# Table of Contents

HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS .................................................. 3
TEACHER EXPECTATIONS ............................................................................. 3
HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY ..................................................................... 4
FOUNDING PRINCIPLES ............................................................................ 4
A. VISION STATEMENT .............................................................................. 4
B. MISSION STATEMENT: ........................................................................... 4
C. PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMY .................................................................. 5
ACADEMIC PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: .................................................... 5
THE HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY'S SUCCESS: ........................................ 5
ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP): .................................................. 6
SUPPORT PROGRAMS .................................................................................. 6
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION OPTIONS (PSEO): ............................... 6
AFTER SCHOOL TUTORIAL: ....................................................................... 6
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES: ............................................................. 7
CITIZENSHIP AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: ............ 7
DISCIPLINE: .............................................................................................. 8
STUDENT CODES OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES: ....................................... 8
PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING A VIOLATION ........................................ 9
CULTURAL DIVERSITY: .............................................................................. 9
TECHNOLOGY: .......................................................................................... 10
PARENT INVOLVEMENT: .......................................................................... 10
PARENT VOLUNTEERS: ............................................................................. 10
1. Classroom Assistants: ......................................................................... 10
2. Field Trip Chaperones: ......................................................................... 10
3. Chaperones for Extra-Curricular Activities: ........................................ 10
Martin Luther King, Jr. Earn As You Learn Scholarship Program: ......... 10
REPORT CARDS AND PARENT CONFERENCES: .................................. 11
STANDARDS OF LEARNING: .................................................................. 11
GENERAL INFORMATION ........................................................................... 11
ATTENDANCE: .......................................................................................... 11
STUDENT ABSENCES: ............................................................................. 11
HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY HIGHLIGHTS

- Focus of the Academy is leadership development
- Located adjacent to Concordia University at 1381 Marshall Avenue in St. Paul
- Creates and maintains a socially committed, morally responsible, and ethnically diverse learning environment
- Values students individually and collectively
- Encourages maximum intellectual and leadership development in students
- Provides a comprehensive academic curriculum
- Provides “earn as you learn” scholarships for students from the kindergarten through 12th grade that can be used by students upon entering college
- Provides a college preparatory curriculum
- Promotes post-secondary options for students while in high school
- Curriculum is Afro-centric, student centered, discovery oriented, multicultural, service based, and interdisciplinary
- Promotes experiential service learning opportunities
- Promotes community partnerships
- Provides computer for students in each classroom
- Is a technology based school with an online curriculum
- Provides mentors and tutors
- Promotes parent involvement in the governance of the Academy, and active involvement of parents in the education of their children

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

- Come to class every day
- Be prepared for all your classes
- Be flexible
- Upgrade your skills constantly
- Take an active role in school programs/activities over and above your classroom assignment
- Be properly groomed
- Be a good role model to students
- Support the school’s mission to the best of your ability
- Respect parents, respect students, respect colleagues, and expect the same in return
- Avoid unnecessary relationships with students
- Maintain confidentiality of student information
- Do not conduct and/or participate in studies that compromise the interests of students and/or use students as research subjects
- Do not form cliques
- Avoid gossiping
- Take an active role in curriculum renewal
- Strive to educate the “whole child”
- Do not label students; all students in your classroom are able individuals who can effectively handle the learning task
• Always seek the support of the appropriate management team in times of crisis
• Avoid impulsive behavior
• Remember, Higher Ground Academy is a place to cooperate not to compete against each other; leave your ego at home
• The students are not the problem; we are here to serve them

HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY
The Higher Ground Academy Charter School opened September 7, 1999 and is a college preparatory school located at 1381 Marshall Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota. The focus of the Academy is to provide a comprehensive K-12th grade program of instruction. The Academy will begin this school year with an approximate enrollment of 700 students.

Higher Ground Academy is committed to instituting innovative, comprehensive and multifaceted programs for students, families, and the community. Higher Ground Academy, having as part of its overall mission the preparation of its students for post-secondary education, recognizes that some students will pursue a traditional four-year liberal arts program, while others will seek to avail themselves of a technical-vocational college degree programs. To assist in this process, the Academy has developed a Career Exploration curriculum and College Scholarship Resource Program to expose high school students to a range of technical and professional career opportunities and assist them in assessing and planning for their future.

Higher Ground Academy recognizes and appreciates that we are now in the “computer age” and that as a minimum our children, in order to take their place on the world’s stage, must be well-grounded with an educational foundation that includes not only the basics but all of the emerging technologies. In response to this challenge, the Academy has instituted a virtual or computer based curriculum that covers the core areas on language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. A computer lab is provided and there is a minimum of 10 computer workstations available in each K-12 classroom.

FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

A. VISION STATEMENT:
Higher Ground Academy is committed to the proposition that all students can learn successfully that success results in further success and that schools create and control the conditions under which learners succeed. Also parents, educators, learners, and the community share in the responsibility which treats all stakeholders as significant resources for every learner’s successful education.

B. MISSION STATEMENT:
Higher Ground Academy’s mission is to create a socially committed, morally responsible, and ethnically diverse learning environment that values students individually and collectively. The goal is to encourage maximum intellectual and leadership development in students through exposure to a comprehensive academic oriented curriculum that is enhanced both by the philosophy and learning approaches of the Efficacy Development Model and by extensive
experiential community service-learning opportunities. To this end, students graduating from the Higher Ground Academy will meet 21st century standards of education, be adequately prepared to pursue post-secondary and post-baccalaureate studies, and be capable of assuming leadership roles in their communities and respective fields of endeavor.

**C. PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMY:** The Academy’s philosophy that becoming ‘smart’ is a lifelong process based on technique and is a learnable, teachable process of development which resides in confidence and productive effort that, in turn, results in effective development. Based on this belief, the Academy will promote positive student self-esteem and thereby develop their capacity and desire to commit to learning, through both curriculum components and parental support. The Academy will help children understand that through hard work and effective expenditure of effort they can ‘get smart’, thereby placing the child in control - the decision about becoming smart is now in his or her own hands. Children are empowered and motivated by the realization that they can choose to “get smart and stay smart” and many armed with this knowledge will choose to stay in school.

Research has shown that when teachers set high expectations for students they get high results and when they set low expectations they get low results. Efficacy principles require that teachers set very high expectations for all students and that these expectations be communicated and shared with the students. Students are taught that: “If you believe in yourself, if you think you can, then you will be able to work hard at what you are trying to learn. And if you really work and don’t give up - you will learn. You will get smart.”

“Smart is not just something that you are, smart is something you can get.”

And to ensure that the students of the Higher Ground Academy do indeed “get it” there is a highly motivated, skilled, and capable support system, which is poised to implement an innovative, unique, and challenging academic program.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The curriculum components will improve student learning by effectively engaging them in their education through the “learning-doing continuum of education” that combines course-work, academic coaching, a comprehensive computer based on-line curriculum that is compliant with the Minnesota Graduation Standards.

Academic Core Courses are designed to meet Minnesota Graduation Standards and are instructed by licensed teachers assisted by appropriately certified community content experts. The curriculum is student-centered, flexible, interdisciplinary in approach, and focused on core courses in language arts, mathematics, computer science, social studies, natural science and technology. Other courses include physical education and fitness, world languages, the arts, and career exploration. Upper division students may elect to take some of their courses through post-secondary options at area colleges and universities.

Weekly homework packets are regularly assigned and students are expected to complete and return their homework assignment. These assignments will count as a portion of their course grade. Students should be encouraged to review work regularly; at least (4) four days a week, at a regular time and in a quiet place away from TV and other distractions. Research shows that students who do their homework enjoy their classes more and generally get better grades.

**THE HIGHER GROUND ACADEMY’S SUCCESS:** Higher Ground Academy offers a comprehensive Afro-Centric program of instruction that is designed to increase student
awareness and achievement by teaching a basic academic curriculum which meets the required Minnesota Graduation Standards.

The Academy’s success in increasing student achievement is based on the “learning approaches” used to teach the curriculum. The learning approaches utilize the Efficacy Principles of Teaching, developed by the Massachusetts-based, non-profit Efficacy Institute. The goal of the Efficacy Principles of Teaching is to promote the academic and social development of all children to their fullest potential. The Efficacy Principles replace the notion that intelligence is fixed, immutable, and unequally distributed with the idea that intelligence can be developed.

All children can act on their intelligence if they begin with a set of beliefs about their capacity, acquire the confidence resulting from their experience of success, and become skilled at making renewed and continuous effective efforts to learn and improve.

The Academy’s success in increasing student achievement is also based on its fundamental departure from the traditional school in its inclusion of “experiential community service learning” as an integral component of the curriculum. For example, Academy middle and secondary students (grades 6-12), having been recipients of excellent tutoring in turn, model that learning skill by tutoring students in reading and mathematics.

As a result, Higher Ground Academy is ranked among the best comprehensive charter schools in Minnesota.

**ADEQUATE YearLY PROGRESS (AYP):** AYP is the measure that the Minnesota Department of Education uses to determine high and low performing schools. Schools must demonstrate continuous and substantial academic improvement in nine different subgroups based on student’s ethnicity, their eligibility for free and reduced meals, disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.

Higher Ground Academy meets the State Department of Education’s standards of Adequate Yearly Progress and is therefore a qualified high performing school. Also over 80% Academy students pass the State’s Standard Test in reading, writing and mathematics as compared to 40% for African and African American students in the public schools. In order to retain this prestigious honor, the Academy, parents and students must be recommitted to hard work and continuous improvement in the school year 2014-2015.

**SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

**POST-SEONDARY EDUCATION OPTIONS (PSEO):** Higher Ground Academy 11th and 12th grade students are required to complete post-secondary options courses as a condition of graduation. The PSEO program is designed to allow high school juniors and seniors to earn credits toward their high school graduation and also have the credits apply to a post-secondary or academic program.

**AFTER SCHOOL TUTORIAL:** Higher Ground Academy closely monitors student progress in the core areas of reading, language arts and mathematics because, it is generally known that effective learning in these areas is fundamental to successful learning in all other areas.
Students who receive a grade F in any given quarter will be required to attend after school tutorial. Students who are on track to getting an F grade may also be required to attend the after-school tutorial. Attendance to these tutorials is mandatory to all the students identified. Missing a tutorial will count as an absence and would be considered the same as missing a class during the regular school day.

If a student attends the tutorials for an entire quarter and improves his/her grade to a D or higher, he/she will no longer be required to attend as long as the grades are kept at a D or above.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:** Parents considering enrollment in Higher Ground Academy Charter School are asked to plan with the school in order to meet any special needs their child might have in school; health needs, learning needs, or behavior needs.

Special Education Services are provided to students who are found eligible. These services include:

- **CHILD FIND:** Identify eligible children with disabilities.
- **EVALUATION:** Conduct non-discriminatory team evaluations to determine eligibility and a need for special education and related services.
- **IEP:** Develop an individualized education plan for those children found eligible and in need.
- **LRE:** Determine an appropriate placement in the least restrictive environment.
- **DUE PROCESS:** Afford parents their due process protections in relationship to evaluation, the IEP process, placement and services including right to a due process hearing.

Parents are requested to share information regarding any special education services their child has received in the past so that a program can be developed to meet the specific needs of their child. Parents are asked to participate in all aspects of the special education planning and to work closely with the school as the program is implemented for their child.

**CITIZENSHIP AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:** This program was developed to assist and work with students who break or violate the student code of conduct and causes disciplinary problems. Higher Ground Academy views discipline as a teaching and guiding function rather than a punitive function. Teaching and guiding students on how they should behave in certain situations is a central role and outcome of the Citizenship and Character Development Program.

When a student’s behavior or conduct is outside of the limits of the student code of conduct, he/she is referred to the Citizenship and Character Development Program. A review is done to assist the student in recognizing, identifying; and taking ownership for their contribution to the problem. The student stating what corrective action he/she will take in the future enters into a contract or agreement.

If the student again violates the student code of conduct, additional consequences can be added including assignment to the in school Chore Corps Program and depending on the seriousness of the situation, home based suspension can be instituted.
DISCIPLINE: School discipline yields success for schools. At Higher Ground Academy, the goal is to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. We encourage accountability, personal responsibility for actions, learning, and self-guidance by the student in their daily interactions that support and are aligned with the philosophy of the Higher Ground Academy. In the classrooms, the goal is to maintain a climate of cooperation, enthusiasm, mutual respect, and purposeful activities. Although the teacher sets the expectations for the class, students will be afforded opportunities to voice their concerns about expectations and how the expectations will be enforced. Higher Ground Academy recognizes that common expectations, consistent enforcement, and logical consequences for behavior, help students grow in becoming responsible for their actions. Each teacher has the authority and is expected to intervene, when necessary, if the conduct of students dictates.

When a middle or high school student violates the following student code of conduct, a teacher or any other staff member documents the student’s conduct and follow-up by referring him/her to the Citizenship and Character Development Program. The program coordinator will work with the student as outlined in the above section on Citizenship and Character Development. Reasons for disciplinary action of a student include the following violations of the

STUDENT CODES OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES:
- Profanity, obscene, or offensive language.
- Violation of the school districts weapons policy.
- Hazing.
- Using, possessing, and/or distribution of tobacco or any paraphernalia.
- Using, possessing, and/or distributing weapons or other dangerous objects.
- Using, possessing, and/or distributing items or articles that are illegal or harmful to persons or property including, but not limited to drug paraphernalia.
- Gambling, including, but not limited to playing a game of chance for stakes.
- School bus/transportation and safety rules violation.
- Possession/distribution of slanderous, libelous, and/or pornographic materials.
- Possession of nuisance devices or objects that cause distractions including, but not limited to pagers, radios, phones, games and/or toys(cards of any kind) unless requested in writing by teacher.
- Student’s attire and personal grooming that creates a danger to health, safety, and disruption to the educational process, including clothing which bears some messages that are lewd, vulgar, and/or obscene apparel promoting products and/or activities that are illegal for use by minors, or clothing containing objectionable emblems, signs, words, objects, and pictures communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group or which connotes gang membership.
- Sexual abuse and/or harassment, actions, including fighting or any other assaulting behavior, which causes or could cause injury to the student or other persons or which otherwise, endangers the health, safety, or welfare of teachers, students, other school district personnel or other persons.
- Attendance problems including, absenteeism, and/or leaving school grounds without permission.
- Violent opposition to authority.
- Using, possessing, distributing, and or being under the influence of narcotics or other controlled substances, except prescribed by a physician.
Possession, use, and/or distribution of explosives and any compound mixture, the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion.

Acts disruptive to the educational process, including but not limited to, disobedience, disruptive or disrespectful behavior defiance of authority, cheating, insolence, insubordination, failure to identify oneself, improper activation of Fire alarms, or bomb threats.

Violation of directives or guidelines relating to lockers or improperly gaining access to school locker.

Falsification of any records, by documents notes or signatures.

Tampering with, changing and/or altering records or documents of the school district by any method including, but not limited to computer access or other electronic means.

Physical and/or verbal threats, including, but not limited to the staging of reporting dangerous or hazardous situations that do not exist.

Inappropriate abusive threatening, or demeaning actions based in race, color, creed religion, sex, marital status in regards to public assistance, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.

**PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING A VIOLATION** is as follows:

a) The first violation will be handled by the teacher or other staff member and parents notified.

b) Second violation will be handled by the Citizenship and Character Development Program and parents will be notified.

c) Third violation will be handled by the Director of the Academy and parents will be notified and must be present at disciplinary meeting. Parent input will be sought as to corrective actions to be taken. The Director, following consultation with parent, will prescribe appropriate corrective actions for which the parent will be responsible for implementing.

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY:** Approximately 85% of Higher Ground Academy’s student body is composed of new immigrant East African students. Consistent with the Academy’s belief that the curriculum and school environment should be, to the extent possible; reflective of the cultural experiences of the learner our Afro-Centric curriculum has been further diversified to reflect these communities.

Most East African students attending the Academy are Muslims and are required by their religion to pray 5 times each day, 2 of which may occur during the school day. In the spirit of reasonable accommodations, appropriate space and time are provided for students and staff to perform their prayers. In addition, pork is excluded from school meals. Also, as is done with other religious holidays, the Academy is closed in for the Eid celebration.

In terms of instruction, ESL courses are available for students; bilingual courses for secondary students and evening ESL courses are available for adults. Arabic is taught as a world language that can be used to fulfill one of the Minnesota Graduation requirements. In addition the Academy supports student’s election to wear traditional clothing, including wearing the hijab.
TECHNOLOGY: Technology is a major goal of Higher Ground Academy. Through use of technology, our students are being prepared for effective participation in the 21st century. Technology will continue to play a vital role in the teaching and learning process at the Academy. All classrooms are supported with cutting edge technologies, i.e., LCD panels, microcomputers, computer networks, television, modems, video-disc, CD-ROM, satellite, software, etc.

The Academy’s core K-12 curriculum is computer-based and can be accessed from all classrooms and computer labs. Since the curriculum is online, students can progress at their pace. Also, the system has built-in assessment and monitoring capacity thus allowing that potentially no student should be left behind.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: Parents are a vital and integral component, without which the mission and vision of Higher Ground Academy could not be realized. Parents are involved in the governance of Higher Ground Academy and serve on the permanent board of directors. They are involved throughout the decision-making process of the school and assist in making broad policy decisions that will help guide the day-to-day ongoing operations of the school-including curriculum design, budget, facilities, staffing, and measurement of outcomes.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS: Each parent is expected to provide at least 2 hours per month of volunteer service to Higher Ground Academy. The school Parent Liaison staff will schedule parents for their volunteer activities. Some of the volunteer activities include the following:

1. Classroom Assistants: The ideal site for parents to provide volunteer services is in Kindergarten through 5th grade classrooms where small groups of students’ lesson reviews are on the computer. A parent liaison staff will provide training to parents. Parents will develop skills and learn techniques for supervising, monitoring and reviewing student progress. Parents can in turn use these new skills and techniques when assisting and supporting their children in doing the required homework assignments.

2. Field Trip Chaperones: Higher Ground Academy recognizes that experiential learning is an important part of the overall educational process. Well thought out field trips that are linked to the curriculum and lesson plans can provide rich experiential learning opportunities. It is a goal of the Academy that the instructional activities of each classroom will provide for a field trip each month during the regular school year. Parents are encouraged to serve as volunteer chaperones for school field trips.

3. Chaperones for Extra-Curricular Activities: A variety of extra-curricular activities and programs are regularly scheduled at Higher Ground Academy. Some are scheduled during the school day while others are scheduled after school and on weekends. Adult supervision is necessary for some of the activities and in addition to teachers, parents make ideal supervisory chaperones.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Earn As You Learn Scholarship Program: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Earn As You Learn Scholarship program is designed to provide each deserving
student with a scholarship for higher education upon graduation and acceptance into an accredited liberal arts or technical college. The value of the scholarship will vary depending upon each individual student’s academic achievement, but could range up to $2,400.

A unique feature of this initiative is that students can begin earning scholarship credits when they enter kindergarten and continue earning credits at each grade level until they graduate from the Academy. The scholarship fund provides that a student can earn scholarship credits each marking period based on academic performance beginning in kindergarten through the 12th grade. Credits annually will be in the amount of $200, $175, and $100. The maximum a student can earn as a result of the fund is $2,400.

REPORT CARDS AND PARENT CONFERENCES: Report cards are issued four times a year, at nine-week intervals. The purpose of the report cards is to let parents see the strengths and weaknesses as does the teacher who in turn would evaluate and plan instructions accordingly. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of each report card marking period. Additional conferences can be scheduled at the request of either a parent or a teacher.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING: Higher Ground Academy is a college preparatory school. To that end the Academy has written a coherent and comprehensive curriculum that meets the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards of Learning for the Arts, Language Arts, and Mathematics, Science and Social Studies goes beyond. Higher Ground Academy adequately prepares students to participate in statewide assessment at the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, and 11th grade levels and other college entrance exams.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE: School hours begin promptly at 7:30a.m and end at 2:30 p.m. A student is considered tardy after 8:30a.m. Attendance is taken in homeroom and submitted to the office each morning. Thereafter, middle and secondary levels are required to submit class roles after each period. All parents/guardians are notified if a student does not report to school or class. Higher Ground Academy is a closed campus, therefore, no student is allowed off campus without written permission from the parent/guardian. Absences and tardiness can result in students attending Saturday class. Regular attendance is important to academic achievement.

STUDENT ABSENCES: Students should be in class every day. As absences disrupt the sequence of learning, parents/guardians should make every effort to keep within the laws to maintain proper attendance for their children. Those students that do not report to school and are consistently tardy for school are considered an unexcused absence. A parent/guardian is expected to call the school office between the hours of 9:00a.m and 10:00 a.m. to report that the student will not be in school. Early pick up of a student before dismissal requires a telephone call, note or letter from a parent/guardian prior to a
student leaving the Academy. The parent/guardian must pick up and sign the student out at the front desk only.

Your child must have a signed letter or note from home explaining the absence and the days missed when he/she returns to school. If the student returns without documentation this is considered an unexcused absence for the day(s) missed. Students are responsible for all lessons and assignments covered by the teacher that day.

**EXCUSED SCHOOL ABSENCES:**
- Sickness
- Health or Mental Health appointments (return to school slip)
- Extreme family emergencies
- Religious holidays

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:**
- Baby sitting
- Travel
- Too tired/Over slept
- Needed at home
- The weather
- Missed the bus or kicked off the bus
- Child is not immunized

**TRUANCY POLICY:** Higher Ground makes the final decision on accepting or denying the student for an excused absence. The school’s option is to use the Truancy Intervention Project (TIP) process as a referral resource. How the law defines or describes a Truant: A child between the ages of 5 and 16 is considered truant if he or she is absent without legal excuse for three (3) or more days or class periods. Children ages 16 and 17 will be considered truants if they have not lawfully withdrawn from school with their parents'/guardians’ permission. Higher Ground Academy does report truancy to Office of the Ramsey County Attorney. Information is reported and can be obtained through the Social Work office.

**TELEPHONE USE:** When contacting a teacher, phone the teacher’s voice mail. We ask that teachers not be interrupted during the day. Please do not interrupt classroom during the day to drop items off, give messages to your child, or talk to the teacher. Items may be left at front office and secretaries will see that they are delivered.

Students may use the phone at the discretion of the classroom teacher and with a telephone pass. We discourage calls by students asking to visit the home of another student. The telephone is for business and emergency calls only.

**FAMILY EMERGENCY:** Check with the office. Directions will be given. Changes in home or work telephone numbers should be reported immediately.

**FAMILY MOVES:** If you plan on moving and intend on the student remaining in the Academy, please notify the school immediately of the new address. With advance notice, we will be able to accommodate any changes in transportation.

**STUDENT WITHDRAWS FROM ACADEMY:** Notify the school. A written notice must be sent to the school office so that your child’s records may be transferred.
BUS RULES:
1. Follow the instructions of the driver promptly and courteously.
2. Keep things in your lap—not under the seat or in the aisle. Ask the driver where to place bulky things that cannot be held in your lap.
3. Do not bring sharp objects on the bus, for everyone’s safety.
4. Opening, closing, or adjusting windows will be done only at the direction of the bus driver. Do not extend or throw any objects out of the window.
5. First aid kits, flares, emergency doors, and two-way radios are for emergency use. Students must not tamper with any of the bus emergency equipment.
6. Fighting, spitting, teasing, wrestling, throwing objects, or littering will not be tolerated.
7. Respect the personal property of other students.
8. Animals and pets may not be brought on the bus.
9. Be courteous! Do not use profane or abusive language.
10. Keep the noise level down.
11. Individual students may be charged for damage to the bus.

Failure of a student to observe these rules could result in the loss of privilege of riding the school bus. A copy of bus rules will be sent home with all students for parents to go over with students. Students in grades K-12 will be tested over the rules and regulations of bus safety.

Bus Issues (Important Bus Information!)

How will I know which bus my child should ride?

A few days before school starts, you will receive a letter from the school. The letter will list all of the buses that come to Higher Ground Academy. It will tell which corners each bus stops at and at what time the bus comes to each corner. You will have to pick a bus that comes to a corner close to your house. Be sure that your child will not have to cross any busy streets to get to the bus stop that you pick. Your child may have to walk up to three blocks to get to the bus stop, depending on where you live. Students who ride the bus must live at least one mile from the school. If you are not sure about this, call the school.

In the bus letter you will find bus cards for each student. This card gives your child’s name and tells the name, address, and phone number of the school and of your home. As soon as the corners where your child is to be picked up and dropped off have been selected, write the information on your child’s bus card. Be sure to put the bus number on the card as well!

If more than one bus stops at my child’s pick-up corner, how will I know which bus is the right bus?
The letter that you receive will give a number for each bus. Please note the number of the bus you pick. The number will be posted in the window of the bus you pick close to the door of the bus. It is very important that you remember the number of your child’s bus and that they get on the bus with the right number.

**How will I know when the bus is coming?**

The time will be given in the letter. Please be at the corner at least five (5) minutes before the posted time.

**What if the bus does not come?**

At the beginning of the school year, there are usually many problems with the bus. If the bus you are expecting does not come, please call the school and we will report it to the bus company. If possible, you might want to have a ride available for your child for the first few days of school, just in case the bus doesn’t come.

**When can I expect my child to return from school each day?**

Our school day ends at 2:30pm. Usually, all children should be home within one hour except otherwise caught up in traffic. In some cases, it may be later for the first week or two until the drivers learn their routes. As a rule, if your child is not home by 4:30pm, you should call the bus company at 612-267-2060 for Minneapolis or 612-238-8080 or 612-238-2121 for St. Paul. Otherwise, just call the school 651-645-1000 and the transportation coordinator will assist you.

**What are the rules for children who ride the bus?**

Children are expected to follow the same rules on the bus as they follow at school.

**What will happen if my child does not follow the rules?**

In the state of Minnesota, riding a school bus is a privilege. When a student does not follow the rules on the bus, they lose this privilege. The first time a student does not follow the rules; the driver usually reminds them of the rules. If they continue to disregard the rules, the driver will write an official report to the assistant principal. The first time a student is reported for disobeying the rules, the parent/guardian is notified and sent a copy of the rules to review with their child and the principal reminds the student of the rules. The second time a student is reported; he or she is suspended from the bus for at least two days and must attend Saturday Bus Safety School and demonstrate that he or she knows the rules. The third time a student is reported; he or she is suspended from the bus for at least a week and must attend Saturday Bus Safety School. **If a student continues to disregard the bus rules, he or she may lose their privilege to ride the bus for the rest of the year.** If the student commits a Class I offense, he or she may immediately lose bus privileges for the rest of the year. Class I offenses include such things as possession of a gun, attempting to ride on the outside of a bus, running in front of a moving bus, or pushing another child in front of a moving bus.

**What should I do if my child will not be riding the bus home today?**
If your child usually rides the bus and you do not want your child to ride the bus home after school on a certain day, you must send a note to your child’s teacher the morning of that day. **All students will be sent home on the bus unless a note has been sent by the custodial parent.**

**DRESS CODE:**
The Higher Ground Academy supports the principle that student’s dress reflects their approach to their studies, the respect they have for themselves, and their behavior as it affects other students. We recommend that students dress modestly. And for students who elect, as a part of their cultural or religious tradition, to cover or wear a hijab, the Academy fully supports this option.

**FOOD SERVICE:** Higher Ground Academy will provide nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch for students. The meals will be prepared and handled by qualified and certified personnel through Caravan Kids Caterers. Prices for meals are set annually. Parents should appraise the Academy administration of any restricted dietary needs. All menu items are pork free.

**STUDENT LOCKERS:** Lockers are property of Higher Ground Academy and are loaned to students. Administration has the right to search school lockers as needed. Students are responsible for providing locks for their lockers and access to the lockers for the administration.
**SCHOOL SUPPLIES:** The following items have been identified by Higher Ground Academy as basic school supplies. Items on the list do not represent all supplies needed by students, but will serve the students for the start of school. Please check with the homeroom teacher for more details. Supplies are broken down by grade level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3, 4 &amp; 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pencil Sharpener</td>
<td>Pencil Box</td>
<td>Pencil Sharpener</td>
<td><strong>Spiral Notebooks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencil Box</td>
<td>Elmer’s Glue</td>
<td>Pencil Box</td>
<td>2 Red For Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Folders</td>
<td>Pocket Folders</td>
<td>Pocket Folders</td>
<td>2 Blue For Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharpened No. 2 Pencils</td>
<td>Sharpened No. 2 Pencils</td>
<td>Colored Pencils</td>
<td>2 Black For Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasers</td>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td>Pencils</td>
<td>2 Green For Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td>Colored Pencils</td>
<td>Erasers</td>
<td>1 Yellow For Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer’s Glue</td>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td><strong>Blue Compositions Notebook (4th Grade Only)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washable Markers</td>
<td>Watercolor Paints</td>
<td>Elmer’s Glue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide-Lined Notebooks</td>
<td>Washable Markers</td>
<td>Washable Markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glue Stick</td>
<td>Wide-Lined Notebooks</td>
<td>Wide-Lined Notebooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scissors Box Of Kleenex</td>
<td>Notebook</td>
<td>Scissors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll Of Paper Towels</td>
<td></td>
<td>Box Of Kleenex</td>
<td><strong>Pocket Folders</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12-Inch Ruler</td>
<td>2 Red For Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Roll Of Paper Towels</td>
<td>2 Blue For Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade 6</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grade 7 &amp; 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>High School</strong></td>
<td>2 Black For Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 3 Ring Binders At Least 2 Inch</td>
<td>4 – 3 Ring Binders At Least 2 Inch</td>
<td>Pocket Folders</td>
<td>1 Green For Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Notebooks</td>
<td>4 Notebooks</td>
<td>No. 2 Pencils</td>
<td>1 Yellow For Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Folders</td>
<td>Dividers</td>
<td>Colored Pencils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Boxes Of Pencils</td>
<td>Pencils</td>
<td>Erasers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasers</td>
<td>Calculator</td>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Basic Function Calculator</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Box Washable Markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Dry Erase Markers</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Small Hand Held Pencil Sharpener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 White Board Eraser - <em>(A Piece Of Cloth Or Old Sock Works Well)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Box Washable Markers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Box Washable Markers</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Small Hand Held Pencil Sharpener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair Small Scissors</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 White Board Eraser - <em>(A Piece Of Cloth Or Old Sock Works Well)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Glue Stick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Small Hand Held Pencil Sharpener</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sturdy Plastic Pencil Box Or Zip Pencil Case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Box Kleenex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **16**
GENERAL HEALTH INFORMATION

IMMUNIZATIONS: Before children may enter a Minnesota school for the first time, they must be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella. This is a Minnesota law. This requirement can be waived only if a properly signed medical or conscientious objection exemption is filed with the school.

HEALTH INFORMATION: The law prohibits school personnel from dispensing aspirin or any other medication without a doctor’s order. If a child requires medication, prescribed by a doctor, during the school day, it must be in the original bottle with complete written instructions indicating dosage and time to be given at school. Please contact the school nurse or principal if you have any questions about the medication policy. If a child requires any long-term medication, please notify the school nurse and contact the school office for proper forms. If your child has any allergies or other health issues, please inform the principal or nurse promptly.

If a child’s doctor recommends limited participation in physical education, a note signed by the physician should be sent to the school office.

STUDENT ILLNESS/INJURY: Parents sometimes wonder if their child is healthy enough to attend school. Some general guidelines are:

- If a child has had a fever greater than 100, they should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal (and stayed normal without fever-reducing medication).
- If a child has a rash that is disease-related or if the cause of the rash is unknown, check with your clinic before sending the child to school. Many rashes are very contagious.
- If your child has vomited, they should stay home until 24 hours after the vomiting has stopped.
- If your child is too ill to go out to recess they are too ill to come to school.

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, we will attempt to contact you at home or at work. Please pick your child up within one hour. If we are unable to reach you we will call the numbers you have provided if you cannot be reached. We are required to have at least two names and phone numbers on record. Please notify the school immediately if emergency phone numbers change.
MEDICATIONS/MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

**Long Term Medication** (over 2 weeks) - Requires a written order from a person licensed to prescribe medication, written permission by a parent/mentor, and the original prescription bottle with the pharmacy label.

**Short Term Medication** (less than 2 weeks) - Requires written permission by a parent/mentor and the original prescription bottle with the pharmacy label.

**Over-the-Counter Medications** - Require a written order from a person licensed to prescribe medication, written permission from a parent/mentor, and the original container.

Medications coming to school in any other package other than the original container will be destroyed. Parent permission forms for administration of medications are available from the office.

**CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT:**

Higher Ground Academy firmly believes every child needs and deserves nurturing from their family and community. As a professional organization working with children and families, it is our responsibility to protect children from harm. Minnesota state law created a legal mandate for professionals, and their delegates who work with children, to make a child protection report if they know or have reason to believe that a child is being neglected or abused or has been neglected or abused in the preceding three years. The professional staff at the Higher Ground Academy will govern themselves in compliance with Minnesota Laws.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:**

The decision to send children to school in severe weather is the responsibility of the parents. Higher Ground Academy will follow the decision of St. Paul Schools - when they’re closed we are closed. Higher Ground Academy will call to let families know.

An announcement will be made on WCCO Radio beginning at 6:30 a.m. that “All Saint Paul public and non-public schools will be closed.” You may also hear names of several individual schools as well - please be advised to listen for “Higher Ground Academy.”

It is the policy of the Higher Ground Academy to comply with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulations issued thereto, to the end that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any educational program or in employment, or recruitment, consideration, or selection, whether part-time or full-time, under any educational program, employment, or activity operated by the school except as provided by law.