



# HEARTLAND LAKES COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BRAVE | WISE | CURIOUS

## Family Handbook 2025-2027

Revised August 2025

It all began as a dream....

*“To start a school is to proclaim what it means to be human,” Tom James wrote, and he continued with, “If you’re going to try to reform schools, restructure them, change them, you have to begin by imagining what a human being can be, then you map backwards from that and create a realm of experience in which people can really grow.”*

Tom James wrote these words in a proposal to the Harvard School of Education for a new kind of school in America, one based on the principles of Outward Bound, called Expeditionary Learning. The dream for Heartland Lakes Community School began in much the same way- a group of community members- parents, aunties, business

owners, educators, friends– dreaming of what a school could be, what a school should be, and mostly, what could be possible if the community adopted this dream and rallied around the idea of cultivating brave, wise, and curious people.

We did a little bit of research, and then a little more– we started making some lists, which became big lists, and then writing applications, and attending meetings, and somewhere in there– our dreams became plans. Foggy ideas in our mind became an actual building, empty bookshelves were filled with books, and our checklists grew. This thing that we’ve been working on for almost half a decade is finally happening!

But– one part of our dreams that we could only hope for up to this moment is what is happening right now-- as the families that will become Heartland Lakes Community School are welcomed into the circle for the first time. Our adventure has now truly begun!

Our vision for this school from the beginning was that this would be a place where families found their needs met, that could serve the community, and push the boundary on what we have traditionally thought was possible for students, for teachers, and for school. We wish for you to share in the dreams we have for our community, and hope to share in the dreams you have for your family with you. You are a part of the story now, and we can’t wait to see what the next chapter holds.

So– imagine that we are old friends, sitting down at a kitchen table together, talking about our kids, our ideas, and our hopes and dreams. That’s how this all started-- with getting curious, searching for wisdom, and ultimately, being brave.

We welcome you into this conversation we started so many years ago. Who knows what the future brings! Welcome to the journey.

Onward, crew!

## **Mission and Vision Statements**

### **Our Mission:**

Heartland Lakes Community School exists to empower students to bravely live their truth, to become wise stewards of the land and resources, and to ignite lasting

curiosity that leads to positive change in their school, their communities, their world, and themselves.

### **Our Vision for our Scholars:**

To empower students

- To be leaders of their own learning
- To make choices regarding their education

To bravely live their truth:

- By welcoming and celebrating families and staff of all backgrounds and identities
- Helping students explore other ways of being and examine how multiple perspectives align or digress from their own

To ignite lasting curiosity:

- Using a cross curricular approach, scholars will learn content and skills through exploring topics from multiple perspectives
- Giving student and teachers tools to ask questions and investigate their ideas

Positive change in their school, their community, and their world:

- HLCS believes in the importance of students becoming producers, rather than consumers
- Our scholars will be equipped to look for problems in their space that they would like to solve

Wise Stewardship of the land and resources

- Learning about and appreciating our natural surroundings in the north woods
- Gardening projects where we are able to use the harvested crop for a healthy breakfast or lunch
- Expanding education regarding the land as a collaboration with community organizations

### **Our Purpose:**

An emphasis on outdoor learning by using the environment with which we live and learn by utilizing both structured and unstructured outdoor learning spaces; we intend to be an expeditionary learning school where students work together on a specific project throughout the school year to achieve a common goal. HLCS will be a

smaller community school with smaller class sizes, which will lead to more individualized attention and care.

### **Our Guiding Philosophy:**

To develop and meet the needs of the whole child. Providing hands on learning experiences fostering curiosity and allowing students to discover their abilities, values, and passions. All members in the school community will strive to take responsibility in their learning, collaborate, and build mutual trust so all individuals feel safe and confident to take responsible risks. Our school will intentionally foster a space of inclusivity for all members.

## **Expeditionary Learning (EL) Education**

The ten Design Principles are our best short statement of the philosophy of education and core values of EL Education. Drawn from the work of Outward Bound's founder Kurt Hahn and other educational leaders, the principles focus our attention on what is important and give us something to return to when we need guidance.

Learning is an expedition into the unknown. Expeditions draw together personal experience and intellectual growth to promote self-discovery and construct knowledge. We believe that adults should guide students along this journey with care, compassion, and respect for their diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and needs. Addressing individual differences profoundly increases the potential for learning and creativity of each student. Given fundamental levels of health, safety, and love, all people can and want to learn. We believe expeditionary learning harnesses the natural passion to learn and is a powerful method for developing the curiosity, skills, knowledge, and courage needed to imagine a better world and work toward realizing it.

### **1. THE PRIMACY OF SELF-DISCOVERY**

Learning happens best with emotion, challenge, and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, "grand passions," and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. They must have tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A primary job of the educator is to help students overcome their fear and discover they have more in them than they think.

## **2. THE HAVING OF WONDERFUL IDEAS**

Teach so as to build on children's curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide matter to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed. Foster a community where students' and adults' ideas are respected.

## **3. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEARNING**

Learning is both a personal, individually specific process of discovery and a social activity. Each of us learns within and for ourselves and as a part of a group. Every aspect of a school must encourage children, young people, and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.

## **4. EMPATHY AND CARING**

Learning is fostered best in small groups where there is trust, sustained caring, and mutual respect among all members of the learning community. Keep schools and learning groups small. Be sure there is a caring adult looking after the progress of each child. Arrange for the older students to mentor the younger ones.

## **5. SUCCESS AND FAILURE**

All students must be assured a fair measure of success in learning in order to nurture the confidence and capacity to take risks and rise to increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important to experience failure, to overcome negative inclinations, to prevail against adversity, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.

## **6. COLLABORATION AND COMPETITION**

Teach so as to join individual and group development so that the value of friendship, trust, and group endeavor is made manifest. Encourage students to compete, not against each other, but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.

## **7. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Diversity and inclusivity in all groups dramatically increases richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and acceptance of others. Encourage students to investigate, value, and draw upon their own different histories, talents, and resources together with those of other communities and cultures. Keep the schools and learning groups heterogeneous.

## **8. THE NATURAL WORLD**

A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and reveals the important lessons of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the earth and of the generations to come.

#### **9. SOLITUDE AND REFLECTION**

Solitude, reflection, and silence replenish our energies and open our minds. Be sure students have time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections and create their own ideas. Then give them the opportunity to exchange their reflections with each other and with adults.

#### **10. SERVICE AND COMPASSION**

We are crew, not passengers, and are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others. One of a school's primary functions is to prepare its students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service to others.

The above principles have been informed by Kurt Hann's "Seven Laws of Salem" by Paul Ylvisaker's "The Missing Dimension," and by Eleanor Duckworth's "The Having of Wonderful Ideas" and other essays on Teaching and Learning (New York: Teachers College Press. Columbia University. 1987

## **Equal Opportunity Statement**

Heartland Lakes Community School is an Equal Opportunity Employer and educational provider. It is our policy to comply with all applicable Equal Employment Opportunity laws and regulations. Therefore, recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, discipline, compensation, benefits and all other employment or enrollment decisions will be made without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, status with respect to public assistance, or other protected class status.

## **Expectations for Families**

The goal of Heartland Lakes Community School is to be a cooperative enterprise: our families, teachers, students, director, and staff share the responsibilities and rewards of operating our school. Caregivers play essential roles in and out of the classrooms. Our families experience firsthand the school environment, become advocates for their

children, and enrich the school community with their ideas, interests, talents, and resources.

Family involvement is a key foundation of Heartland Lakes as families are essential partners in the education of our students. The school requires that all families support their children in learning at home and school, while also being involved in the development of the school.

## **Service Opportunities & Volunteer Background Checks**

We have plenty of opportunities for caregiver families and community members to join in and support our vision and work at HLCS. There are so many ways to get involved: everything from joining a class crew on a regular basis, serving as a volunteer on one or more field work or camp days, helping with an afterschool club, to sharing a special talent or interest with our scholars. If being behind the scenes is more your style, we often have building projects or work that requires heavy lifting as we make our school into a place that best serves our teaching and learning needs. Our Caregiver Advisory Committee will be meeting monthly to plan and discuss fundraising efforts and ensure that caregivers have an avenue for staying involved. All Caregivers are invited to join and attend meetings. Let us know!

For those who would like to volunteer to work in-person with our scholars, please let our admin team know in advance! Anyone actively volunteering in-person at the school for more than 15 minutes must undergo a background check, which can take several days to a week to complete. The background check is at no cost to the volunteer.

## **Family Engagement**

Family engagement is described as meaningful communication between a school and the families of the children attending school. Successful family engagement includes a commitment from both families and the school. The family commits to support their child's learning. The school commits to involve the family in their child's learning experiences.

According to research, students whose families are engaged in their learning experiences in a positive way show improved performance through all grades. This is regardless of the age of the child or the family's ethnicity, income or education level.

Children with families who are actively engaged in their learning—

- Adjust to school easier
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills
- Show improved attitudes and behavior at school and at home
- Have advanced language and math skills
- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Graduate from high school and go on to higher education

*Adapted from A New Wave of Evidence The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections of Student Achievement (2012) <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf> Common Core State Standards*

### **We are a teacher/student/home team: together we are CREW!**

We invite and strongly encourage families and students to be active crew members and we want your feedback. Administrators, teachers and others are expected to contact families for both positive reasons as well as concerns. We expect that families check in with teachers and show interest and concern for their child's learning. We expect our scholars to be responsible for their learning. Teachers interact, question, prompt, and set up physical and intellectual environments for students. We expect students to explore, wonder, hypothesize, create, and discuss their ideas about the world. We expect every member of our Crew to actively participate in the learning experience.

### **We need families to support their children with their learning**

We expect families to be aware and supportive of their child's engagement in the learning process. At times this may include supporting your child's efforts to complete assignments at home. We expect caregivers to let teachers know if their child is struggling with school work, or with any of the concepts they are learning at school.

Teachers may send home assignments home that are fun or explorative in nature, or that may require completing, revising, or redoing something that was started at school. If work is sent home, we expect each of our scholars to complete it, and turn it in on time.

Reading aloud at home is a wonderful way for caregivers to ignite and support their child's curiosity and learning. We have a small library at school and hope that caregivers explore our collection of books and even consider taking a book home to read aloud with their scholar.

### **Conferences**

Conferences are an essential part of maintaining open communication between HLCS and families. Conferences often involve student presentations of their work. Conferences will occur three times during the school year..

### **School Celebrations and Exhibitions**

Throughout the year, families are invited to participate in celebrations of learning. Students demonstrate and exhibit their work for an audience of peers and families at the conclusion of each learning expedition.

## **Visitor/Volunteer Guidelines**

**All persons visiting the school must sign in at our office.**

Family members are cordially invited and encouraged to attend school programs and visit with teachers and administrators. Even coming to school to share lunch with your scholar is a great way to be supportive of your scholar in their school environment. Our plan is to have more after school opportunities and clubs in which caregiver families are invited to either watch, participate in, or lead the activity. Please note: Active volunteers at the school are required to complete a background check to help ensure the safety of our scholars and staff. Volunteer forms are available or can be requested from our admin staff. There is no charge for these background checks.

## **Heartland Lakes Community School Expectations**

The behavior policies of the Heartland Lakes Community are intended to promote safety and learning for all crew members. Any behavior that detracts from this objective is deemed inappropriate. All policies are available on our website under 'board policies' and are available in hard copy at the front desk.

## General Expectations

- Heartland Lakes Community School (HLCS) bans weapons of any kind on our campus. See our Violence/Weapons Policy.
- HLCS will not tolerate any sexual harassment/assault, and such conduct will be disciplined as outlined in our Sexual Harassment Policy.
- HLCS will not tolerate any bullying behavior. See our Bullying and Prevention Response Policy.
- HLCS leases property from Riverside United Methodist Church. The buildings, structures, and grounds all belong to our host. Students must treat the property with respect. Any intentional damage done to this property will be the family's financial responsibility.
- Personal electronic devices are not to be used during school hours. It is highly recommended that students do not bring these items to school at all, and HLCS will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. If any personal electronic device is seen being used, it will be confiscated until the end of the school day. Chronic offenders will need a parent or guardian to pick up the device. This includes, but is not limited to speakers, tablets, gaming devices, and phones.
- Inappropriate music and literature will be confiscated. Examples of inappropriate music and literature include, but are not limited to, images or music that depicts graphic violence or is of a sexual nature, or that violates a school policy. However, any item, even if not necessarily inappropriate, brought from home that is causing a disruption to the learning day may be confiscated.
- Toys are not to be brought to school, unless special arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher. This includes fidget spinners (and other 'fidgets,' unless specified in a student's learning plan), stuffed animals, rubix cubes, trading cards, etc.
- Riding of bicycles is only allowed on approved/supervised class outings. Students must wear a helmet while riding.
- HLCS promotes a healthy lifestyle for all staff and students. We request that students do not bring soda, coffee, smoothies, energy drinks, or candy for a snack. They will only be allowed to have these items as part of their cold lunch. As a reminder, these items are also not allowed on the bus. If students have soda or candy at times other than for their cold lunch, they will be asked to put it in their backpacks or to throw the items away.
- HLCS believes that our mission is available to all, and includes a mandate to work towards a more accepting world for all people. We work actively to promote tolerance and acceptance throughout the school community in order to provide a safe, non-judgmental space for all of our students, regardless of

race, color, national origin, immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

## Community Caring Plan and Discipline Guidelines

HLCS focuses on developing a caring, supportive school community in which students participate fully in solving problems, including problems of behavior. We believe that students' growth toward kindness, respect and critical problem solving depends on becoming active members of a caring community. We further believe that it is the experience with decision-making and problem solving that enables children to handle conflicts that arise.

### **Supporting Positive Behavior**

HLCS staff teach and model expected schoolwide and classroom behavior in the first weeks of school, using their crew circle time to discuss learning targets, discuss readings, and participate in initiatives related to expectations. These expectations are revisited with individuals and whole crews as needed throughout the year.

Crews may develop Crew Contracts, co-written by students and teachers. These contracts explain how all members of the classroom will behave to ensure comfort, safety and success by all. HLCS staff use common language with all HLCS students when discussing school-wide and classroom expectations.

When students do not adhere to school-wide and/or classroom expectations, HLCS staff attempt to determine what has happened and why by asking restorative questions (listed below) and listening to answers.

### **Examples of Restorative Questions:**

*Are you ready to talk right now?*

*What happened, and what were you thinking at the time?*

*Who has been affected by what happened and how?*

*What do you think needs to be done to make things as right as possible?*

*What strategies can you use next time?*

*What have you thought about this since we last talked?*

*What is your job right now?*

*Do you need help doing your job?*

In all disciplinary matters, students will be given notice and will have the opportunity to present their version of the facts and circumstances leading to the disciplinary actions to the staff member involved and/or the administrator.

All responses to inappropriate student behavior include elements of teaching or re-teaching appropriate school behavior and restoration of relationships affected by the student behavior.

Alternatives to removal from instruction will be used unless the behavior of the student places the student or others in danger, or the disruption to the educational environment can only be remedied by an automatic office referral, which the law may at times require. These alternatives to removal may include, but are not limited to:

- Reminders of school or classroom rules and behavior expectations
- Redirection of behaviors
- Modification of instruction
- Re-teaching expectations and skills
- Student-teacher restorative conferences
- Self-charting of behaviors
- Role play
- Small group instruction, or lessons on anger management with conflict resolution instructors.
- Parent contacts

Opportunities for students to repair relationships affected, or harmed by their behavior, will be offered as part of the response to behaviors that do not result in a removal from the classroom.

Opportunities for students to repair relationships affected or harmed by their behavior will be included in the return to classroom for any student removed. These opportunities may include, but are not limited to:

- Restorative conference with the teacher or director.
- Apology of action/ Community Service
- Student/Parent restorative conference with school staff
- Community restorative/ accountability circle
- Reflective Essay

The following disciplinary actions may still be used in extreme cases or when required by law:

- Loss of school privileges

In-house suspension located in a quiet space in the school where the scholar can reflect, speak with the school director, and complete homework  
Suspension from extracurricular activities  
Modified school program  
Removal from class  
Referral to police or juvenile authorities  
Out-Of-School-Suspension/Expulsion  
Compensation for Property Damage

### **When Will Automatic Office Referrals Be Used?**

The following behaviors will result in an automatic office referral, so other steps will be skipped. The student will be sent directly to the administrative offices. Parents and/or guardians will be contacted directly by the administrator regarding such a referral. The administrator will copy the classroom teacher in these correspondences.

Abusive Language (language with the intent to harm)  
Physical Aggression with Intent to Harm  
Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing  
Possession of a Weapon (or look-alike)  
Threats to Injure or Harm  
Gross Disrespect or Defiance  
Possession of Alcohol, Drugs, or Tobacco  
Theft of Personal or School Property  
Vandalism to Personal or School Property  
Leaving School Property Without Permission  
Continuous or Persistent Behavior Adversely Affecting the Learning Environment

The community caring plan and discipline policy applies during normal school hours, as well as at extracurricular activities, fieldwork, and all other school sponsored or sanctioned programs. See Behavior Flow Chart and Recess Behavior Flow Chart in this handbook

### **Transportation ([Bus Transportation Form](#))**

HLCS contracts with ISD #309 for transportation, and as such, students fall under the purview of ISD #309's behavior policy when on the bus.

Safety is the first responsibility of the Transportation Department. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral standards while riding the school bus as are expected on school property or at school activities, functions or events. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right.

District 309 and Heartland Lakes Community School are dedicated to helping students understand the rules and regulations of bus riding so that they can retain the privilege of riding the bus and know that we have student safety as our main priority.

School District 309 in conjunction with HLCS shall provide students enrolled at Heartland Lakes Community School with school bus safety training. Upon completion of the training, a student shall be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the main tenets of bus riding. We ask our caregivers and scholars to be knowledgeable and aware of the following:

- Transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right.
- Following appropriate conduct while on the bus will be expected of all riders
- The 309 district bus transportation form must be completed in advance to ensure the safety and security of all bus riders
- 3rd grade scholars and younger must be received by a parent, caregiver, or guardian at drop-off.
- For safety and smooth coordination of all student transportation, drop-off and pick-up locations should remain consistent. District 309 is not able to accommodate weekly schedule changes
- District 309 policies for student conduct and school bus safety must be followed. HLCS coordinates and cooperates with District 309 in upholding these policies
- The danger zones surrounding the school bus must be known
- Procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing must be followed
- School bus evacuation and other emergency procedures will be practiced

## **Communication Model & Problem Solving Procedure**

**Communication Model:** The ultimate purpose of a communication model is to encourage the growth and development of Heartland Lakes Community School as a healthy community. Dealing with conflict is a part of any development or growth process and may arise in any community. An effective problem solving and conflict resolution process is therefore an essential component of the communication model.

The Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution Procedure is a model for all members of the Heartland Lakes Community School community and is designed to address issues among the following: between caregivers and staff, caregivers and administration, staff and administration, and staff and staff.

**Four Major Areas of Communication:** Conflicts may fall into one of four major areas (or may be a combination of these areas) as listed below.

1. Policies and Legal Issues

Current policies are available in the school office. Reviewing policies lends information that may at times solve a conflict. The Heartland Lakes Community School Board has final approval of all governance policies. Issues of policy should be addressed directly to the Heartland Lakes Community School Board.

2. Procedures/Daily Operations

The Director shall establish procedures designed to carry out the policies adopted by the Board. Procedures pertain to anything regarding the daily operations of Heartland Lakes Community School. An office staff member or the Director can clarify procedures. The Director serves as the primary administrator of the school. Any daily operations/procedural issues should be addressed directly to the Director.

3. Pedagogy

Pedagogical issues pertain to anything that occurs in the classroom, i.e. teaching, curriculum, classroom management, or teacher-student relationships. Pedagogical issues should be addressed directly to the class teacher.

4. Interpersonal Communication and Relationships

Concerns between people or communication breakdown should be directly communicated with the person(s) involved. In addition, communication and relationship issues can surface in conjunction with policy and procedural issues or pedagogical issues.

*The overall purpose of this procedure is to perpetuate a climate of collegiality, mutual trust and respect by resolving differences in a timely, objective, and equitable manner.*

If concerns or conflicts regarding policies and procedures, pedagogy, and or community members are not resolved after following the procedures described under “Four Major Areas of Communication,” direct communication lines should be employed.

These communication lines are the vehicles that Heartland Lakes Community School uses to resolve conflicts within the community as they arise. These pathways form a structure and process that encourage parties involved in a conflict to reach resolution. *It is emphasized that the first step in the resolution of conflicts in the community is direct communication with the involved parties.*

### **Problem-Solving Form**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Ground Rules for stating conflict in writing and in discussions:**

- Address the problem, don't attack the person
- State your needs and feelings with "I" statements
- Discuss the conflict when you are calm
- Focus on the stated problem
- Hear the other's needs and feelings
- Seek mutually beneficial solution

#### **State the problem/conflict:**

- What steps have you taken to try to resolve this issue?
- What are your needs and feelings regarding this problem?
- What do you want to have happen (include all options that would be acceptable to you)?
- What effect will this action have on others in the school and/or the school culture (costs/benefits)?

#### **Following the discussion:**

If this issue has not been resolved, what plan is there to help resolve it?

### **School Hours**

Students may begin being dropped off at school at 8:00 AM. Classes begin at 8:15 AM and end at 2:55 PM; at which time students may be picked up. Students are supervised by school personnel from the time they depart the bus in the morning until they board the bus or are picked up by caregivers in the afternoon. School personnel will be available to supervise students during all school-sponsored events.

If a child needs to be taken out of school during school hours, **caregivers must first check in at the office to sign out the child.**

**We do not have staffing to supervise students before 8:00 am or after 3:00 pm. Please make pick up/drop off arrangements accordingly.**

## **School Closing/Late Starts**

School closings/late starts are announced through direct communication using automated email, text and phone calls (be sure contact information is updated in JMC), posted on our website, posted to social media, and to other local news/social media outlets. Please make it a point to check with these options for school closing and early dismissal announcements in the event of severe weather conditions.

## **Appropriate School Clothing**

It is the policy of Heartland Lakes Community School (HLCS) to encourage students to be dressed appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards. This is a joint responsibility of the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

**Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

1. Shoes or boots worn indoors and outdoors at all times
2. Clothing appropriate for the weather.
3. Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
4. Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e., fieldwork or the classroom).

**Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:**

1. Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
2. Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
3. Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on

clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in HLCS's Harassment and Violence Policy

4. Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.

**Students should dress comfortably and for the weather.** Not having the right clothing is not an excuse to skip out of outdoor activities. We go outside for recess, learning opportunities, and other outdoor activities until it is colder than -10 below windchill. We will still go outside in the rain unless there is a downpour or lightning is present. Students should be prepared to navigate these conditions by wearing appropriate gear! Learning about nature and the outdoors can best happen when we are experiencing all seasons. We embrace this opportunity and see the many advantages of scholars learning in nature, from nature, and about nature in this way.

Appropriate gear for all students is as follows:

Above 50°

Long sleeves are recommended but not required.

Between 45° - 50° windchill

Long sleeves must be worn. Hat & mittens not required.

Between 44° - 32° windchill

Coats must be worn, hat & mittens not required, but recommended.

Below 32° windchill

Coats must be worn and zipped.

Hats & gloves must be worn. Coat hoods may count as a hat.

K/1 students are required to wear snow pants and boots.

Snow pants and boots are required to play in the snow for all students in K-5.

Snow pants and boots are recommended for 6th and 7th graders when playing in the snow.

Students are allowed to wear hats and have their hoods up, but their face and eyes must be able to be seen. Students may be asked to remove their hats or hoods for certain situations.

Administration reserves the right to ask a student to change or remove clothing that is in violation of these goals and guidelines, at any time.

## **Student Use of Phones**

Student calls are limited to emergency calls only. If students need to make a call, **they should come to the office and a school administrator will help facilitate their call.** **Students will not be called out of class to answer phone calls.** A message will be taken for the student.

**Student cell phone use is not permitted during the school day.**

## **Attendance: Notice of Absence to School**

We cannot stress too greatly the importance of our students being in school everyday and on time, if they are to achieve the greatest success in their work. Regular attendance is expected of all students. It is impossible to completely make-up for everything that is missed, especially in an expeditionary learning school.

A typical school day is filled with learning that is not limited to books: i.e. group projects, discussion, lab work and project work. Paperwork can be made up; but the valuable learning opportunities cannot.

That being said, when children are sick, they should stay home from school.

If your child will be absent or tardy, email HLCS attendance ([attendance@heartlandlakescs.org](mailto:attendance@heartlandlakescs.org)) before 9:00 am. We will be setting up automatic messages to go out to families if a scholar is not at school by 9:00 a.m. and we have not received absence notification through the proper channels. **Absences will only be excused on the day of the absence.**

If a student has missed three consecutive days due to illness, parents must provide a Doctor's note in order for the absences to be excused. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the school in order to excuse any absence. If no contact is made, the absence is automatically recorded as an unexcused absence.

If a student has 3 unexcused absences during a semester, contact is made with the family either through a letter or phone call. If a student reaches 7 unexcused absences during a trimester, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, teacher and director to discuss an action plan to improve attendance.

If a student reaches 15 absences in a school year, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent, teacher, and director to consider whether retention is necessary due to poor attendance.

If attendance continues to be an issue, we are obligated to contact agencies including, but not limited to: Department of Human Services, County Attorney, Public Health, and Juvenile Court Services.

Please keep in mind that the state requires us to report on students who have more than 7 unexcused absences, and they would call this level of absenteeism 'chronically absent' or 'truant.'

**Other consequences may result from absences, including loss of privileges or opportunities to attend class trips or other activities, depending on how much class work may be missing.**

## Tardy

Please make every attempt to have your child at school on time. **Classes begin at 8:15 a.m. This means your child should be with their crew at that time. *Every student that arrives late to school must be checked in at the office by their caregiver.*** Students arriving at school after 8:15 a.m. until 9:45 a.m. will be recorded as tardy. Students arriving after 9:45 a.m. will be counted absent for ½ a day. **Three unexcused tardies will equal 1 unexcused absence. It is not acceptable to just drop your child off late and not accompany them into the school and check them in. This is for your child's safety and our awareness that your child is on campus.**

## Illness or Injury at School

If students are injured or become ill at school, they are to report to their teacher and ask to report to the office. If necessary, the office will try to contact the caregivers. **All students who are injured or become ill must check out through the office before leaving school.** When a student is transported by school personnel to the hospital or clinic, the parent/guardian is responsible to meet the driver and student at the health facility.

## Medication Requirements (2 Medication Forms)

If your child needs to take medication during school hours, the school requires it to be turned over to the office staff by the child's caregiver. Caregivers must also adhere to the following:

- 1. All prescription medications, including rescue inhalers for the treatment of asthma, must be accompanied by a signed order from the child's health care provider, in a pharmacy labeled container which includes the following:**
  - a. Student name

- b. Name of medication, dosage, route to be given
- c. Time to be given
- d. Diagnosis (optional)
- e. Possible side effects
- f. How long the medication is to be given.

2. **Written consent** from the caregiver requesting school personnel to give the medication.

3. **All medication must be brought to school in a pharmacy labeled container.** School personnel may refuse to give medication that is sent to school in odd bottles, plastic bags, foil, envelopes, or if the medication is unidentified.

4. **By state law, all rescue inhalers (Albuterol, Proventil) for the treatment of asthma must be checked and the child's ability to correctly use their inhaler evaluated by a school nurse before a child may carry them during school hours.** If the inhaler is started during the year, please notify the school immediately so this can be done.

5. **Over the counter (non-prescription)** medications will only be given with the written consent of parent/guardian and must be provided in the original manufacturer's container and labeled with the child's name.

6. **Caregivers must pick up all medications at the end of the school year –** they will not be sent home with students on the bus. If medications are not picked up, they will be disposed of.

## Immunization Regulations

The school complies with Minnesota State Regulations regarding childhood immunizations. The immunization law now specifies that students in all grades have documentation for all required vaccines.

Children without an immunization record or with an incomplete record may not be allowed to attend school. Parents/guardians of **both returning and new students** should send updated copies of immunization records, if appropriate, either to the school or with their child on the first day of school. **We must have these within the first week of school.** Waivers for parents/guardians that object to certain or all immunizations may be obtained from the school office.

Further information about immunizations may be obtained from the school, your physician, or a local public health office. Here is a link to the Minnesota Immunization Law: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/readykidswhento.pdf>

## Other Required information

### Student Information

Each HLCS enrolled student's family will be required to complete online forms through their JMC account and password. These forms are a required component so that we can best serve your students.

**It is of utmost importance to complete these. For two-household families, please provide information for both households. Throughout the year, if any updates are required to student information, these changes must be updated in JMC Parent Portal**

All Kindergarten students are required to have a copy of their birth certificate, immunizations and Kindergarten screening information on file during the first week of the school year. Kindergarten students without kindergarten screening must be screened prior to October 31st.

## Confidentiality of School Records

The directory information that can be made available for inter-school use includes:

- Student's name
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of enrollment and attendance
- Previous school attended
- Grade classification

Student records and files are not available to anyone other than persons working directly with the student.

**All information gathered will be used solely by HLCS in providing a quality education and by the Minnesota Department of Education upon data submissions. Basic information such as student/parent names, address, birthdate, emergency contacts, work numbers, etc. may be shared with ISD #309 for transportation purposes. HLCS will not release any information to any outside entity unless requested by signed authorization.**

Student name, address, and phone number may be released intra-school (i.e. to families for birthday invitations, etc.) with a signed authorization.

## Data Privacy and Tennessean Notice

HLCS is asking you to provide information, which includes private information, under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA). HLCS is asking for this private information so that we can fulfill your request to enroll your student at HLCS.

This information will be used to enroll your student at the HLCS, create a student file, and fulfill state and federal reporting requirements. This information will also be used to appropriately assist your student in the event of an emergency.

You are not legally required to provide the information the HLCS is requesting and you may refuse to provide some or all of the information requested.

However, HLCS may not be able to process your student application for enrollment if you do not provide sufficient information. Failure to provide certain information could result in delays, incorrect enrollment, or cause your student to not be enrolled.

With some exceptions, unless you consent to further release of private information, access to this information will be limited to individuals whose jobs reasonably require access to this information and school officials with an educational need to know.

However, state and federal law authorizes release of private information without your consent: to the juvenile justice system, the Minnesota State High School League and if required by a court order, or authorized by other state or federal law.

## **Application/Enrollment Process**

All openings at all grade levels will be filled from a waiting list established by state-mandated lottery to be held each February for the following school year. Applications can be completed on the website, or a hard-copy application can be acquired through the office.

Priority will be given to those applicants with siblings currently attending HLCS. In order to assure sibling priority for placement in all grade levels, HLCS must receive an application prior to the annual February lottery. Sibling applications received post-lottery will be placed at the top of the waiting list following any other siblings already in place on the list, and only offered a spot if there is an opening. Placement of students and class sizes/make-up will be at the discretion of the Director.

Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year for which they are applying. Once offered a spot, the enrollment process begins, requiring additional information about the student and family, followed by request for records and actual enrollment in the school. Once enrolled, the student remains enrolled until completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade or withdrawal.

## **Trespassing**

Minnesota Statute 609.609 makes it a gross misdemeanor for a group of three or more persons to be found on school property unless the persons

- Are enrolled students or are parents of enrolled students.

- Have reported to the office and have permission to be on school grounds.

- Are attending an event to which the public, or individuals, have been invited.

## **Pets**

Students should not bring pets to school unless arrangements have been made with the teacher for a special occasion. Please notify the office if you are bringing your pet to school for such occasions.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

In accordance with MN Statute 121A.11 and HLCS policy 531, students at HLCS have the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America at least once a week led by a staff member. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students and school personnel must respect another person's right to make that choice.

## **Internet Usage**

### **Internet Usage Guidelines**

A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy has been provided to all families as a part of annual registration and needs to be reviewed and signed digitally through the JMC family account or a paper copy signed and turned into the office.

## **Food Service**

At this time, HLCS does not provide school lunches. Caregivers will be made aware of any changes.

## **Tobacco and Electronic Device Use Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment, at Heartland Lakes Community School (HLCS), that is tobacco free, HLCS policy 419.

Using or carrying tobacco, tobacco-related products, or electronic smoking devices is not allowed by any student, staff, or visitor on Heartland Lakes Community School (HLCS) property. This includes all school buildings, school vehicles, and any location—on or off campus—where school events are held.

Elementary students (grades K–8) are also not allowed to have any tobacco products or electronic delivery devices at school or school events.

HLCS will enforce this policy and take appropriate action when it is violated.

HLCS does not accept donations, materials, or support from companies that make or promote tobacco or vaping products. These products will not be advertised or promoted at school or school events.

## **Student Discipline and Behavior**

### **HLCS Student Behavior Policy 506**

#### **Purpose**

This policy sets clear expectations for student behavior to keep our school safe, respectful, and focused on learning. Consistent discipline helps avoid disruptions and supports fairness.

#### **General Statement**

At HLCS, we believe in respect, responsibility, and self-discipline. Students learn best in a positive, respectful environment. Our goal is to help students make good decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

Students are expected to:

- Respect themselves, others, and school property.
- Follow school rules to create a positive learning space.

- Accept consequences if behavior disrupts learning or safety.

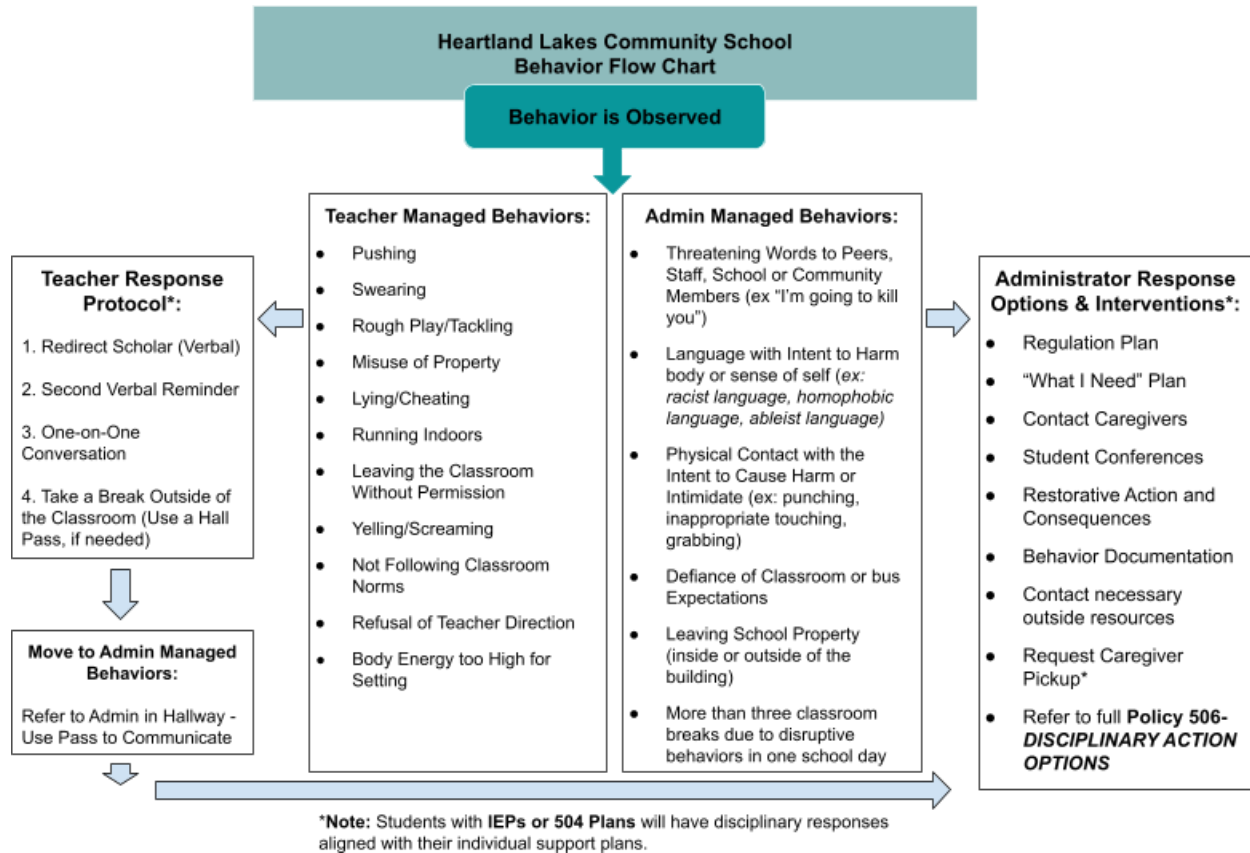
This policy follows the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

## **Who's Responsible?**

- **HLCS Board:** Makes sure discipline is fair and supports staff actions.
- **Director:** Sets rules, works with staff, students, and families, and may involve outside agencies when needed. Can use reasonable force to keep people safe, if necessary.
- **Teachers:** Create respectful classrooms and guide student behavior. Can use reasonable force if needed for safety.
- **School Staff:** Help maintain a respectful school environment under the Director's guidance. Can also use reasonable force when necessary.
- **Caregivers/Guardians:** Support their child's behavior and work with the school when needed.
- **Students:** Follow school rules, take responsibility for their actions, and help create a respectful school.
- **Community Members:** Support a respectful and responsible school environment.

## **Student Rights**

HLCS uses EL Design Principles and Habits of Scholarship to teach students how to be responsible, respectful, and thoughtful members of the school community.



**ADDITIONAL**

## Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

### Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) or the [WIDA English Language Development Standards](#). These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 public and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education, and statewide assessments gives educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

#### Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)

MCA and MTAS are the annual assessments in reading, mathematics and science that measure a snapshot of student learning of the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards.

#### ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

### Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments helps families see a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students can use MCA results:

- For course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.
- For Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and College in the Schools programs.

English learners who take the ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from English learner programs.

### Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions about how to use money and resources to support all students.

### Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the form. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

## Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS, the student would not have the opportunity to exit their English learner program.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Since all eligible students are included in some calculations even when they do not participate, school and district accountability results are impacted. This may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any other consequences for not participating.

Explore the  
Statewide  
Testing page  
for more  
information.

[education.mn.gov > Students  
and Families > Programs and  
Initiatives > Statewide Testing](https://education.mn.gov/Students-and-Families/Programs-and-Initiatives/Statewide-Testing)

### Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1 percent of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by the beginning of each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20\_\_ to 20\_\_ school year.)



By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. This form must be returned to your student's school before the applicable test administration.

## Statewide Assessment: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

### Student Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Refusal: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

☐ MCA/MTAS Reading

☐ MCA/MTAS Science

☐ MCA/MTAS Mathematics

☐ ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on how to opt out of local assessments.

Updated April 21, 2022



## THE SCHOOL - HOME COMPACT

The School-Home Compact outlines how families, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and the way in which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve high standards. Signing this document also acknowledges receipt of our Family Handbook.

### **HLCS students agree to:**

- ~Attend school regularly
- ~Come to school each day with appropriate tools needed for learning
- ~Complete and return homework assignments on time
- ~Follow and foster the Habits of Scholarship at HLCS

### **Student signature:**

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### **HLCS families agree to:**

- ~Make attendance a priority
- ~Monitor child's homework completion
- ~Volunteer, to extent possible, in school-related activities/attend school events
- ~Stay informed with school/respond to school communications in a timely manner
- ~Know and support the Habits of Scholarship at SLC

### **Caregiver signature:**

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**HLCS teachers agree to:**

- ~Maintain open lines of communication via the school website, email, and phone
- ~Help each child reach his/her maximum learning potential, by using varied instruction, materials, and a knowledge of each child's interests and goals
- ~Teach and foster the Habits of Scholarship at HLCS
- ~Follow and foster the Design Principles at HLCS

**Teacher signature:**

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**HLCS administration agrees to:**

- ~Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment
- ~Hold parent/teacher conferences twice a year
- ~Provide progress reports

**Administrator signature:**

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