8526, or email the district at [wpsfns@willmar.k12.mn.us](mailto:wpsfns@willmar.k12.mn.us).**

**Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure and Process**  
**[School Board Policy 522](#)**

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities, and it is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The school district is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

Any student, parent, or guardian having questions regarding the application of Title IX and its regulations and/or this policy and grievance process should discuss them with the Title IX Coordinator. The school district's Title IX Coordinator(s) is:

Elizabeth Windingstad, Human Resources Director  
320 231-8520, [windingstade@willmar.k12.mn.us](mailto:windingstade@willmar.k12.mn.us)  
Willmar District Office, 611 5th St. SW, Willmar, MN 56201

Questions relating solely to Title IX and its regulations may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator(s), the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or both.

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## **WEAPONS**

It is a violation of the policy of Independent School District #347 for any individual to knowingly or voluntarily possess, store in an area subject to one's control, handle, transmit, or use any instrument that is considered a weapon or destructive device or a "look-alike" weapon or destructive device in school, on school grounds, at school activities, at bus stops, in school vehicles, or entering upon or departing from school premises, property or events. Weapons and destructive devices will not be tolerated.

Any student found in possession of such weapons may be expelled for up to one calendar year.

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## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

A student planning to withdraw from school for any reason must bring a written statement from the parents or guardian to the Guidance Office. He/she will then be given a withdrawal form. This form must be signed by all of the student's teachers and the Media Center before being returned to the office. Refunds and unpaid fines or fees will be considered at this time. Upon leaving the school in good standing, the student will be given a transfer letter for admittance to the next school.

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## **BUS SAFETY COMPETENCIES**

1. TRANSPORTATION IS A PRIVILEGE NOT A RIGHT. (M.S. 123.801) \*A student's eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies.

2. THE SCHOOL BUS IS AN EXTENSION OF THE CLASSROOM. \*District conduct and discipline policies apply to the school bus and to bus stop areas as well as to school buildings and grounds.

3. APPROPRIATE CONDUCT WHILE ON THE BUS.

- \*Be on time.

- \*Stay out of the "Danger Zone."

- \*Follow the driver's and monitor's instructions.

- \*Always stay seated.

- \*Be courteous. No fighting, swearing, or yelling.

- \*No eating or drinking.

- \*Keep the bus clean. Do not damage the bus.

- \*Keep your hands and arms inside the bus windows.

- \*No pets or dangerous objects allowed on the bus.

- \*Windows are not to be lowered below the black safety line indicated on each bus.

4. THE DANGER ZONE

- \*The "Danger Zone" is the area within 10 feet of the bus.

- \*The two areas which are the most dangerous, due to limited driver visibility, are the right rear and the front of the bus.

5. PROCEDURES FOR SAFELY BOARDING AND LEAVING THE SCHOOL BUS.

- \* Be on time.

- \*Always line up single file to board (no pushing or shoving.

- \*Do not approach the bus until the driver opens the door.

- \*Use the handrail.

- \*Take one step at a time.

- \*Be seated quickly.

- \*Remain seated until the bus stops at your stop.

- \*Walk to the door.
- \*Use the handrail.
- \*Take one step at a time.
- \*Move out of the “Danger Zone.”
- \*If you must cross the street, wait for the driver’s instruction or signal.
- \*Go directly home.

6. PROCEDURES FOR THE SAFE CROSSING OF VEHICLE LANES.    \*Move away from the side of the bus (if you can touch the bus, you are too close.)

- \*As you move away from the bus, move to a point at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- \*Turn toward the driver and make eye contact (see that the driver sees you.)
- \*Wait for the driver to signal you that it is safe to cross (either by the public address or by hand signal.)
- \*Walk 10 feet in front of the bus, stopping to check for vehicles that might violate the stop arm.
- \*When it is safe, complete the crossing.

## 7. SCHOOL BUS EVACUATIONS AND OTHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

\*There are three different evacuation plans:

- a. using only the front service door
- b. using only the rear (or side) emergency door
- c. using both the service door and emergency door
  - \*All students should know the location and basic function of the emergency equipment
  - \*In a real emergency, students should leave personal belongings on the bus.
  - \*Students should gather in a group in a safe area about 100 feet away from the bus



## Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

### Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

### Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student's achievement, but your student's participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student's school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota's implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered "proficient."
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

### Academic Standards and Assessments

#### What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

#### What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science.</li> <li>Majority of students take the MCA.</li> <li>MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li> </ul> | <p><b>ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.</li> <li>Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.</li> <li>Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs. • Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

### Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

### Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

### What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level.

Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

### When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

### When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

### How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

### Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

### Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](https://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

## Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

*To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required **each year** parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.*

Date (This form is **only** applicable for the 20 to 20\_school LJGÄd□

Student's Legal First Name\_Student's Legal Middle Initial

Student's Legal Last Name Student's Date of Birth

Student's District/School,Grade

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](#)

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide ĀĚĚĜĚŵĜŸİ;Ě you are opting the student out of this school year:

- MCA/MTAS ReadingMCA/MTAS Science
- MCA/MTAS MathematicsACCESSAlternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state’s efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered “proficient.”

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name ;ĐđšŸİ

Parent/Guardian Signature

To be completed by school or district staff only. Student ID or MARSS Number

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