

Woodbury Leadership Academy

Family Handbook

8089 Globe Dr. Woodbury, MN 55125 - 651-571-2100 - www.wlamn.org

Created 2023

LEADING THE WAY

OUR MISSION: The mission of WLA is to utilize leadership based programs and strategies grounded in solid research, combined with the demonstrated success of Core Knowledge curriculum as a basis of a rigorous overall educational program that builds strong skills in math, reading, literature, writing, music, science, and technology.

OUR VISION: The vision of WLA is to be a school where students and graduates become exceptional leaders, and are prepared to take on the academic and leadership challenges they will face as they transition into high school.

OUR PHILOSOPHY: WLA's academic philosophy is based upon The Core Knowledge Sequence developed by The Core Knowledge Foundation. WLA is dedicated to teaching solid academic content and skills to all children. Within Core Knowledge, many people, including staff and parents, engage in meaningful and thoughtful discussions.

WLA believes that there are universally important civic and ethical virtues that are the foundations of a free and democratic society, such as respect, responsibility, perseverance, humanity and gratitude.

INTRODUCTION: Welcome to Woodbury Leadership Academy (WLA), a Minnesota public charter school. We are glad that you have chosen WLA for your child's education. We hope this will be a rewarding and enjoyable year for everyone in your family. As a Minnesota public school, it is our responsibility to follow all rules and regulations that apply to all state public schools. This handbook has been prepared to share general information about our school and our policies and procedures with you. The handbook is only a starting place for two-way communication between the school and your home. It does not replace the personal contact that is needed to create a true partnership between the school and families, but we hope it will help in answering some of the ongoing questions that arise during the year. Our contact information can be found both in this handbook and on our school's website. We are available to answer any further questions you have about your students' school.

OUR JOURNEY

- 2014-2015 Established 200 students
- 2017-2018 New leadership & stabilized board. 240 students
- 2018-2019 Moved to 8089 Globe Drive & leased 1.5 floors of original building. 400 students
- 2019-2020 Obtained three floors of original building. 480 students
- 2020-2021 Increased enrollment even through COVID & bonding and expansion plans. 520 students
- 2021-2022 Completed bonding process & constructed 2nd building. 630 students
- 2022-2023 Construction completed & moved into 2nd building. 685 students
- 2023-2024 Complete outdoor spaces, begin search for new Executives Director 720 students projected

GENERAL INFORMATION:

OFFICE 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

SCHOOL DAY 9:20 am to 3:50 pm

SCHOOL OPEN 9:00 am to 4:05 pm

YMCA 6:30am to 9:05 am and 3:50 pm to 6:00 pm

Doors to the school are open to students that are dropped off by parents/guardians at 9am. All students are dismissed at 3:50pm. Only those students that are registered for the extended childcare program or have permission from one of the teaching staff and is in a supervised activity are allowed in the building prior to 9:05 am or after 4:05 pm. There is NO supervision for other students either before or after school.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors governs the school by setting the expectations and parameters that lead to higher levels of student achievement. The Board of Directors role (as a governing body) is to adopt goals, ensure accountability, evaluate results and adopt policies - acting as one voice. Among other things, the Board is responsible for compliance reporting, strategic goal-seeing, evaluating the school's Executive Director, curriculum development and overseeing the finances of the school.

If you are interested in serving on WLA's Board of Directors, please visit the school website for more information.

STUDENT INFORMATION

ADMISSIONS: Students admitted to WLA will be placed in the appropriate grade based on their age and previous schooling. Woodbury Leadership Academy will not accept a student for kindergarten unless they are at least five years old by September 1st of the school year in which they start kindergarten.

ENROLLMENT: WLA follows Minnesota State statutes including enrollment, lottery, sibling preference and utilizes wait lists. Please refer to Enrollment Admissions policy 538.

EXTENDED LEAVE: A student absent 15 or more consecutive days will be unenrolled. In order to be re enrolled upon return families need to have completed an extended leave of absence prior to leave.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Student success is directly correlated to attendance. In order for WLA to increase more student learning opportunities the following guidelines and procedures have been put into place.

- Contact the school office before 9am if your child will be tardy or absent.
- If notifying school outside of hours, leave your name, students name, students grade/teacher with a reason for the absence over voicemail or email.
- A doctor's slip may be required for any absence that is 3 or more consecutive days, or where excessive absences occur.
- If your student is tardy or absent 3 times in any 4 week period, you will be expected to attend a meeting with school administration.
- Continual truancy-absent 3 days in a row in a school year without valid excuse.
- Habitual Truancy-child under 16 years of age is absent without a lawful excuse for 7 consecutive days.
- If your child is a continual or habitual truant, a truancy notice will be sent to you in which you must verify the absence with a doctor's note or other documentation. If you fail to

comply with the policy, the school is obligated by law to report the case to Washington County Child Protection.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Sickness/Hospitalization
- Cultural Ritual
- Death in the family
- Death of a friend
- Death of a pet
- Birth/Adoption
- Other excuses may be discussed with school administrators

COMMUNICATIONS

WEBSITE: The school website shares information to parents/guardians about their school, staff and student opportunities. The school's website is www.wlamn.org

EMAIL: Teachers will let parents/guardians know the best ways to contact them at the beginning of the school year. Most teachers check e-mail regularly, but please note that they may not be able to respond immediately, as their primary focus during the day is the students. If you need to reach the school immediately, call the main office 651-571-2100

NEWSLETTER: Classroom teachers will send out a weekly newsletter every Thursday regarding updates in their classrooms, in the school and upcoming events.

PARENTVUE: ParentVUE is an app used by middle school teachers to share grades, attendance, and notes from teachers.

EMERGENCY CLOSING: In the event of a school closure, a 2-hour delay, or early dismissal for any reason, you will be notified as soon as possible via the school website, social media and on WCCO 830 AM, WCCO channel 4 and KARE 11. WLA will be announced; listen for Woodbury Leadership Academy.

CONFERENCES: Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year (Fall and Winter) providing an opportunity for parents to check-in with their student's teacher in regards to their progress in a more formal meeting.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

As a part of our focus on safety and academic excellence, students attending WLA are required to wear uniforms. The purpose is to minimize distraction, promote appropriate student behavior, alleviate peer pressure and promote and encourage school spirit. Please refer to Policy 540 Student Dress, Appearance and Uniform located on the school website for detailed information regarding requirements.

TRANSPORTATION

Busing is available for students who live in the school district boundary of ISD 622. WLA may bus to ISD 833 and/or the Woodbury city limits as possible. For more information, please contact the main school office at 651-571-2100. Students who reside outside these boundaries must find their own way to school.

Cars can drop off between 9:00-9:15 am and pick up between 3:50-4:15 pm.

Transportation changes need to be made by 3:00 pm. We do understand that emergencies happen and will work with you.

Questions regarding any transportation issues such as routes, stops, late buses can be directed to the WLA Main Office at 651-571-2100 or info@wlamn.org.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

(Policy 709)

All students in grades K-8 will participate in bus safety training at the beginning of the school year. Please review the following ten rules students will need to follow on the school bus:

- Be on time and be clear of the danger zone.
- Follow the Driver's instructions while driving.
- Remain seated and facing forward at all times.
- Head and arms must remain in the bus.
- Although cell phones are allowed, taking photos or recording is not.
- Be courteous to others on the bus.
- No drinking or eating on the bus.

- Take all personal items and trash when you exit the bus.
- No throwing objects in or out of the bus.
- Dangerous weapons or objects are not allowed on the bus.

Violation of School Bus Safety Guidelines: Any student that violates bus rules will be issued a Bus Conduct Report. This report is to notify parents/guardians of infraction in order for them to respond and aid in correcting the behavior. Repeated or serious infractions of rules may result in a student's removal from the bus for a period of time to be determined by the building administrators. Suspension can result in loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year, depending on the severity of the offense. Parent/Guardian will be contacted prior to a student's bus suspension and circumstances.

NUTRITION SERVICES

Research proves that daily food choices affect your health and how you feel. WLA will not be providing a hot breakfast/lunch service for this school year, but we encourage our families and students to make healthy eating choices.

Bringing Cold Lunch: When sending a bag lunch with your child, be sure to provide food that is nutritious, portable, easy for your child to manage and does not need heating. Microwaves are available for 6th through 8th graders. Refrigerators are not available.

Snacks for Birthdays/Class Parties: If choosing to send birthday snacks for birthdays or other class parties, we ask that you send healthy choices and preferably snacks that are individually wrapped.

SCHOOL SAFETY

WLA is committed to creating a safe environment for all students to ensure their well-being both physically and emotionally. Reports of bullying will be thoroughly investigated and WLA will discipline or take appropriate action against any person who is found to have violated this policy.

Bullying Policy 514: An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school property, school provided transportation or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student who interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of WLA or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or

employees. This policy also applies to an act of cyberbullying and cyber harassment regardless of whether such act is committed on or off school property and/or with or without the use of school resources. Acts of cyberbullying/cyber harassment include but are not limited to: teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, parent or other employee of WLA by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs, may constitute an act of bullying.

What is bullying?: “Bullying” means any repeated written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to a student or a group of students and which substantially interferes with another student's or students' educational benefits, opportunities, or performance. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, conduct by a student against another student or a group of students that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:

- harming a student or a group of students
- damaging a student's or a group of students' property
- placing a student or a group of students in reasonable fear of harm to person or property
- creating a hostile educational environment for a student or a group of students
- intimidating a student or a group of students

What to do if bullying is suspected?

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. For more information, see policy 514 on the school website.

OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY

Outside Preparedness: Students are to come to school with appropriate attire for all types of weather. At school students are expected to be outdoors for recess and other activities that may occur throughout the day. If students do not have appropriate clothing, they will be asked to stay inside. When temperatures drop below zero degrees or a wind chill below -10, students will not be going outside.

Walkers: Students that live within a 1-mile radius of school may choose to walk. Students that elect to walk must have written permission from a parent/guardian.

Bicycle Safety Guidelines: Students that ride their bicycles to school must have written permission from parents/guardians. Bicycles should be locked to prevent theft. Kindergarten students are not allowed to ride bicycles to school. First grade students are not permitted to ride unless a note is received from parent/guardians stating that the child has the physical skills, knowledge and good judgment necessary to ride a bicycle safely to school.

Photographing Students: WLA will keep a record of which students are not able to be photographed. Parents/guardians will need to fill out a release form at the beginning of the school year.

Technology: Cell phones and smart watches are not allowed during school hours.

Field Trips: Our classrooms are involved in one or more field trips during the school year. These trips are facilitated by the school to complement learning outside the school. School buses are used for field trip travel and are supervised by teachers and chaperones. Parent/guardian permission is required and a field trip slip will need to be completed prior to the trip. Students will not be able to attend a field trip unless a permission slip is on file. There may be a small fee to help defray the cost of field trips.

Volunteer Background Checks: WLA welcomes families and community members to come in and work with our students and teachers. In order to do so, volunteers will need to complete a background check, sign in at the main office and follow all school policies and procedures. Some volunteer opportunities include but are not limited to volunteering in the classroom, chaperone field trips, or working school events.

Building Visitors: Lunch visitors are welcome during the student(s) lunch time. Classroom visitors are welcome with pre approval from your student(s) teacher. All visitors are required to check in and out at the office.

Safety Drills: All schools are required to conduct safety drills throughout the school year. These include fire drills, severe weather and lock-down drills. Students may be evacuated and sheltered within the school. It is important to speak with your child about the importance of these drills. Familiarity with what to expect in the event a crisis should arise will help keep students safe and calm.

YMCA Care: WLA will be offering YMCA before and after school childcare. Childcare is offered on site before school from 6:30am until school starts and after school until 6:00pm. Please call 651.731.9507 for more information or visit our website at www.wlamn.org

Student Release: Student safety is a high priority at WLA, therefore whenever a parent/guardian/adult is picking up, they are required to come into the office to sign the student(s) out. If you need to pick up your child during the school day for an appointment or other appropriate reason, please call/email the office (info@wlamn.org or 651.571.2100). We will not release your student from school to anyone other than an authorized person unless we have received written consent from the custodial guardian.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents/guardians will be called to pick a student up who has a temperature above 100.4, diarrhea, vomiting, or a contagious disease. Please be sure we have your daytime phone number and at least one backup emergency number. If we are unable to reach you we will call county services. If a student is sent home for any of the reasons above, they may not return to school until they have been free of the condition for a minimum of 24 hours. THIS WILL BE ENFORCED IN ALL CASES.

Medications: School personnel are not authorized to administer any type of medication, including over-the-counter medication (such as Tylenol or cough syrup) unless the following conditions are met:

- We must have a medical form signed.
- For prescription medication to be given for longer than 2 weeks, we must also have a medical form signed by a physician
- Prescription medication to be given for less than 2 weeks must be brought to school in a pharmacy - labeled container and a permission form signed by parent/guardian.

Permission Forms may be picked up in the school office. Appropriate school personnel will supervise students taking medication according to the directions on the form. ALL medication, including non-prescription varieties, must be kept in the Health Office.

An Emergency Medical Plan form should be on file for any child with an existing medical problem and/or allergy (such as asthma, seizures, allergy to bee stings, etc.). 911 will be called to transport a seriously ill or injured child. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

Injuries/Illness at School: When minor injuries occur at school, trained school personnel will give first aid treatment. Parents/guardians will be called if there is a serious injury.

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

Tobacco: WLA is a tobacco/drug free environment. It is unlawful for a student under the age of 18 to possess or use any type of tobacco product. It is also unlawful for use of tobacco products on school property by either a student or an adult.

Controlled Substances or Alcohol: Contact with controlled substances or alcohol is detrimental to a student's growth and development. Being in possession, or under the influence of, controlled substances or alcohol on school property or at a school function will have serious consequences. This also includes the possession of related paraphernalia and the abuse of prescription and over the counter medications.

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

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

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

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Curriculum: WLA's academic philosophy is based upon The Core Knowledge Sequence developed by The Core Knowledge Foundation. The Core Knowledge Sequence is defined as "...a detailed outline of specific content and skills to be taught in language arts, history, geography, mathematics, science, and the fine arts. As the core of a school's curriculum, it provides a coherent, content specific foundation of learning, while allowing flexibility to meet local needs." It is our goal that every child at WLA makes a minimum of one year's academic growth in each of the areas above.

Report Cards: Parents/Guardians will receive report cards three times (early December, mid-March, end of school year) regarding their child's performance in school. In addition to these report cards, parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled to discuss students' progress and constructively discuss the child's rate of progress in school and other matters of mutual concern. If there are additional concerns during the year teachers will make every effort to keep parents/guardians informed regarding their child's progress.

Responsive Classroom Program: Responsive classroom is based on teaching and modeling behaviors where children can learn to care about themselves and how to treat others. Students will spend time learning and practicing values such as honesty, fairness and respect, as well as developing social skills such as cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. The program contains six central components that integrate teaching, learning and caring.

- Classroom Organization - Provides active interest areas for students, space for student-created displays of work, and an appropriate mix of whole-class, group and individual instruction.

- Morning Meeting - Provides students daily opportunity to practice greetings, conversations, and activities and motivates them to meet the academic challenges of the day ahead.
- Rules and Logical Consequences - are generated, modeled, and role-played with students, and become a cornerstone of classroom life.
- Academic Choice - all students take control of their own learning in a meaningful way, both individually and cooperatively.
- Guided Discovery - a technique that moves students through a deliberate and careful introduction to new experiences such as learning materials, areas of the room and routines; there is no assumption that students already know how to do something before they begin.
- Assessment and Reporting - an evolving process of mutual communication and understanding.

Testing: Students will be given several assessments throughout the academic school year which includes statewide, district, and classroom tests. Minnesota Comprehension Assessments (MCAs) are the required state tests that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards and also meet federal and state legislative requirements. Math and Reading is administered to students in grades 3-8 and Science is taken by students in grades 5 and 8. To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete a form from the Minnesota Department of Education and return to WLA. Form can be obtained from the school site or main office.

The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) and iReady? is a computerized adaptive test that helps teachers, parents/guardians and administrators improve learning for all students and make informed decisions to promote student academic growth. The MAP test is administered in grades K-8.

For a schedule of when district and statewide tests will be administered, please visit the school website calendar.

Special Services: WLA has developed systems designed to identify pupils with disabilities in kindergarten through eighth grade. Parents/guardians may request a special education evaluation at any time. In addition to receiving referrals from parents/guardians WLA has a referral process for teachers. Referrals include a discussion of the whole child to identify additional areas that may impact the child and be appropriate to include in a comprehensive evaluation. A special education case manager is assigned who schedules an Evaluation Planning meeting with the parents/guardians and other special education specialists who may be involved with the evaluation.

Who is eligible for special education services?

Students must meet specific eligibility criteria to qualify for special education services as defined by Minnesota Rule Chapter 3525. A team of professionals will evaluate students to determine if they qualify for one or more of the following disability areas:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Specific Learning Disability
- Developmental Delay
- Speech Language Disorder
- Emotional/Behavioral Disorder
- Visually Impaired
- Other Health Disorder

For more information on Special Services, please visit the school website or call 651.571.2100.

Our school policies are available on the school website and in the WLA main office.

