



Acacia Academy
Student and Parent Handbook
2025-2026

Acacia Academy - LaGrange

6425 Willow Springs Road
LaGrange, IL 60525
708-579-9040

Acacia Academy – Burr Ridge

6880 N. Frontage Rd. Suite 100
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
708-639-4222

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

On behalf of the Acacia faculty, I want to extend a warm welcome to Acacia Academy's 2025-26 school year. This handbook will acquaint you with our procedures and policies.

We look forward to an exciting and successful year and continue to support active learning for the further development of academic, social, emotional and/or intellectual skills and abilities. We want your student's time spent at Acacia to be a productive, supportive and positive learning experience.

Our staff is grateful for the opportunity to work with students and their families as a team in preparation for a successful school experience and adulthood.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Fouks

Kathryn Fouks
Chief Administrator

SCHOOL HOURS

Acacia Academy is open from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Monday - Friday. Acacia student hours are 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM, Monday - Friday.

MISSION

The mission of the school is to assist the individuals it serves in meeting the goals in their individualized educational programs. The Administration and staff of Acacia Academy offer personalized and exceptional educational instruction of the highest quality to each individual student in the development of his/her intellectual and academic potential. Our instruction is geared to each student's specific learning styles. Our dedication and experience is evident through our programs proven to be successful, administered in an affirming environment that strengthens academic skills and enriches the life of each student. Students leave our school with fundamental educational and social skills, giving them the ability to confront the challenges of tomorrow.

VISION

By achieving our mission of students meeting IEP goals, their inherent talents, gifts, and dreams are realized. Utilizing individual learning styles and a variety of environmental settings, academic and emotional gains are celebrated. In addition, students recognize their strengths and increase their connection to the earth and each other.

DRESS CODE POLICY

At Acacia, we are dedicated to preparing our students for success: success in their academic careers; success in their personal development; and in their professional lives. We believe that an important part in that equation is learning to 'dress for success.' To help instill in our students this habit of dressing for success, we have a school-wide dress code policy that must be followed daily.

All clothing must be void of wording and design that is not appropriate for school. To maintain a respectful and inclusive environment for all students, clothing that displays inappropriate language, images, or graphics is not permitted. This includes—but is not limited to—items with profanity, violent imagery, sexually suggestive content, references to drugs or alcohol, or any messages that promote hate or discrimination.

Pants/Shorts/Dresses/Skirts: All pants must be free of holes and appropriate fit in length and size. Pants must be worn at the waistline, and undergarments must be covered at all times. Pajama pants are not allowed. All shorts, dresses, and skirts must be at the length of the longest fingertip.

Shirts/Sweaters/Sweatshirt: Shirts need to fit appropriately in length and size (*not too tight, too short, etc*). Tops must cover the entire torso area at all times and all undergarments (bras, etc.) must be completely covered. Tank tops are not allowed. Coats/jackets of any kind are not allowed in the classrooms.

Shoes: For your student's safety, it is suggested that they wear shoes with a back as climbing the stairs and navigating the Nature Center are part of an Acacia student's day. Students participating in Physical Education must bring gym shoes with them daily. Slippers and shoes with heels greater than 1" are not allowed at Acacia.

Hats/Hoods: Acacia Academy is a “hats-off” building for all students, staff, and visitors. Students should not wear hats, hoods or head coverings of any kind, except those of established religious groups or for medical reasons.

Hair: Hair must be of a natural and conservative color, style, clean, and moderate length for all students.

Pajama Tops and Bottoms: Pajamas are only allowed at Acacia on a designated pajama day.

Tattoos: All tattoos must be covered at all times in the school building.

Jewelry: Earrings must be modest. Facial piercings, including tongues, are not allowed at Acacia Academy.

Failure to follow Acacia Academy’s dress code will result in contacting the parent/guardian. If necessary, additional consequences will be discussed with parents/guardians and put in place.

STUDENT CELL PHONE + PERSONAL DEVICE POLICY

The student cell phone and personal device policy outlined below must be reviewed and agreed to prior to the start of the school year. **Please note, all students are responsible for keeping all personal devices properly secured and away upon entering the building for the duration of the school day.** Acacia will assume no responsibility for any misplaced device, theft, repairs, software updates, or maintenance to the student’s device.

- All personal devices (earbuds, cellphones, tablets, etc.) must be turned off and secured in student backpacks, which are kept out of the classroom in student lockers (HS) or designated area (Elem/TR). **The cell phone policy at Acacia is “phones away for the day”**
- It is recommended all personal devices have a locator application installed and activated.
- Students may not use any device to record, transmit or take/post photos, voice or video while in school such as FaceTime and other similar formats.
- The use of any digital devices that disrupt the classroom, access inappropriate websites, plagiarize, visit noncurricular websites, engage in commercial activities or any activity deemed inappropriate for a school setting is prohibited.
- If a staff member sees any personal student or technology device (including ear buds) out without permission, the student will be asked to turn in the device(s) to the administrator for the duration of the school day. The device will be locked up for the remainder of the day. If a student refuses to turn over the device, more serious consequences may result.
- Students are responsible for all personal devices. If a parent allows a student to come to school with a personal device, the parent waives any claim or complaint against Acacia.

Failure to follow the above guidelines **upon request** may result in the loss of the privilege to bring personal technology to school, and/or disciplinary and legal action as appropriate.

****Unauthorized audio or video recording/taping is illegal in the school building, on grounds or in a school bus.***

COMPUTER AND LAPTOP USAGE

We recognize technology as a valuable resource in the intellectual growth of our students. We also know that unsupervised, unstructured use of technology can pose a significant hazard to this growth, and cause damage to electronic devices. We have formulated a set of policies for safe technology usage at Acacia Academy. We ask that all our students and their parents/guardians take a moment to familiarize themselves with these policies:

- All district and/or Acacia provided laptops must be labeled with the student's name **and** brought to and from school daily.
- All district and school laptops (including headphones) are for educational purposes only and can be used only with staff permission.
- Personal e-mail, instant messages, social networking sites, music streaming websites, chat rooms or any site that requires a username or password are for home/out of school use only. This does not include teacher-directed websites or blogs. Teachers will give permission and direction prior to turning on the computer, opening any application or visiting any website
- Students must leave all food and beverages away from all technology devices.
- Students will report any problems with their assigned computer to the instructor.
- Students are not permitted to fix/repair any Acacia technology or district provided technology.
- Permission/direction must be given before turning on / using any device, opening any application, visiting any website, downloading any images/files, or using the printer.
- All electronic devices must only be used by the student that owns or has checked out the device. Students will touch and operate only their assigned computer.
- Students who do not comply with these policies will lose the privilege of using computers for a period commensurate with the severity of the violation. Breaking computer usage rules could result in completing alternative course requirements and/or receiving a failing grade for the course.

SOCIAL NETWORK POLICY

State law requires Acacia to notify students and their guardians that school officials may request or require a student or their guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website. This request may be made only if there is reasonable cause to believe that the student's account contains evidence that they violated a school disciplinary rule or school policy.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Acacia Academy maintains a closed campus policy. This means students may not leave the grounds without advanced authorization. Acacia Academy keeps the doors locked during the

school day for the safety of the students and staff.

VISITOR POLICY

Acacia staff requests visitors schedule an appointment in advance. All placing district representatives and Illinois State Board of Education personnel can visit at any time. Acacia Academy requires all visitors to follow the following guidelines:

- All visitors will be asked to show identification before entering the school building.
- All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor's badge during their stay.
- All visitors will review and sign our visitor policy when they arrive on campus.
- Visitors should enter the room(s) quietly and take a seat where directed by the classroom staff so as to not interrupt instructional activities.
- Visitors should turn cell phones to silent mode. If you must take a call, please step out of the classroom.
- Video and audiotaping is prohibited within our building(s) and on school grounds.
- After a visit to the classroom, visitors may set up a time to speak to the classroom teacher, administrator, or related service personnel.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CLASSROOM OBSERVATION POLICY

Acacia Academy welcomes parents and guardians to our building(s). Please schedule your visit with an administration team member in advance. As you watch your student engage with their peers and with the staff, the focus should be on your student as we maintain the confidentiality of other students in the classroom. Please keep in mind the following during your visit today:

- Visits are scheduled in advance and are limited to one hour.
- All parents should sign in and wear a visitor badge during their stay.
- Parents should enter the room and take a seat at the back of the classroom or where directed by classroom staff so they do not interrupt instructional activities.
- Please turn your cell phones to silent mode. If you must take a call, please step out of the classroom.
- Parents are asked not to sit with their student as this could create an unnecessary disruption for other students.
- Parents are asked to remain seated and refrain from interacting with students or the teacher unless the classroom teacher initiates the interaction.
- If staff are giving an assessment, the parent must step out during that time to respect all students' right to be able to focus and concentrate.
- Video and audio recording is prohibited within our building and on school grounds.
- After the classroom visit, parents may set up a teacher conference or a time to talk with the teacher.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers are required to check in and out in an office and receive a visitor badge before going to their destination. Regular/weekly volunteers must complete a police background check and be approved by an admin team member before assisting at the school.

COMMUNICATION

TeacherEase is our web-based communication system alerting parents/guardians to updates, upcoming events and closings. It is also a way to access student grades and report cards.

When calling Acacia, please leave messages in the appropriate voicemail and we will return your call as soon as possible. You may also contact us via email. Please **do not call your student(s)** at school. Students cannot answer texts or phone calls with their personal cell phones. We do not interrupt classes for non-emergency messages during school hours. If it is an emergency or you will be late in dropping or picking up your student, please call and/or email a member of the admin team.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Annual inspections by the Pleasantview Bureau of Fire Prevention are conducted at both school properties (6425 Willow Spring Rd and 6880 N Frontage Rd). The properties have passed all necessary inspections and found to be in compliance with the 2018 edition of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101-Life Safety Code and applicable references as adopted in Title 41 Illinois Administrative Code Parts 100, 109, 251 and 300.

Acacia Academy (La Grange Campus) has been inspected by Midwest Environmental Consulting Services for asbestos and is in good standings. MECS performs 3-year reinspection and evaluation. Acacia continues to implement a thorough asbestos monitoring program, which fully complies with the requirements of the State of Illinois and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHREA). Complete records of the periodic asbestos surveillance reports are kept in administration offices at La Grange Campus.

Cook County Department of Building and Zoning conducts annual building inspections including Fire/Life and Safety Code, Plumbing, and Electrical. La Grange Campus passed all necessary inspections. Reliable Fire conducts annual Fire Sprinkler System, Emergency Lights, Fire Alarm,

Fire Extinguisher, and Boiler System inspections at 6425 Willow Springs Rd. La Grange Campus passed all necessary inspections.

Chicago Metropolitan Fire Prevention conducts annual Fire Sprinkler System, Emergency Lights, Fire Alarm, Fire Extinguisher, and HVAC inspections at 6880 N Frontage Rd Ste 100. Burr Ridge Campus passed all necessary inspections.

The facilities and all materials used by students at the LaGrange campus and Burr Ridge campus will be maintained in a clean, sanitary, and safe condition.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance is tracked and monitored through TeacherEase. Teachers record student absences in TeacherEase daily. If you need to report an absence, a parent or guardian must telephone the school office before 8:30AM. Dial 708-579-9040 then follow the voicemail directions to get to the attendance line. Please state the date, student's name, and reason for absence. Excused absences include: *student illness, serious illness or death of a family member, unforeseen family emergency, or parent request*. If a student has chronic and unexcused tardiness, administration will notify parents to schedule a conference. If a student has 5, 10, or 20 unexcused days absent in a row, the home school district and parent is notified. Written verification of absence is necessary to consider the absences excused. We work with each individual placing school district to uphold their individual district attendance policies.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If Acacia Academy closes due to inclement weather or because of an emergency, a text and email message will be sent through TeachereEase and updates will be posted on our website.

PRIVACY AND DIGNITY POLICY

Each student's personal privacy and dignity is safeguarded during personal hygiene activities at the elementary, junior high, high school and transition/post-graduate levels. Developmentally appropriate assistance is given, with parent/guardian/IEP team guidance, until the student is able to manage on their own. Acacia Academy is not equipped to accept students that require diapering into our school.

Caregivers are trained individually by a present staff member before they administer individual aid to a student unable to perform personal hygiene activities. Parents of the student may act as a caregiver or provide their own personal caregiver for their student if the IEP determines it is a necessary support.

STUDENT INSURANCE POLICY

We do not offer student insurance for purchase, as most public schools do. Therefore, we request that you provide your own insurance and keep it in force throughout the school year. Parents/Guardians of our students are required to keep medical insurance coverage current and in force. Parents/Guardians accept full responsibility for their students while traveling to and from, and during class time. Medical insurance coverage must be current and in force. During school, should an unavoidable accident occur (such as falling down the stairs, a sports game injury at recess or PE, etc.) the student's insurance or parent/guardian will accept responsibility for any ambulance, emergency room, hospitalization, or follow-up physical visits, which result from this accident. Acacia Academy is not liable for any expenses incurred as the result of an accident.

HEALTH RECORDS

Illinois Public Act 81-184 requires all school students in Illinois to present proof of immunizations and physical examinations in accordance with the law and rules and regulations instituted by the Illinois Department of Public Health. **The State of Illinois requires school physicals and immunization updates in kindergarten, sixth, and ninth grades.**

All students entering, transferring, or advancing into kindergarten through 12th grade are required to show proof of receipt of 2 doses of mumps and 2 doses of rubella vaccine. In addition, students entering, transferring, or advancing into kindergarten, 6th or 9th grades are required to show proof of receipt of 2 doses of varicella vaccine. Most students likely have already received the vaccine and simply need to provide the school with verifying documentation from their healthcare provider.

Illinois Public Act 093-0946 requires all students in kindergarten, second, sixth and ninth grades to have a dental examination or a signed waiver on file. We must have a copy of each examination on file for your student to enroll at Acacia Academy. Students not in compliance with these regulations cannot attend school until they comply with the law. Students transferring from other schools are responsible for transferring their medical and dental records to Acacia Academy.

GUIDELINES FOR MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Acacia Academy discourages administering medication during the school day unless it is necessary for the student's critical health. In the case that medication must be administered, the following guidelines are in place:

1. Any student requiring medication to be administered during the school day must have their doctor fill out the school medication form. The medicine form must include the student's name, current date, name of medication being prescribed, dosage, route by which the medication is to be administered, approximate time to be administered and the physician's signature. Parent/guardian must also agree, noted with a signature. Medication Authorization forms are valid for one year.

2. Medicine must be brought to school by parent/adult in the original prescription bottle obtained from the pharmacy. If the parent is unable to bring in the medication (some parents do not have transportation), a bus driver or transportation service may receive the medication from the parent after the parent has called the school and received the approval from administration to allow the driver to hold it. The parent will let the administrator know the name of the medication and how many tablets were in the prescription bottle when it was received by the driver. When the administrator receives the medication from the bus driver or transport service, they will confirm receiving the medication and the number of pills with the parent.
3. All medicine, along with the medication disbursement forms, will be kept in a double locked cabinet/locker with administration holding the keys.
4. A medication log will be kept which includes the students name, prescribed medication, date, dosage, time of disbursement, and all documents signed/initialed by the person administering the medication.
5. Any changes in the dosage will require a new school medication disbursement form to be on file prior to the change occurring.
6. Clean technique will be used when in contact with or when administering the medication, which includes frequent use of antibacterial gels before and between each student, and gloves as needed.
7. Medication will be checked monthly or as needed for expiration and number of pills. Parents will be notified if medication is expired or more medication is needed.
8. Medication no longer required by the student will be sent home to the parent. Any outdated or unclaimed medication will be taken to the nearest police station for community disposal after all labels and identifying information has been removed. The removed medication bottle label will be torn off and/or shredded prior to being thrown out.
9. Epi-pens are held and used for students with known severe allergic reactions. Students with Epi-pens know where they are being stored and have been previously instructed on their use. Staff are also aware of where they are being stored and are familiar with the administration of them. All Epi-pens are labeled with the student's name.
10. All school administrators and classroom teachers are trained, specific to school protocols, at least once a year by a registered or school nurse.
11. A registered nurse or school nurse consults on all nursing minutes mandated in a student's IEP.
12. Medication is administered by a registered nurse, school nurse, or licensed and trained school administrator.
13. In order to allow students to fully participate in educational programming and school activities at all times, trained staff members may also be delegated medication administration authority in compliance with the requirements of Section 50-75(b) of the Nurse Practice Act and pursuant to the requirements of a comprehensive nursing assessment by the licensed School Nurse/Registered Nurse under 225 ILCS 65/50-75(b).
14. Administration may contact 911 and parents when a student has severe allergic reactions or behavior issues after medication was administered.
15. If a student requires a biohazards container, a container will be provided for proper

disposal of medical supplies.

16. Students that need to check their blood sugar when at school should be self-sufficient in the process prior to the start of school.

Acacia has reviewed and will adhere to the requirements set forth in 105 ILCS 5/22-30, 23 IAC 1.54, and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b. The above guidelines have been reviewed by a registered nurse.

FOOD ALLERGIES

State law requires all schools to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses. If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify a member of the admin team. **If your student requires an EpiPen or another allergy-relief medication, a school medication form, action plan, and the required medication must be submitted prior to the first day of school.**

BED BUGS

If a bed bug is found on a student's clothing or belongings, a staff member will discreetly bring the student to an office. A staff member will inspect clothes and belongings and collect any specimens. The student's parents/guardians will be notified. If there is a report of infestation at home, the school will encourage parents to treat the infestation. If repeated incidences occur, the school may enlist social agencies for support. In the event that a bed bug is found in the classroom or other school location, trained pest management professionals will inspect for bed bugs. Acacia will follow pest management professional plan and notify staff and families.

INFECTIONS, ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

According to the rules of the Illinois Department of Public Health and Acacia Academy, children must be kept out of school if they have the following illnesses:

Chicken Pox - At least six days after the onset of the skin rash, or until the scabs are crusted.

Measles - At least five days after the onset of the rash. Students with measles should have a physician's permission to return to school.

Mumps – At least seven days, or until all swelling is gone.

Strep Infection - At least 24 hours after antibiotics have been started.

Skin Rashes - Until they are diagnosed and a treatment plan is in place.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) - At least 24 hours after medication has started.

Fever and Vomiting - A student with a cold, sore throat, earache, upset stomach, or a temperature of 100 degrees should not be sent to school and should be kept home for 24 hours after fever and vomiting without fever-reducing medication.

Fifth Disease - A lace-like rash with reddened cheeks; no need to miss school unless the student has a fever. The rash may come and go for days. Notification to the health office is necessary. Notification of pregnant staff and parents will occur if there are multiple cases.

In the event of a health or safety risk to the general public, Acacia will take the following precautions:

- To ensure the safety and health of the premises and all of those who work/visit the premises, Acacia will request custodial staff to be vigilant with regular wiping of all community surfaces.
- If circumstances mandate such steps including the closing of school for a period of time, Acacia will take more aggressive measures to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Regular and transparent communication from the Acacia Administration will be forthcoming as needed through TeacherEase emails or notices sent home.
- Our school administration will look to the County Health Department and governmental agencies such as the Illinois Department of Public Health for information and recommendations.

MEDICAL CANNABIS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Students that are registered qualifying patients for the use of medical cannabis will be allowed administration on school property following the guidelines below:

- Provide the original Patient Registry Identification Card for the student. A copy will be made and kept in the student's medical records folder.
- Administration of medical cannabis must occur by a parent, legal guardian, or individual who is a "registered designated caregiver".
- Staff members are not allowed to administer medical cannabis under any circumstances.
- Administration must take place in office with no other person present with a closed door.
- Storage of medical cannabis on school property is not permitted under any circumstances. Caregiver must remove the product after administration.
- Smoke or vape medical cannabis products are not permitted. Medical cannabis must be an infused product.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

In order to support the needs of all students, Acacia Academy has Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, anti-bullying and harassment, restorative justices, and social and emotional learning frameworks in place. These supports are described in our student handbook and embedded in our program.

Physical intervention is only used in extremely rare circumstances at Acacia Academy when a student presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to themselves or others. In the past two years, there have been no circumstances of physical intervention at Acacia Academy. Physical restraint is prohibited as a punishment.

Acacia Academy does not use Time Out and Isolated Time Out. In emergency situations, in order to ensure the safety of all students and staff, Acacia reserves the right to call 911 for police and paramedic intervention.

Physical Restraint

According to The State Board of Education, "Physical restraint" means holding a student or otherwise restricting the student's movements. "Physical restraint" as permitted pursuant to this Section includes only the use of specific, planned techniques. A physical restraint shall not impair a student's ability to breathe or speak normally.

Physical Restraint at Acacia Academy is only implemented by a team of trained staff members (Acacia's Co-Principals, Assistant Principal, Special Education Teacher, School Administrator, and Occupational Therapist) that are certified in SafetyCare. Physical Restraint will not exceed a 15-minute time period. At least one school administrator certified in SafetyCare will be present to monitor the situation and evaluate the physical health and safety of the student and staff involved in the incident.

In the event that a student poses an imminent danger to the safety of himself/herself or another person, only a staff member trained at Acacia Academy in Safety-Care: Procedures for Crisis Prevention, De-Escalation, and Crisis Intervention is allowed to assist the student. That staff member who applies physical restraint shall use only the techniques he or she received during training. Staff members must also verify that there is no medical contraindication or history of psychological trauma for the student.

Acacia Academy does not use prone or supine physical restraints.

Safety-Care by QBS

Safety-Care is designed to provide a set of skills and strategies that allow staff in a variety of settings to safely and humanely provide support to individuals who may sometimes exhibit disruptive or dangerous behavior.

The prevention and de-escalation interventions in Safety-Care are drawn from extensive clinical research on treatment of undesirable and dangerous behavior. Specifically, they are drawn from the field of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). This research has developed powerful, non-coercive ways to prevent crisis and teach desirable, functional alternatives to dangerous and disruptive behavior.

In the Safety-Care program, staff are trained in the following goals of Safety-Care:

- Create a positive, supportive and enriched physical and social environment.

- Teach functional alternative to challenging behavior.
- Prevent behavioral crises whenever possible.
- Manage behavioral crises safely and therapeutically.
- Minimize the intensity and duration of behavioral crises.
- Decrease the future likelihood of behavioral crises.

Physical management procedures are the most restrictive techniques in the Safety-Care program. Physical management procedures must be used only when there is no other safe alternative, and the following conditions must be met to consider the use of physical management:

1. There must be imminent risk of serious harm to the agitated person or someone else.
2. There must be no other practical way to prevent that harm without physical management.
3. The risk of not intervening must be greater than the risk of intervening.

Safety-Care physical management procedures are used only when necessary for safety, and only with the upmost care for the safety and well-being of the agitated student and everyone else.

1. **1-Person Stability Hold:** If only one staff member is available during a behavioral crisis in which there is imminent risk of harm, it may be necessary for one person to take immediate action instead of waiting for help to arrive. In a 1-Person Stability Hold, the staff member steps behind the agitated student, starting in shoulder check position and sweeps the student's arm in front of him/her by putting pressure on their elbow. With the other hand, the staff member reaches around, under the free arm, and grasps the student's swept arm just above the wrist. The student's arm will rest against their body just above their hip. Staff member's head is kept back to avoid head-butting. If the student continues to hit, grab or scratch, the staff member may be able to quickly grasp that arm just about the student's wrist with the hand that is securing the elbow. Place that arm across so that the hand is near the person's hip.
2. If the student chooses to lower to the ground, the staff member will continue with the **1-Person Floor Seated Stability Hold**. This procedure is not initiated by staff. It provides a way for staff to assist the student to the floor if he or she has decided to drop down. Starting in the 1-Person Stability Hold, the staff member will step backward to give the student room to sit. The staff member will position his/her inside leg so that the student will not sit on their leg, knee, ankle or foot. The staff member will assist the student gently to the floor, while remaining in the hold until the student is calm.
3. **2-Person Stability Hold:** This hold requires 2 trained staff members. Both staff, with the outside hand, grasp the student's closest arm just above the wrist. Both staff reach with their inside hand inside the student's arm closest to them and grasp the arm of their own outside hand. Staff establish a secure stable grip without digging elbows into ribs or pulling the arm back. Staff move behind the student, facing outward with their hips behind the student's hips and leaning somewhat back with their inside leg close and outside the student's foot. Student's hands will rest near his or her pickets with the arms slightly bent.
4. If the student initiates to sit, the staff members will assist him/her gently to the ground into the **2-Person Seated Stability Hold**. Starting in the 2-Person Stability Hold, the staff

members will step backwards to give the student room to sit. The staff members will position their inside leg so that the student will not sit on their leg, knee, ankle or foot. The staff members will assist the student gently to the floor, while remaining in the hold until the student is calm.

5. **Forward Transport:** At times, it might be necessary to move a student from one location to another. This might happen when the current location is not safe or when de-escalation is more likely to be effective in another location. This is only recommended for short distances. For this procedure, two staff members will begin in the 2-person Stability Hold. Both staff members will take small steps as they bring their forward foot slightly outside the other student's foot. Staff will shuffle forward, maintaining a broad balanced stance and continuous contact, driving their hip gently but firmly forward to move the student forward until the desired location has been reached.
6. **Reverse Transport:** If a student makes it difficult in a Forward Transport, the Reverse Transport may provide an effective alternative. For this procedure, both staff members will start in the 2-Person Stability Hold. Both staff transition to the Reverse Transport by stepping forward with the outside leg. Staff will bring the hand holding their own arm to the person's forearm, grasping overhand.

Training for SafetyCare

Trainer	Recertified annually by a professional at SafetyCare	Trains Acacia staff for 24 hours per year
Specialists – Crisis Response Team	Recertified annually - Full Curriculum	Initial Certification: 12 hours Recertification: 6-8 hours
Specialists – Acacia Staff Members	Recertified annually – Partial Curriculum	Initial Certification: 7.5 hours Annual Training 5 hours

*In addition to SafetyCare training, all staff members participate in a minimum of 3 additional hours of training through Professional Development Courses, Infinitec Platform, and SafetyCare Refresh Courses.

Recording and Reporting of Physical Restraint

Written record of the situation must be completed immediately following the incident. After an incident occurs, certified administrators will follow debriefing protocols including assessing for injury. Parents/guardians will be notified on the same day a restraint takes place and any injuries will be promptly reported to parents/guardians. All required Physical Restraint forms will be completed by Acacia Administration and provided to parent/guardian, serving school district, and ISBE within 24 hours of the incident. Acacia administration will inform the parent/guardian that they are entitled to meet with the staff involved in the physical intervention to discuss the incident and that the meeting will take place within 2 days unless they request that it be held to a later date. Acacia administration will document whether the parent chose to have a meeting. Administration will also inform the parents in writing that they can file a complaint with ISBE and a school administrator can assist them with that process if they request help. A Restraint Review will take place if there are more than 2 incidents in a 30-day period.

Acacia Academy uses the Illinois State Board of Education Physical Restraint form. Acacia Academy provides the student's parent/guardian and the State Board of Education a copy of the completed form within 24 hours of the incident.

Illinois State Board of Education Physical Restraint form includes:

- a. Student name
- b. Date of incident + beginning and ending time of incident
- c. A description of any relevant events leading up to the incident
- d. A description of any interventions used prior to the implementation of time out or physical restraint
- e. A description of the incident and/or student behavior that resulted in time out or physical restraint
- f. A log of the student's behavior in time out or during physical restraint, including a description of the restraint techniques used and any other interaction between the student and staff
- g. A description of any injuries or property damage
- h. A description of any planned approach to dealing with the student's behavior in the future
- i. A list of the school personnel who participated in the implementation, monitoring, and supervision of physical restraint
- j. The date and time parental notification took place

Policy Review Process:

- Acacia Academy's Physical Intervention Policy is reviewed at our summer Administrative meeting. Team members include: Chief Administrator, Co-Principals, Assistant Principal, Administration Staff, School Social Worker, Special Education Teacher

Acacia Academy reviews and adheres to State Code 23IAC1.285

Website: <https://qbs.com/safety-care/>

LOCKERS/LOCKS

The school will issue a locker and lock to each high school student to store their personal belongings. All elementary, junior high and transition students will be given a hook or space to store their personal belongings. All students must keep their backpacks, coats/jackets, hoodies, and other personal belongings, out of the classroom and in their dedicated space.

Acacia Academy does not accept responsibility for personal goods that students lose from their lockers, hook, or designated space. The lockers and locks used by high school students are the property of the school. Students must make restitution for any damage to school lockers and if necessary, replace the lock. School officials may conduct locker inspections whenever deemed necessary.

PARKING/DROP OFF/PICK UP

All elementary, junior high and high school students are dropped off and picked up in the morning and afternoon at the LaGrange campus, 6425 Willow Springs Road, Lagrange Highlands.

Transition students will be dropped off and picked up at our Burr Ridge campus, located at 6880 N. Frontage Rd in Burr Ridge.

Due to limited parking, parents may park in an open space in our back lot at the LaGrange campus and come into the school to pick up the student or form a U-shaped line in the rear of the building and wait for your student to enter or exit the building during arrival or dismissal. Please note that parking in the front of the building is typically reserved for buses only. During arrival and dismissal, please follow all staff directions so that the students can safely enter and exit the building.

Students who arrive late or who need an early dismissal must be signed in and out in the school office or front desk (Burr Ridge campus). All individuals who have permission to pick up your student must bring identification and be listed in TeacherEase under the transportation field.

COMMUNITY OUTINGS

Elementary / Junior High / High School: Throughout the school year, students may have opportunities to take a field trip off campus. Before each field trip, students receive permission forms that require their parent or guardian's written signature. Only students who have the required signed consent form may accompany the class on the field trip. Acacia Academy's school buses or outside bus companies, depending on the number of students attending, provide the transportation for field trips. For large group activities, bus companies may be contracted for transportation. All physical education classes are transported on the Acacia Academy buses to utilize local off-site facilities (e.g. community park).

Transition: Acacia Academy transition students are transported daily by Acacia Academy buses to off-site work facilities as well as to occasional community outings off campus. Permission slips are not distributed prior to each field trip since weekly community outings are part of the transition curriculum. All outings will be cleared by the administrative team at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled outing.

Acacia Academy limits its responsibility for the safety and welfare of the students by providing reasonable supervision by representatives of the school designated to supervise each activity. This is to limit and restrict any claim against Acacia Academy, any of its teachers, employees, or representatives, arising out of any act or omission regarding your student's participation in the activity and the transportation.

ACACIA SCHOOL BUS RULES

1. No food or drink is allowed on the buses.
2. Assigned bus seating for every class.
3. The driver is the first person in the bus and an employee stands at the entrance while students' board.
4. Employee sits in the rear seat by the emergency exit.
5. Bus does not move until everyone is seated and is wearing a seatbelt.
6. Employee is the first person off the bus and stands at the bus entrance.

7. Students who deface the buses will receive a minimum of a one-day suspension and responsibility for financial restitution.
8. Employees will check the bus before and after each use.

MONEY

Acacia Academy may utilize TeacherEase in order to collect optional fees for events (*e.g. field trips*) and other purposes (*e.g. yearbook, graduation, etc.*) throughout the school year. If you send money to school with your student, please seal it in an envelope and clearly mark the student's name, note the name of the individual collecting the money, and list the purpose for the money.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Students must bring their lunch in a brown paper sack or lunch box/bag. **Please make sure your student brings in a lunch that does not require refrigeration or use of a microwave.** Please supply your student with a clear reusable water bottle daily labeled with his/her name. Students may only have drinks other than water if they take them outside and properly dispose of the container. Students may have water at any time during the school day, except when near technology.

FOOD OPPORTUNITIES

There are additional sources for lunch offered during the week. The pantry, offered to students in the main building, offers daily selections from simple lunch items as well as items to supplement lunches. Students fill out an order form and submit daily before 10:00AM, with costs ranging from \$1.00 - \$3.00. Weekly menu options are also offered by the transition students. Some of the menu options include salads, pizza, snacks and fast-food restaurant items. Costs range from \$3.00 - \$15.00. Weekly forms are sent home through TeacherEase as well as paper copies provided by each homeroom/resource teacher. **If your student plans to order hot lunch, please be mindful of any allergies they may have and ensure that the food being ordered is safe and appropriate for their dietary needs.**

BRINGING FOOD ITEMS TO SCHOOL

To ensure a safe environment for all students with food allergies and sensitivities, students will not be allowed to share food during lunch and/or bring in any food that has nuts or may contain nuts for a special event (*e.g. birthday*). If donations are requested for a school sponsored event, please make sure all food items are store bought and nut free (*including items that may contain nuts*). If you have any questions, please contact a member of the administration.

EVALUATIONS AND STANDARDIZED TEST

Acacia Academy uses iReady to assess a student's reading (**phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension**) and math levels, three times per year. iReady testing is a computer adaptive test administered to all elementary, junior high & high school Acacia students. As part of our program, we may also administer additional standardized tests. Some of the

subtests are administered orally, untimed, and on a 1:1 basis. The student starts at an easy level (basal) and stops when she/he reaches a difficult level (ceiling). In addition to Acacia Academy assessments, students placed by a public school may also be required to take additional state assessments such as: ACCESS, DLM, IAR. We administer all tests with approved accommodations necessary per the student's IEP. Students required to take the PSAT and SAT will do so at the home school district or a representative from the home school district will come to Acacia to assess the student.

PUBLICITY

Throughout the school year our students have publicity opportunities, such as newspaper articles, Acacia Academy publications that include the website, yearbook, and various social media pages. Acacia Academy requires parent permission at the start of the school year during fall Teacher Ease registration in order for your student to participate in these opportunities.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety and security of our Acacia Academy students and staff we must prepare for all unsafe and unsecure situations. For that reason, we routinely hold fire, tornado and lockdown drills during the year. We practice with and without prior notice of the drills to help ensure that our students are ready and able to respond to any situation that might arise.

“Hard” and “soft” lockdown drills are components of our preparedness efforts. The purpose is to isolate students from any possible dangers within or outside the building. In the case of a “hard” lockdown we will lock all classroom doors, draw the shades, and turn off the lights. Students will stay in their classrooms until they are cleared by administration or law enforcement. Acacia Academy will inform parents by phone/letter/email of a “hard” lockdown. In extraordinary circumstances if we had to evacuate, Acacia Academy staff would notify parents by phone and arrange for student pick up. In that case, the Acacia Academy staff would only release students to parents/persons reported as emergency contacts. The responsible adult would have to have a valid driver's license or state identification card to show to an Acacia Academy administrator.

A “soft” lockdown is used when student privacy is required for health or emotional well-being. During a soft lockdown, shades are drawn, classroom doors closed, and all staff and students remain working in their designated classrooms.

By Illinois law all schools must have an established threat assessment protocol. Acacia Academy's can be found on our website www.acaciaacademy.com. **If you are aware of any type of threat to our students, staff, school buildings or school community please immediately report your concern to a member of the administration team by phone or email.**

Members of the Acacia Academy staff are trained in crisis prevention techniques, first aid, CPR and use of an AED. Annual recertification keeps staff abreast of changes and reinforces good safety practices. We will notify parents by phone if their student needed any safety intervention.

The following guidelines will help us keep your students safe:

1. Impress upon your student(s) the need to follow directions of all school personnel.
2. Please keep Acacia Academy informed if your contact information changes.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

At Acacia, we are committed to helping our students realize their full potential. Just as school is a place to learn and practice various academic concepts and skills, so is it a place for students to learn and practice appropriate behavior. The staff strives to create a learning atmosphere within the school as well as outside the school when students are under direct supervision. A good school climate maintains working conditions conducive to learning. While it is not possible or desirable to develop rules for all possible situations, these guidelines have been adopted by the staff:

- Students are expected to be in their classes on time with the necessary materials, to give the teacher their attention, and to complete their work promptly, accurately, honestly, and neatly.
- Students are to respond appropriately to the directions or requests of the school staff, both in the school and at school-sponsored activities.
- Students are expected to act appropriately in school or on school grounds and at extracurricular events, including refraining from public display of affection.
- Students are expected to be present and on time for school daily. Students must stay on campus at all times. Exiting the school building and/or school grounds may result in the police being contacted and the student being immediately dismissed from our program.
- Students are expected to be dressed and groomed in a manner that meets reasonable standards of health, cleanliness, and safety, and which follows the Acacia Uniform Policy.
- Students are to exercise care with regard to the property of others including school property.
- Students are not to use libel, slander, vulgarity, or obscenity in their verbal or written expression, or in their gestures.
- Students are not to possess at school, or bring on school grounds, items that may be dangerous or disruptive to the educational process. The school is not responsible for loss or damage to these items when brought on school grounds. Such items will be confiscated and returned at the discretion of the school administration.
- Students are expected to refrain from fighting or any form of physical harm towards another. Acts of physical aggression may result in an immediate dismissal from our program.
- Students are not permitted to sell/trade/share anything unless the sale is school-sanctioned.
- Students are expected to walk (not run) and to avoid disruption or excessive noise in the halls and classrooms. Students are to be in their assigned areas and to have passes when not in class.

We are committed to helping our students learn and practice these skills. We believe that every action has its logical and natural consequences and that learning to recognize and accept these consequences is an important part of growing and developing as a student. Potential school-wide disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures:

1. Notifying parents/guardians
2. Disciplinary conference
3. Withholding of privileges
4. Temporary removal from the classroom
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen, or damaged property

6. Lunch detention or in-school suspension
7. Notifying home school district
8. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that violated school rules
9. Suspension of bus riding privileges
10. Out of school suspension(s)
11. Notifying law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs, alcohol or weapons

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. Before receiving disciplinary action, all students and staff involved in the incident will be given the opportunity to reflect and summarize the incident. Each incident will be analyzed and judged based upon a complete investigation into all staff and student reports. The consequence assigned to any given behavior will depend upon our review of the evidence. Parents will be contacted and will be an important part of addressing behavior concerns.

VANDALISM/THEFT

Vandalism and theft are serious school offenses. If a student purposely damages or destroys school property, Acacia Academy will assess a replacement or repair fee, which the student must pay, and appropriate consequences will be rendered. Students are encouraged to keep their possessions in their locked lockers (HS) or desk. Staff encourage students to keep valuables at home.

STUDENT SEARCH POLICY

To maintain a safe and secure school, members of the admin team are authorized to conduct reasonable building, equipment and property searches (partial or full). When administration is made aware of an unsafe situation or potential contraband on campus, a student search and parent notification may occur. The admin team may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of student personal belongings, lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted with specially trained dogs.

If a staff member observes, suspects or is informed that a student has an illegal substance, contraband or weapon in their possession, the following procedure will take place:

1. Staff will immediately report student safety concerns to an administrator
2. The student will immediately be escorted with their belongings to an office or private space. If the student will not come willingly, the police may be called.
3. Two staff members will be with the student in the room. A staff member will explain to the student the concern regarding a possible illegal substance or object. The student will be asked to empty their backpack, show emptied pant pockets, coat or sweatshirts, remove socks, and turn them inside out and shake their shoes. Staff members will have as little physical contact with the student as possible. Staff may use a metal detector if needed.

4. If the student refuses to cooperate with the search, the parent will be called and alerted to the situation. The student will talk to their parent. If the student still refuses to cooperate with the search, the police will be called. The student will remain isolated from the student population until the police arrive on site. The administration will follow police directions, contacting the parent and district with details on the outcome.
5. If nothing illegal is found, the student is thanked for their cooperation and is free to go back to class, reinforcing that importance of keeping the building safe.
6. If an illegal substance, contraband or dangerous item/weapon is found, the substance will be confiscated and when appropriate, evidence may be transported to law enforcement authorities. The parent/guardian notified immediately using all emergency numbers on file. After talking with the parent/guardian, the administration team may call the police. The student will remain isolated until the parent/guardian and/or law enforcement arrives at school. Disciplinary action may be taken, included but not limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.
7. If an illegal substance or weapon is found on a student or part of their property, written documentation to their home school district will be reported. An IEP meeting may be determined necessary and placement at Acacia may be jeopardized.

WEAPONS, DRUGS, OR ALCOHOL

The possession, delivery, solicitation, use or sale of weapons, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, drug paraphernalia or substances, or anything considered dangerous (e.g. lighters, pocketknives, etc.) on school property or while attending school sponsored activities may result in suspension/expulsion, notification of parents/guardians, and notification of local police. Any verbal or written threat that mentions a weapon may be reported to the police and/or the Department of Children and Family Services for their investigation.

TOBACCO AND VAPE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Smoking and vaping are prohibited on Acacia property. It is against school policy to be in possession of or use any tobacco products (cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vape pens, lighter, loose tobacco, chewing tobacco, non-THC containing liquids, and vape paraphernalia) or paraphernalia (lighters, matches, and rolling papers), regardless of the age of the student, on school grounds, on property adjacent to the school, or at any school function. Tobacco products and paraphernalia will be confiscated from students and not returned to them. In addition, parents will be called, and possible consequences issued.

If any staff member sees a student with a tobacco product or vaping paraphernalia, they will contact a member of the administrative team. The student will be brought into an office with an administrator and another staff member. The student will be asked to empty their pockets, backpacks and shoes/socks. If a tobacco product or vaping paraphernalia is found, it will be confiscated by the administrator. The student's parent will be called to notify them. Possible consequences may be issued to the student as well as contact made with the home school district.

GANGS

Acacia Academy forbids any gang affiliations or visible symbols of gang affiliation or representation. A gang is defined as a group, club or organization of two or more persons, whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. While on Acacia property and when attending an Acacia sponsored event, students may not wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items with gang related symbols. Acacia students are prohibited from soliciting others for membership in any gangs, harassing or threatening any person, committing an illegal act, or inciting other students to act with physical violence upon another person. Gang graffiti or symbols on assignments, in lockers, tattoos or on clothing are prohibited. Failure to follow this policy may result in immediate suspension or change of school placement.

BULLYING POLICY

The Illinois General Assembly finds that a safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve and that bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students and interferes with students' ability to learn and participate in school activities.

Bullying, may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive. It shall be a violation of this policy and State law for any school community member (students, school employees, volunteers, parents, guardians, community members) to bully another school community member through conduct or communications.

No school community member shall be subjected to bullying:

1. During a school-sponsored activity or event;
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses, or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities; or
3. Through the transmission or posting of information or content from use of school technology, devices, or networks, or use of non-school owned technology, devices, or networks if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the education process or orderly operation of a school.

The Illinois laws and definitions regarding bullying are listed below:

Bullying Definition:

For purposes of this policy, "bullying" means any severe or persuasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student

or students that results in an imbalance of power and has or can be reasonable predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to a student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student(s)' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student(s)' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student(s)' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying shall include cyber-bullying. For purposes of this policy, "cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectric system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications involving the transmission from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the District of school within the District, if the bullying causes any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying above, any substantial disruption to the education process or orderly operation of the school. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of the posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Policy. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this policy.

Bullying may take various forms, including, without limitations, any retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Bullying/Harassment: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 (2010) defines bullying and prohibits it in the school environment on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. No student shall be subject to bullying during any school-sponsored education program or activity, while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the bus, at schools-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities, or through the transmission of information from a school computer, school computer network or other similar electronic school equipment. Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment,

sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Cyber Bullying: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 (2010) prohibits bullying (as defined in the statute) in the school environment and includes in its definition of bullying electronic communications. Bullying is specifically prohibited through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment. 105 ILCS 135/1-2 (2008) defines harassment through electronic communications. The definition includes “making any obscene comment, request, suggestion or proposal with an intent to offend,” and “threatening injury to the person or to the property of the person to whom the electronic communication is directed or to any of his family or household members.” Violation of the provisions of the statute will result in a class B misdemeanor.

Reporting Procedures:

Students are encouraged to report any act of bullying to any staff member at Acacia (teacher, paraprofessional, administration, related service staff). Any report will be reported immediately to the administration.

- Anonymous reporting: info@acaciaacademy.com
- Email Options: info@acaciaacademy.com, Kbourdage@acaciaacademy.com, lmconnell@acaciaacademy.com, melissaburns@acaciaacademy.com, swinstead@acaciaacademy.com
- Written form: Bully Box located in Ms. Kacey’s office
- Report by phone: Main building phone number: 708-579-9040

Acacia shall maintain procedures for reporting bullying, including (without limitation):

- Identifying and providing the school email addresses (if applicable) and school telephone number for the staff person(s) responsible for receiving such reports
- Procedures for anonymous reporting; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of any anonymous report
- Procedures to promptly, and in accordance with applicable laws and rules governing student privacy rights, inform parents and guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident or bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the administration shall promptly inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Investigation of Reports of Bullying:

Full implementation of this policy includes conducting a prompt and thorough investigation of all reported incidents of bullying. Acacia shall maintain procedures for promptly investigating reports of bullying, including (without limitations):

1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the alleged bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying
2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process
3. Notifying the principal or school administrator or his or her designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received
4. Consistent with Federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights and providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religious based views protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

Acacia's Strategies for Bully Prevention/Intervention:

Acacia promotes a welcoming, caring, safe environment for all students to learn. Acacia staff stresses to our students the importance of respect and empathy – feeling what another is feeling. The following practices are in place for the promotion of acceptance, tolerance and respect:

- Acacia's yearly Student and Parent Handbook will include a copy of our "Bullying Policy" along with an anti-bullying pledge that will be signed by each student.
- The Bullying Policy will also be made available to all families and staff members on Acacia's website
- The Bullying Policy is available to all staff on Office 365
- Once in school administration will assess the level of respect in our building by having students fill out bully/victim rating scales. Information will be compiled and data reported to students and staff.
- Administration, staff, and students will determine building "hot spots" and increase student monitoring in those areas.
- Each grade level will implement class level discussions and activities about bullying.
- Students will be acknowledged for respectful behavior.

Acacia's Response to Bullying:

Acacia's response model will clearly label "bullying" as unacceptable, build awareness, and help students develop the skills, empathy, and insights they need to interact respectfully with others. Staff will work with the "bullied," "bully" and "the bystanders" by intervening, investigating, reporting, and remediating.

When bullying is suspected, staff will intervene immediately, document the information, talk to the students involved separately and help other understand how to prevent future incidents. When bullying is confirmed, staff will intervene immediately, investigate, document the information, and make plans for remediating.

If bullying continues, parent phone calls/conferences will be made or scheduled. Based on the severity/repeat offenses consequences and remediation will be issued.

The information below should be considered a guideline for Acacia practices (Interventions, Consequences):

Low severity/Repeat Offenses Written warning, detention, parent notification, in-school Suspension, out of school suspension, apology, behavioral contract, assignment on bullying, parent meeting, student to meet with school social worker/ psychologist

High Severity/Repeat Offenses In school suspension, parent notification, out of school suspension, legal action, report to law enforcement, expulsion, apology, behavioral contract, additional pro-social skills Training, restitution, restorative practices

Low Severity/First Offense

Conference with student, temporary removal from classroom, loss of privileges, parent notification, reflective essay, apology, social skills training

High Severity/Low Offenses Detention, report to law enforcement, parent notification, in school suspension, out of school suspension, apology, behavioral contract, assignment on bullying, parent meeting, meet with school social worker/psychologist

www.stopbullying.gov

Matrix from DuPage County Anti-Bullying Task Force Bullying Protocol

Ramifications:

If it has been determined, following investigation, that an incident of bullying as occurred, then the Acacia Administration may take actions it deems appropriate to address the situation, including, without limitation, social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, and community-based services. Local law enforcement may be contacted if violence or threat of violence is involved and as otherwise deemed appropriate by the Acacia Administration.

“Restorative measure” refers to a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsion, that 1. are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, 2. contribute to maintaining school safety, 3. protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, 4. teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society 5. serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and 6. reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students’ behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

All Acacia employees, agents and students are prohibited from reprisal or retaliating against any person who reports an act of bullying and the consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation. Any person who is found to have falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying shall be subject to remedial action as deemed appropriate by the Acacia Administration.

Acacia will evaluate the effectiveness of the Policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as:

- The frequency of victimization
- Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school
- Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs
- The types of bullying that are common or occurring
- Bystander intervention or participation
- The information developed as part of the evaluation process must be posted on the school website (Acacia Student and Parent Handbook).

The Bullying Policy aligns with the other policies of Acacia Academy.

Process to Investigate:

The Policy or implementing procedure shall include a process to investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of Acacia's jurisdiction. Acacia shall provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within Acacia and the community, such as counseling, support services and other programs.

Acacia shall develop and maintain a program that educates students, parents, teachers, and other school community members about conditions that foster bullying and means to help prevent or stop bullying, including setting expectations that preventing and stopping bullying is a duty shared by all school community members.

This policy is based on engagement with a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians. This policy is posted where other policies are posted in the school. This policy shall be posted on Acacia's school website, included in the Parent and Student Handbook, on Office 365 for all staff and new employees, and made available on TeacherEase during the registration process. This policy is distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel.

Date of Policy Revision: 7/2025

This policy will be reviewed and revised, if necessary, every 2 years, and submitted to bullyingpolicy@isbe.net.

Acacia Academy's Anti-Bullying Pledge

We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally. We should all feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, nationality, and economic background.

Bullying is cruel intentional physical, verbal, and/or relational (social/emotional) behavior that occurs **over time**. Bullying is actions that are used to intentionally control, ostracize, intimidate, hurt, frighten and/or torment others. These actions could be repeated and/or random.

- Physical – pushing, physical contact, bumping, blocking hallways
- Verbal – name calling, gossiping, spreading rumors, taunting
- Relational (social/emotional) – excluding or rejecting students from their peer group
- Cyber Bullying – using technology to intimidate or threaten others such as chat rooms, text messaging, on-line posting, personal pages, e-mail, social networking sites such as Facebook, etc.

Students agree to:

1. Value student differences and treat others with respect.
2. Not become involved in bullying incidents or be a bully.
3. Be aware of the school’s policies and support system with regard to bullying.
4. Report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying to a faculty member.
5. Be alert in places around the school where there is less adult supervision such as bathrooms, corridors, and stairwells.
6. Support students who have been or are subjected to bullying.
7. Talk to teachers and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying.
8. Work with other students and faculty to help the school deal with bullying effectively.
9. Provide a good role model for younger students and support them if bullying occurs.
10. Acknowledge that whether I am being a bully or see someone being bullied, if I do not report or stop it, I am not helping others feel safe at school.

MANDATED REPORTERS

All school personnel are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

TITLE IX AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), is a Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. All public and private schools receiving any Federal funds must comply with Title IX. Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion. All public and private schools are required to have a Title IX Coordinator. A **Title IX Coordinator** is the individual designated by the school to coordinate compliance with **Title IX**, including overseeing all sex discrimination complaints and identifying and addressing any patterns or systematic problems that arise during the review of such complaints.

Acacia Academy Title IX Coordinators and Contact Information:

Amy Judd / Business Office / ajudd@acaciaacademy.com / 708.639.4222

Lana McConnell / Co-Principal / lmcconnell@acaciaacademy.com / 708.579.9040

Melissa Burns / Co-Principal / melissaburns@acaciaacademy.com / 708.579.9040

Kacey Bourdage / Assistant Principal / kbourdage@acaciaacademy.com / 708.579.9040

Susan Winstead / Social Worker / swinstead@acaciaacademy.com / 708.579.9040

Michael Orlos / Social Worker / morlos@acaciaacademy.com / 708.579.9040

Under Title IX:

- Effective August 14th 2020, students now have greater control over whether to file a formal complaint. Previously, schools were required to investigate any complaint of sexual harassment, even when complainant didn't want it investigated.
- Anyone, including bystanders, can report sexual harassment and put the school on notice. Reports can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, to a coordinator via phone, mail, or email.
- All Acacia Title IX coordinators have training on definition of sexual harassment. All Title IX coordinators are trained to implement supportive measures, conduct an investigation, and follow grievance process.
- Anyone can report an incident to any school employee, regardless of that person's job description. Any employee that has notice of allegations of sexual harassment (student or staff), must report it and the school must respond.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

(1) any instance of *quid pro quo* harassment by a recipient's employee;

(2) any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access; and

(3) any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), **dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking** as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Definition of Stalking: Any conduct that will cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, resulting in emotional distress. Can occur online or in-person. Even a single instance of stalking can constitute sexual harassment.

Includes forcible or non-forcible sex offenses based on lack of consent on part of victim.

Response to a Report of Sexual Harassment:

1. Title IX Coordinator(s) will promptly contact the person who filed the complaint and inform them of their right to request supportive measures, whether or not the person decides to file complaint.
2. Title IX Coordinator(s) will consider alleged victim's wishes and offer supportive measures.
3. Title IX Coordinator(s) will explain to complainants that they have an option and process for filing a formal complaint
 - a. If a complainant or their parent/guardian or the schools Title IX coordinator signs a formal complaint, the school must follow the grievance process.
4. Title IX Coordinator(s) cannot pressure an individual into filing or NOT filing formal complaint or participating in a grievance process.
5. Title IX Coordinators will investigate **every** formal complaint and take it seriously. Even if a formal complaint is not made, documentation of the grievance process will be recorded and supportive measures for the complainant.

Range of Supportive Measures:

- Even if a student has not filed a formal complaint, they are still entitled to supportive measures.
- Title IX Coordinators will implement non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services without fee or charge to the complainant, preserving equal access to the school's education program without unreasonably burdening the other party.
- Supportive measures will be designed to protect the safety of the parties or the school's educational environment
- Some examples of supportive measures include: counseling, extensions of deadlines, modifications of work/schedule, building escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, leaves of absence, increased security, monitoring of campus.

How to File a Formal Complaint:

- Anyone can report an incident to any school employee, regardless of that person's job description. Any employee that has notice of allegations of sexual harassment (student or staff), must report it and the school must respond.
- Reporting sexual harassment does not trigger formal complaint process. In order to file a formal complaint, a written request with a signature of the complainant is required.
- Upon receipt of a formal complaint, school must initiate the grievance process.
 - o The grievance process...
 - Provides due process and fundamentally fair procedures
 - Provides both parties with notice of the allegations
 - Requires an investigation that allows both parties to inspect and review the evidence
 - Provides written determination regarding responsibility
 - Provides an opportunity for both parties to appeal

- A live hearing is NOT required for K-12 schools
- Reporting under Title IX is different and distinct from reporting to law enforcement
 - o Acacia school officials can and will contact law enforcement as needed.
 - o Law enforcement does not relieve a school of their obligations. Acacia is still responsible for concluding the grievance process within a prompt timeline. Acacia may temporarily delay the grievance process for concurrent law enforcement activity but must provide written notice to complainant and respondent.
- If there is an immediate threat to the physical safety, Acacia may remove a respondent from the educational environment on an emergency basis. We will provide respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge decision immediately following the removal.
- Acacia will follow the grievance process to determine whether the respondent is responsible for the alleged sexual harassment.

Privacy Protections:

- Acacia must not use or attempt to use questions or evidence that is protected by a legal recognized privilege, unless the person holding the privilege waives the privilege.
- Acacia cannot access or consider a party’s records, if they are maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, or other professional and made for the purpose of providing treatment to the party. These records can only be accessed with a party’s voluntary written consent.
- During an investigation, questions/evidence about complainant’s prior sexual behavior are never deemed relevant.
 - o Exceptions: to prove consent or to prove someone other than the respondent committed the alleged harassment.

For More Information Visit: www.ed.gov/OCR

To file a civil rights complaint with OCR: ocrcas.ed.gov

TEACHER EASE

Acacia Academy uses the website, www.TeacherEase.com, to take attendance, collect student information, assign student work, and communicate with parents and students. Please email: lmconnell@acaciaacademy.com if you are not registered for TeacherEase and you will be emailed a welcome letter with your TeacherEase password. After you have received your password, you will have the capability to see grades, assignments, and email teachers.

STANDARD BASED GRADING

The term standards-based refers to a system of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that is based on students demonstrating understanding or mastery of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. When using standards based approaches to educate students, teachers develop standards at each level or for

each course/ subject taught. Learning standards are concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. These learning standards determine the goals of a unit or course and allow teachers to determine how and what to teach students, so they achieve the learning expectations described in the standards.

With Standards Based Grading (SBG), students receive scores (on a scale 1-4) that represent their proficiency in each of the standards that are being assessed. This grading system provides an avenue for all stakeholders to gain clear feedback on what standards or skills each student has mastered and what standards or skills each student still needs to work towards mastering.

MISSING WORK POLICY

- Students are required to complete missing work as presented by their classroom teacher. The number of days a student is absent will determine how many days they have upon return to make up the missing work.
- Students will have extended time determined by the teacher/admin to make up work.
- Students may also work with staff during lunchtime to make up assignments.

If a student is chronically absent:

- Teacher will continue to set aside missing work
- Teacher will provide only necessary assignments to meet standards
- Teacher will continue to move forward with their current lesson
- Student will work with the staff in the room to make up past lessons during class and at lunchtime
- Students with attendance below 75% will be assessed with the support of their home district team to determine if credit will be earned

Regarding Related Services: If a student misses class due to related services, please provide the student with completed notes. Students should not be penalized for missing class.

ELEARNING AND REMOTE LEARNING POLICY

Acacia Academy has adopted an eLearning Program school-wide that shall permit student instruction to be received electronically or through hard copy while students are not physically present in school due to emergency closing. Remote learning will take place in the event of a mandated school closure or quarantine.

- eLearning days will take place on assigned days from the hours of 9:00AM – 2:30PM.
- Students will log into TeacherEase using their student account (Acacia assigned email and password) at 9:00AM to view student assignments and/or virtual links.

- Once in TeacherEase, students will select:
 - Academic
 - Assignments
 - Check that the date is selected for the correct date.
 - You will see each class, assignment, and virtual link if needed.
- All assignments will be posted in TeacherEase. To view assignments from previous or future days, select the date on the calendar tab.
- Teachers will be available virtually from 9:00AM – 11:00AM for student support as needed.
- Teachers may host virtual sessions at specific times.
- During virtual sessions, direct instruction will be provided to students.
- While participating in virtual learning, students will receive support in a small group or one to one using breakout rooms.
- Students will be expected to complete daily assignments and summative assessments.
- Grades will be issued according to general guidelines (SBG grades will be issued).
- Student attendance will be entered based on completion of work.
- Monitoring of student IEP goals will continue to take place during eLearning days.
- Related service providers will notify students of their service schedule which will remain as consistent as possible.
- Non-electronic materials will be available to students who do not have access to technology.
- Work completed by students will be provided to teachers through TeacherEase upload feature or by email.

VIDEO CONFERENCING POLICY

Acacia Academy uses Microsoft TEAMS as our video communication platform. If Acacia Academy uses a remote or eLearning learning model, students may be required to use video conferencing with Acacia teachers and related service staff. To make sure video conferencing sessions are secure, students are prohibited from sharing TEAMS links with non-Acacia students/staff. Upon signing in to TEAMS, students must (1) show their face so staff can verify identification (microphone and camera turned on) and (2) use their full name so that staff know which student is present in the session. Students are expected to follow all teacher directions and behavior expectations while participating in video conferencing sessions.

REPORT CARDS

Acacia Academy issues report cards and benchmark updates four times a year. All district students will receive copies of their goal updates along with their report cards. Parents and students will have access to student report cards via TeacherEase. Acacia Academy requires that you pay any financial obligations, in full by the end of each semester in order to receive any grades, credits, transcripts, or other reports.

STUDENT SCHEDULES + PROGRESS REPORTS

Midway through each quarter, Acacia Academy's teachers may send progress reports to parents/guardians, if a student is working below his/her expected performance level. The progress report may also indicate that a student has improved since the last report card. A teacher will not give a failing grade to a student at the quarter or semester unless the teacher has issued a progress report *or* communicated with a parent/guardian. Acacia Academy staff may also notify the parents/guardians of a student by phone if the student is working below his/her expected performance level. In addition, we may suggest a conference with the parents or guardian(s) and student.

Please keep in mind that student schedules and class rosters are subject to change throughout the school year. These changes occur for a variety of reasons (*staff changes, student needs, enrollment changes, class changes, etc*). Acacia reserves the right to make changes to class rosters at any time during the year.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Two designated parent teacher conferences are held during the school year. Parents or teachers may initiate informal conferences throughout the school year as needed.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS FOR PRIVATE STUDENTS

The Board of Directors calculates tuition rates based upon the cost of education for each student, which includes the cost of all academic programs, facility operation and maintenance, and administration costs. We do not send monthly invoices or statements so please use your tuition schedule to make the monthly payments. Regular monthly tuition payments are due on or before the first of each month. *We will extend a ten-day grace period before charging a \$35.00 late payment fee.* You may call the Business Office to arrange a special payment plan for extenuating circumstances. All monthly tuition payments and fees must remain current or Acacia Academy will drop the student from the school program.

Acacia Academy requires that you keep all financial obligations current in order to receive any grades, credits, transcripts, or other reports. We charge a \$30.00 fee for any check returned to us from the bank for non-sufficient funds. After two **NSF** checks, we require payments made via Visa, MasterCard, money order, cashier's check, or cash. If you believe your local school district will assist you with your tuition and fees, we will gladly help you. However, we do require that you pay the regular tuition payments until Acacia Academy receives a signed contract and the school district begins making payments. We will reimburse any duplication of tuition payments to you.

ADDRESS AND FAX INFORMATION

LaGrange Campus:

6425 Willow Springs Rd

LaGrange, IL 60525
 Phone: 708-579-9040
 Fax: 708-491-0131

Burr Ridge Campus/Business Office/Mailing Address:

6880 N. Frontage Road, Suite 100
 Burr Ridge, IL 60527
 Phone: 708-639-4222
 Fax: 708-491-0131

WEBSITE: www.acaciaacademy.com

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Staff Member	Role	Email
Kathie Fouks	Director/Chief Administrator	Kfouks@acaciaacademy.com
Lana McConnell	Co-Principal	Lmcconnell@acaciaacademy.com
Melissa Burns	Co-Principal	Melissaburns@acaciaacademy.co
Kacey Bourdage	Assistant Principal	Kbourdage@acaciaacademy.com
Michael Orlos	Social Worker	Morlos@acaciaacademy.com
Susan Winstead	Social Worker	Swinstead@acaciaacademy.com
Shelley Kraus	Occupational Therapist	skraus@acaciaacademy.com
Jamie Zarling	Speech Therapist	jzarling@acaciaacademy.com
Jen Philip	Speech Therapist	Jphilip@acaciaacademy.com
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Shagufta Wilson	Teacher	Swilson@acaciaacademy.com
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