

# Parent & Student Handbook

2023-2024



1015 Rose Avenue  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
847-824-6900

v. August 14, 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>MISSION &amp; PHILOSOPHY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
MISSION STATEMENT & CORE VALUES	6
FORMATION & SPIRITUALITY OF OPUS DEI	6
CATHOLIC IDENTITY	6
EDUCATIONAL PREMISES & PRINCIPLES	8
EDUCATIONAL & FORMATIONAL OBJECTIVES	9
BENEFIT OF SINGLE-SEX EDUCATION	10
GOVERNANCE OF WILLOWS ACADEMY	10
NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY	10
<b>PARENT PARTNERSHIP &amp; MENTORING..</b>	<b>11</b>
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS	11
MENTORING	12
PARENT/TEACHER/MENTOR CONFERENCES	12
CLASS COORDINATORS	12
<b>ACADEMIC PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>14</b>
ACADEMIC ADVISORY	14
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	14
ACCOMMODATIONS	15
ADD/DROP POLICY	15
DEAN’S LIST AND HONOR ROLL	15
ELIGIBILITY	16
EXAMS	16
GRADING	18
GRADING SCALE	18
GRADE POINT AVERAGES	18
GRADE REPORTING & WILLOWSWEB	19
HOMEWORK	19
HONOR SOCIETIES	19
INCOMPLETE GRADES	20
REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS	20
STANDARDIZED TESTING	21
TUTORING	21
TRANSCRIPTS & SCHOOL RECORDS	22
<b>EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.....</b>	<b>24</b>
INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS	24
PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS	25
<b>STUDENT LIFE .....</b>	<b>26</b>
CHAPEL & HOLY MASS	26
CONFESSION	26
CLUBS	26
HOUSE CAPTAINS	26
SERVICE LEARNING	27
STUDENT COUNCIL	27
<i>Student Council: Class Officers</i>	27
<b>ATTENDANCE .....</b>	<b>29</b>
PICK UP AND DROP OFF PROCEDURES	29
ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL	29
EARLY DISMISSAL	31
TARDINESS TO SCHOOL	31
TARDINESS TO CLASS	31

MAKE-UP WORK	31
COLLEGE VISITS	32
EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD STUDENTS	32
<b>BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
DISCIPLINARY PHILOSOPHY	32
CONSEQUENCES	32
<i>Demerits</i>	32
<i>Detentions</i>	33
<i>Infractions</i>	33
<i>Disciplinary Committee</i>	33
<i>Suspensions</i>	33
<i>Dismissal for Behavior</i>	34
<i>Dismissal for Academics</i>	34
CODE OF CONDUCT	34
<i>Behavior Expectations</i>	34
<i>Unacceptable Behaviors</i>	35
<b>Bullying</b>	35
Behavior Endangering Persons	38
Conduct Endangering Property	38
Fireworks, Weapons, and Ammunition	38
Firearms	38
Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping	39
<b>STUDENT DRESS CODE.....</b>	<b>41</b>
REGULAR SCHOOL DAY UNIFORM DRESS CODE	41
NON-UNIFORM DAYS	43
<b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>44</b>
ADVERTISING POLICY	44
BACKPACKS	44
BIRTH CERTIFICATES	44
CALENDAR	44
DIRECTORY INFORMATION	44
DRIVERS' ED	44
END-OF-YEAR CHECK-OUT FORM	45
FIELD TRIPS	45
HALL PASSES	45
LOCKERS	45
LUNCH	46
OFF-LIMITS AREAS	46
PARKING	47
PHOTOGRAPHS & MEDIA	47
SCHOOL PHONE USE	48
RESTROOMS & LOCKER ROOMS	48
SCHOOL EQUIPMENT	48
STUDY HALLS	48
VISITORS	49
WORK PERMITS	49
<b>HEALTH &amp; SAFETY.....</b>	<b>50</b>
ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN	50
CONCUSSION CARE	50
DRILLS	50
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING	50
HEALTH EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS	50
ILLNESS IN SCHOOL	51
MEDICINE	51
<i>Non-Prescription medication</i>	52
<i>Prescription Medication</i>	52

<i>Student Self-Administration of Medication</i>	52
<i>Diabetes and Epilepsy Care</i>	53
P.E: EXCUSED ABSENCE	53
<b>TECHNOLOGY ..... 54</b>	
TECHNOLOGY PHILOSOPHY	54
CELL PHONES	54
LAPTOPS, CHROMEBOOKS, AND PRINTING IN SCHOOL	55
OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES	55
<i>Smart Watches, Games and Music Devices</i>	55
<i>Graphing Calculators</i>	56
TECHNOLOGY USE	56
<b>FINANCIAL POLICIES ..... 59</b>	
FINANCIAL POLICIES	59
ADMISSIONS & REENROLLMENT	59
<b>ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK ..... 60</b>	

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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Front Office Hours 7:15 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Front Office Phone 847-824-6900 x201

Before 8:05am, Call Front Office To Report an Absence/Tardy or email [attendance@willowsacademy.org](mailto:attendance@willowsacademy.org)

## School Hours

Building opens 7:15 a.m.

School start time 8:00 a.m.

Homeroom Start 8:05 a.m.

Daily mass 9:45 a.m.

Dismissal time 3:00 p.m.

Bonus period 3:04 - 3:46 p.m.

Building closes 5:00 p.m.

# MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

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## MISSION STATEMENT & CORE VALUES

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Willows Academy challenges young women to transform society for the good. In partnership with parents, we facilitate the development of their character, intellect, and love of God. Guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church, we focus on providing a rigorous liberal arts curriculum, personalized mentoring, and vibrant student life.

Willows Academy provides young women the opportunity to love God and serve others through the values of joy, integrity, excellence and generosity.

Joy:

- Grounded in being a daughter of God who seeks true happiness
- That seeks and fosters authentic, lasting friendships with family, peers, and in the community

Integrity:

- Strengthen character through continual development of virtues and deep convictions
- Form her conscience to freely choose the good

Excellence:

- Strive for Christian perfection by applying our God given talents to the work we do
- Seek greatness in each of our unique vocations

Generosity:

- Freely give to others and champion human dignity, treating all people with respect and kindness
- Approach work and daily life as an opportunity for union with God and service to others

## FORMATION & SPIRITUALITY OF OPUS DEI

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The founders of Willows Academy asked Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church, to provide a chaplain who would plan and oversee the doctrinal, spiritual, and sacramental life of the school. [www.opusdei.org](http://www.opusdei.org)

Not all students, teachers, and administrators are Catholic. Yet, an unambiguously Catholic spirit permeates the entire life of Willows Academy. The students have the opportunity and choice to attend daily Mass, to regularly receive the Sacrament of Penance, to participate in other acts of Eucharistic piety, and to receive spiritual direction from the chaplain. Full year courses in Catholic Theology are offered every year from grades 6 to 12. In lieu of Catholic theology, classes on philosophy in High School may be offered. Willows Academy respects the choice of everyone's conscience in what refers to her spiritual life.

## CATHOLIC IDENTITY

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1. How does Willows Academy provide for a Catholic education?
2. Is Willows Academy supported by Opus Dei or the Archdiocese of Chicago?
3. What is Opus Dei?

4. What is the relationship between Willows Academy and Opus Dei?
5. Are all of the students and staff at the school Catholic?

**Q.** How does Willows Academy provide for a Catholic education?

**A.** The parents and educators who founded Willows Academy in 1974 asked the Prelature of Opus Dei to provide the school with chaplains to oversee the religious education curriculum and instruction, celebrate Mass, preach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, and teach Catholic theology. The chaplains are priests of the Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei. They are available to serve Catholic and non-Catholic students alike.

The founders of Willows Academy were inspired by the life and teachings of St. Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei. His writings highlight the dignity and responsibility of parents and the importance of educating the whole person. His message encourages the lay faithful to strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well for the love of God. The spirit of Opus Dei helps young women to give meaning to and to transcend their study, work, and human relationships with the light of their faith.

**Q.** Is Willows Academy supported by Opus Dei or the Archdiocese of Chicago?

**A.** Willows Academy is an independent school, which means it does not receive financial support from the Archdiocese of Chicago nor from the Prelature of Opus Dei. Willows Academy is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Trustees and financed by tuition, an annual fund, and other school-wide fundraising events.

The religious instruction offered at Willows Academy is based on the guidelines established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The chaplain is a priest of Opus Dei. The teachers of Religion/Theology are approved by the Prelature of Opus Dei and the Archdiocese of Chicago. The formation and supervision of the Religion/Theology teachers are entrusted to the chaplain.

**Q.** What is Opus Dei?

**A.** Opus Dei, Latin for “The Work of God,” is a Personal Prelature of the Catholic Church founded by Saint Josemaría Escrivá in 1928. Opus Dei exists to spread the message that the ordinary circumstances of our lives are occasions to find God, to serve God and others, and to improve society. For more information about the aim, history, and work of Opus Dei, visit: [www.opusdei.org](http://www.opusdei.org).

**Q.** What is the relationship between Willows Academy and Opus Dei?

**A.** The spirit of Opus Dei is evident in Willows Academy’s school culture. We recognize the intrinsic worth of each person and respect each person. We strive to promote family harmony and friendship, to integrate love for God into our daily lives, and to pursue excellence so we can better serve others.

**Q.** Are all of the students and staff at the school Catholic?

**A.** Students need not be Catholic to study at Willows Academy. In fact, the school is open to students of all creeds who share our values. Regardless of their faith, all faculty and staff uphold the mission of the school, respect the official teachings of the Catholic Church, and promote a healthy and vibrant school culture.

## EDUCATIONAL PREMISES & PRINCIPLES

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Willows Academy was founded in 1974 by a group of parents who were in agreement that a middle and high school should function on the basis of certain premises:

- A. Education is a perfecting process of human life that facilitates the attainment of the supernatural end of man. Christian education, therefore, concerns itself with every aspect of the growth and development of a child;
- B. Parents have the primary responsibility in the education of their children. “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (Vatican Council II, Declaration on Christian Education, 3);
- C. Parents need schools in order to carry out their educational responsibilities. “Among all educational instruments, the school has a special importance. It is designed not only to develop the special care of the intellectual faculties, but also to form the ability to judge rightly, to hand down the cultural legacy of previous generations, to foster a sense of values, to prepare for professional life” (Vatican Council II, Declaration on Christian Education, 5).

The parents who founded Willows Academy had as their goal to implement these premises to promote a school that embraces only one set of values – those which assist one to lead a truly Christian life. They envisioned such a school to be guided by the following principles:

- A. all education given at Willows Academy is characterized at all times by fidelity to the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church in matters of faith and morals;
- B. all education is rooted in freedom, which is inseparable from the consequence of personal responsibility;
- C. human growth is measured not in light of material things acquired but in light of character development through the practice of virtue;
- D. personal excellence during adolescence can best be achieved through educational institutions that are separate for girls and boys and are committed to:
  - maintaining an academic program of the highest caliber in order to prepare students to lead effectively in our sophisticated contemporary society.
    - *Willows Academy is designed for students who have the ability to pursue a program of college-preparatory studies; are willing to work hard in each subject regardless of career choice; are open to engaging actively in an environment of confidence and trust; and aspire to personal excellence.*
  - maintaining a moral atmosphere within the school that is congruent with the atmosphere of a Christian home.
    - *Willows Academy has been conceived as a family school in full integral support of the parents’ primary responsibility for the education of their children.*
  - instilling in students a true understanding of freedom and responsibility, namely, determining what is necessary to man’s final end and then conducting oneself in a fashion which will achieve this end;
  - providing a program of human and spiritual formation that gives students the necessary means to grow in virtue.

## **EDUCATIONAL & FORMATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

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**Spiritual Objectives:** Willows Academy is open to students of all faiths. The Catholic students receive an intense formation with the spiritual objectives of awakening and developing in each student:

- a profound sense of her condition as a daughter of God, so that this dignity received in Baptism will be considered as the spiritual basis of her life, which will bring her to practice piety, prayer, and frequenting of the Sacraments;
- a consciousness that all Christians through Baptism have received the calling to sanctity and of the demands this supposes on the plane of ordinary life;
- the ideal that charity is the principal Christian virtue, which should bring her to practice a spirit of brotherhood, service to others, and apostolate;
- love for the Eucharist and the Holy Mass as the center and root of all Christian life;
- love for Our Lady.

**Academic Objectives:** The academic objectives of Willows Academy are to give each student:

- sound mastery of the tools of learning and communication: reading, writing, speaking, and computing, so that she will be able to qualify for higher education and for work at her highest level of ability;
- the necessary skills and opportunities for her to be able to exercise personal initiative for thinking clearly, logically, and independently, as well as creatively;
- an appropriate understanding of the physical, social, civic, scientific, economic, cultural, and philosophical world in which she lives, so that she will be able to use her abilities in the most effective way as an active participant in that world;
- an appreciation of the beautiful as exemplified in music, art, and literature so that she will be able to recognize them and put them into practice in her daily life;
- physical education and health education so that she will have, in so far as possible, robust health and the knowledge and desire to safeguard it.

**Objectives of Character Formation: Personal and Social:** These objectives have as their purpose to develop in each student:

- the ethical sense needed to demonstrate self-control, honesty, cheerfulness, sincerity, fairness, order, generosity, friendship, and concern for others. A student is helped to acquire the habit of applying a constant set of objective ethical values to all situations as a means to achieve a happy and fruitful existence.
- knowledge of herself and her abilities so that she will be able to recognize and utilize both her strengths and limitations;
- a realization of the dignity and value of being a woman, preparing her to be a well-balanced and happy individual in her professional, family, social, and recreational life;
- a realization that academic and professional work well done is a common and ordinary means to reach human and supernatural perfection (fulfillment) and to contribute to the good of society. (Professional work is here understood in the broad context of any service to an individual or individuals over a mod of time, whether remunerated or not. It does not distinguish between skilled, white collar, etc. types of work.)

## **BENEFIT OF SINGLE-SEX EDUCATION**

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At Willows Academy, we believe that maximum growth towards excellence can best be achieved in separate educational institutions for both girls and boys, especially during the period of adolescence.

Education at Willows Academy is not just for girls but led by an all-female faculty. The single sex environment in which all the regular classroom teachers and mentors are women provides the girls not only with excellent role models, but with teachers who know best how girls learn.

## **GOVERNANCE OF WILLOWS ACADEMY**

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**Administration:** The administrators of the school include the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, and the Dean of Students.

Guided by the philosophy of the school and the policies enacted by the Board of Directors, the Leadership Team and the administrators work directly with the parents, faculty, and students in achieving the goals for which the school was founded.

**Board of Directors:** The Board of Directors for Willows Academy is responsible for establishing policies that translate the school's philosophy into working directives for strategic action. They are also responsible for the fundraising (Development) activities of the school.

**Board of Trustees:** Members of the Board of Trustees maintain a clear understanding of the philosophy of the school. The responsibility of the Board of Trustees is to guard the philosophy of the school. The members fulfill their responsibilities through the appointment of the Board of Directors, the chaplain, and the Head of School of Willows Academy.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

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Willows admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, and religious background with all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to every student at the school. Willows complies with applicable federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972* (20 USC 1400 et seq.), the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* of 1967 (29 USC 621 et seq.), Titles VI and VII of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964 (42 USC 2000d et seq., 2000e et seq.), the *Americans With Disabilities Act* of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), the *School Code*, and relevant case law; and it complies with applicable State and federal laws, relevant case law, and State and federal rules and regulations.

To remain in compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements pursuant to 23 Ill. Admin. Code 425.20(a)(2)(H), Willows provides equal opportunities for student participation in academics and extracurricular activities based on the individual needs and abilities of each student free of unlawful bias, prejudice, and harassment.

# PARENT PARTNERSHIP & MENTORING

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## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEARNING PARTNERS

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There are three major partners in the learning process at Willows Academy: the parents, the staff, and the students.

**Parents:** Parents are the most influential educators of their children and the key to the success of Willows Academy's program. To help make their daughter's education a success, parents are expected to:

- be knowledgeable about the school, their daughter's activities, and the range of academic, extra-curricular, and social options available;
- demonstrate concern and care for the whole educational environment which influences the physical, emotional, and social well-being of their daughter, and provide the appropriate support for the learning process and academic success;
- attend Back-to-School Night, Parent-Teacher/Mentor Conferences, communicate with their daughter's mentor, and check WillowsWeb weekly;
- become involved in the schooling process by communicating concerns, ideas, and suggestions;
- support Willows Academy's focus on respect for oneself, others, and the school facilities;
- demonstrate respect for faculty and staff.

By failing to carry out their responsibilities as primary educators and trusting collaborators with Willows Academy, parents can jeopardize their daughter's enrollment status.

From the moment of its foundation, Willows Academy has maintained the philosophy that the parents, not the school, take responsibility for their daughters' social activities. For this reason, social activities are sponsored by the parents, not Willows Academy, and are held off campus.

**Faculty and Staff:** Through the curriculum, all members of the faculty and staff are expected to:

- be models for students, demonstrating actions consistent with life-long learning, striving to continually improve means and methods of educating middle and high school children;
- be knowledgeable about the subject areas taught and the relationships between and among the subject areas;
- be sensitive and responsive to individual differences and diverse learning styles of all children;
- provide a variety of instructional delivery styles and assessments that are fair, understandable, and closely matched with targeted learner outcomes;
- demonstrate respect for parents, students, and for each other.

To further students' personal development, staff members are expected to:

- foster a nurturing environment in the context of clearly communicated expectations;
- demonstrate respect for all Willows Academy's learners and the process of learning;
- be consistent and fair in dealing with all members of the Willows Academy community.

To further support parents in the education of their children, Willows Academy staff members endeavor to:

- communicate effectively with parents, children, and administrators about Willows Academy’s instructional program;
- communicate with parents regarding the progress of their child.

**Students:** One of the primary goals of the Willows Academy experience is to provide the student with an opportunity to become more independent and responsible for herself.

To support this process, the students of Willows Academy are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities placed before them and participate actively in the life of the school.

The success of a student is related to the effort the student puts forth in helping fellow students and supporting the efforts of the teachers by:

- doing her best at all times;
- treating others with dignity;
- understanding and observing all school rules;
- participating in school activities;
- taking school seriously by coming to school ready to learn;
- being active shareholders in the educational process;
- knowing when she needs help and taking initiative in seeking and getting help.

## **MENTORING**

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The purpose of mentoring is to provide an adult mentor who acts as a role model and advocate for the student. The mentor is the adult who gets to know the student well and is able to guide her through academic struggles and successes, study habits, friendship, personal improvement, and other issues relating to the student’s growth and development. The mentor can also help facilitate the student’s service learning experience. (See also: Service Learning.)

Each student meets with her mentor a minimum of once a month. The mentor gives her mentee a pass that specifies the time and place for meeting. The mentoring pass also lets the teacher know of the appointment so that the student may be excused during part of class. If a test or quiz is scheduled at the time of a mentoring appointment, the student should contact her mentor to reschedule.

## **PARENT/TEACHER/MENTOR CONFERENCES**

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Parent/Teacher/Mentor Conferences are scheduled in October and February each year.

Parents are encouraged to attend these conferences. The conferences offer parents, teachers, and mentors the opportunity to work together in guiding each student towards a fruitful school year.

Parents need not wait until conference time to contact the school if they have a question or concern regarding their daughter. We encourage and welcome such calls to the teacher or mentor. Teachers may also be contacted by email.

Parent/mentor communication is encouraged at the beginning of the school year. Since the mentor will meet regularly with your daughter, teamwork and cooperation are essential.

## **CLASS COORDINATORS**

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The aims of the Class Coordinator Program are to:

Foster a joyful, friendly atmosphere for families

- Be a smiling face and a welcoming presence for other parents

- Foster friendships among parents and students
- Be an advocate of our mission and its role in uniting parents, teachers, and students
- Encourage parents with questions or concerns to communicate them directly to teachers and/or the Head of School

#### Communicate with families

- Welcome new families by phone or email
- Send reminders about class activities and encourage parents to attend school wide events
- Attend school and parent events to get to know other parents
- CC the Head of School on communication with parents and Lead Teachers, when applicable

#### Coordinate class activities

- Coordinate a class get together to promote class unity
- Organize a class family event so that parents and students can become friends
- Support Homeroom Teachers in fulfilling any needs of the homeroom

#### Support school traditions

- Back-to-School Family Picnic
- Holiday Prelude
- Mother-Daughter Luncheon
- Senior Gala

Traditionally, parents of particular grades help with different events throughout the year:

- 7th: Host 8th Grade graduation reception in June
- 8th: Chaperone 8th Grade trip
- 11th: Senior Graduation reception in May; Senior Gala Committee
- 12th: Lead Senior Gala Committee

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM

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## ACADEMIC ADVISORY

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Academic Advisory is designed to help both students and parents be aware of the need for improved academic performance. When a student is placed on academic advisory, both parents and teachers monitor her academic work in order to help her improve.

A student is placed on Academic Advisory when she receives a grade below 69 in one or more subjects for the quarter and/or semester or has a grade point average below 77% at the semester. Parents will be notified of the Academic Advisory status in writing and conferences will be arranged as necessary.

Should a High School student fail an academic subject at the semester, that credit must be made up over the summer and prior to returning the next academic year. The student must have administrative approval to take a summer school course. A final exam must be taken in a summer make-up course. This credit will be applied toward graduation; however, the summer school grade is not recorded on her Willows transcript nor is the grade included in her grade point average.

A Middle School student who fails an academic subject at the semester is required to make a remediation plan for the summer with an administrator and the subject area teacher so that the student is prepared to proceed to the next grade level.

After her fifth failing semester grade (in any academic subject or combination of subjects), a Middle School student's academic progress will be reviewed by the Administration to determine whether she will be eligible to enroll for the next semester. Willows Academy reserves the right to dismiss a Middle School student with five failing semester grades either at the end of the semester or at the end of that academic year.

Successful completion of the current academic year and recommendation of Willows Academy is required for continued enrollment. Willows Academy shall be the sole arbiter of whether a student has successfully completed the school year and such determination may include non-academic considerations.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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Academic dishonesty by a student weakens her character and reputation, impedes the teaching-learning process, and is in opposition to the values inherent in the philosophy of Willows Academy.

**Cheating:** The sharing of any class work including, but not limited to, homework, papers, and projects is considered cheating. In addition, sharing information, transmitting answers to a test, possessing testing materials, removing or sharing any testing material in any way (text messaging, copied, duplicated, or handwritten) is cheating. Coding answers or using technology in a way not sanctioned by the classroom teacher is also cheating.

Cheating is a serious offense because it involves personal dishonesty and is an injustice to others. Cheating will be dealt with in a swift and formative manner as is appropriate for the age and experience of the student involved. Continued or profound acts of cheating may result in dismissal from Willows Academy.

**Plagiarism:** To copy the ideas or words of another person and to present the work as one's own constitutes plagiarism. Whether intentional or unintentional (for example, because of improper

citation) plagiarism is a serious offense and detrimental to one's moral and educational development and must, therefore, be avoided at all times.

Because it does not represent one's own personal work, work that is plagiarized cannot be accepted for credit.

Consequences for plagiarism will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the teacher, in consultation with the Dean of Students and Parents and the Administration, depending on the nature of the plagiarism and the experience of the student.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

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Willows seeks to provide reasonable accommodations and modifications to support student success based on student need and within the scope of Willows' resources. Students who seek accommodations and modification shall provide Willows with sufficient documentation such as a psychological evaluation or other substantiating information. Willows Academy, at its discretion, will determine whether accommodations and modifications can be implemented.

For questions related to educational support, please contact the Middle School or High School Point Person.

## **ADD/DROP POLICY**

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**First Semester:** Students may make changes (add or drop elective, change course level, etc.) in their course selections until the second full week of school. Students taking an AP course may switch into the honors level course within the first month of school, unless the honors class is full.

**Second Semester (new electives only):** Students may add or drop a new 2<sup>nd</sup> semester elective until the second full week of the semester.

Note: All require consent of the instructor; it may not be possible to add a course in progress.

## **DEAN'S LIST AND HONOR ROLL**

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Outstanding academic achievement is recognized through the computation of a student's quarterly and semester grades.

Dean's List    94.5 – 100        with no grade below 85 and no incompletes

Honor Roll     86.5 – 94.4 with no grade below 77 and no incompletes

In addition, all core courses must be taken for a grade in order to qualify for Honor Roll.

A student is eligible for the Dean's List or Honor Roll when she has successfully completed all her coursework for the quarter. If a student has an incomplete at the end of the term, she will become eligible for the Dean's List or Honor Roll when the incomplete has been cleared. Grades are not weighted for Honor Roll calculations.

**Valedictorian:** The senior with the highest weighted cumulative grade point average in her class at the end of the seventh semester is honored as the Valedictorian of her graduating class. All seven semesters must be taken at Willows Academy. She is a speaker at the Commencement Exercises.

**Salutarian:** The senior with the second highest weighted cumulative grade point average in her class at the end of the seventh semester is named Salutarian of her graduating class. All

seven semesters must be taken at Willows Academy. She also speaks at the Commencement Exercises.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

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Co Curricular activities are an important part of the growth and development of young people. It is important that a balance be kept between academics and cocurricular activities.

Willows Academy strongly encourages co curricular participation. In order for a student to be eligible to participate in a co curricular activity, a student must be earning a passing grade in all courses and be exhibiting appropriate classroom behavior. (Some flexibility in this area is allowed in the Middle School, as determined by the Administration who consults with a student's teacher.) This eligibility requirement is in accord with the college prep mission of the school and complies with the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) by-laws.

Grades will be reported for eligibility consideration at mid-quarter and end of quarter. If a student is failing one or more courses at mid-quarter, the student will be issued a warning. If a student fails a course at the end of a quarter, a mandatory conference will be scheduled with the student, an administrator, and athletic or theatrical director. Parents will be invited to attend.

If a student fails a semester, she is not eligible to participate in extracurriculars (athletics, theater, or Student Council) the following semester.

Maintaining eligibility to participate in co-curricular activities is a student's responsibility. If a student is ineligible, she may not participate in any practice, rehearsal, game, or any part of the activity.

## **EXAMS**

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Semester exams are administered in academic courses at the end of each semester according to the following schedule:

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

1<sup>st</sup> semester at most 3 exams (Math, Language Arts, Geography)

2<sup>nd</sup> semester usually 4 exams (Math, Language Arts, Geography, Science)

### 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade

1<sup>st</sup> semester at most 4 exams

2<sup>nd</sup> semester usually exams in all academic subjects

9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade exams in all academic subjects both semesters (may be replaced by a project)

A semester exam is worth 20% of a student's semester grade.

**Review for Exams:** Days are set aside before exams during which no new material is covered. Teachers use these days to review material covered during the semester with the students. Students in grades 6-10 receive a written review sheet; students in grades 11-12 are given clear guidelines about the format and material to be covered.

The day prior to exams is an optional attendance reading day for Juniors and Seniors. Juniors and Seniors may choose to come to school during the day to consult with their teachers as they are available. Juniors and Seniors are not required to wear their uniform if they come in, however, they are expected to dress and behave appropriately and respectfully when in the building.

**Exam Schedule:** Attendance is required only during a student's scheduled exams. If a student does not have a scheduled exam and chooses to be in school during an exam module, she must be in a supervised study hall.

A student who arrives late for an exam is required to complete the exam within the scheduled time.

A student must wear her regular school uniform, have paid all fines, served all detentions, and submitted all forms and tuition to the Front Office before she may take exams.

International students here for a semester or the entire year must take all required exams at the end of the semester.

Exam dates are set in the regular school calendar and will be administered according to a published schedule during those dates. Exams are rescheduled only in the following cases:

- Illness. A parent must call the school before the scheduled time of the exam. The exam will then be taken on the scheduled make-up day. In cases of longer illness, an administrator will reschedule the exams to an appropriate time.
- Extraordinary/emergency situation. Parents must contact the Dean directly indicating the need for a special arrangement.

\*Exam make-up days are only for students absent from school due to illness or family emergencies.

**Eighth Graders/Senior Exemption from Final Exams:** A teacher has the prerogative of granting an eighth grader or senior the privilege of being exempted from second semester exams. Since the nature of the material in some subjects may demand a semester exam, a teacher reserves the right to require all students to take an exam, regardless of the exemption standard.

8th grade exam exemptions are only for English and History classes; all 8th graders will take a math exam, world language, science and theology final exams. If a teacher chooses to allow an eighth grader or senior to be exempted from a final exam, the student must meet all the following qualifications:

- have a grade of 90 or above for quarters 1, 2, and 3 –and-
- have a grade of 90 or above for Semester I –and-
- have a 4<sup>th</sup> quarter average of 90 or above at the beginning of semester review days.

\* A teacher may require a higher average than 90%.

After 9 absences (excused or unexcused) in the school year, a senior or an eighth grader will not be eligible for any exam exemptions.

Seniors are permitted to take up to three absences for documented college visits. These absences from approved college visits will not be factored into exam exemptions (this means any additional college visits that require missing school may impact a senior's exam requirement).

Note: Each half day (1/2) absence counts toward the nine (9) day limit.

All seniors taking an AP class are required to take the AP exam. If an AP student does not have over a 90%, she must take the final exam.

If a senior is taking an AP exam, a teacher also may, but is not required to, exempt a student from taking a final exam in her class.

## GRADING

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Grades for an individual class are determined by a teacher's class policy. Grades are based on an appropriate weighting of tests, quizzes, research assignments, homework, and participation. They reflect the student's academic achievement for the quarter and semester. Teachers publish their grading policy in the course syllabus and explain it clearly to students during the first days of class and on their WillowsWeb page for the class.

Within two weeks of receipt of the final report card, grades will be entered into the student's transcript and will be final as of that date.

**Calculation of Semester Grade:** The semester grade is equal to a percentage of the quarter grades plus a percentage of the exam grade. The breakdown is as follows:

Courses administering a semester exam: Quarter 1 grade x 40%

Quarter 2 grade x 40%

Semester Exam x 20%

Courses not administering a semester exam: Quarter 1 grade x 50%

Quarter 2 grade x 50%

## GRADING SCALE

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Grade	Letter	Grade	Value	Honors
95-100	A	P	Pass	1 Dean's List 94.5 - 100
93-94	A-	I	Incomplete	and no grade below 85
91-92	B+	W	Withdrawal	2 Honor Roll 86.5 - 94.4
87-90	B			and no grade below 77
85-86	B-			
83-84	C+			
79-82	C			
77-78	C-			
75-76	D+			
71-74	D			
69-70	D-			
Below 69	F			

## GRADE POINT AVERAGES

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A Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated for all subjects according to the credit given for each class and is reported on a 100-point scale. A student's permanent record of academic achievement (recorded on her official transcript) consists of her semester grades and her cumulative GPA. Quarter and exam grades are not reported on the permanent record nor are they transmitted to colleges, unless requested by the student.

The GPA is calculated by dividing the grade points by the credits attempted. The cumulative GPA is the average of all semester grade point averages.

Cumulative GPAs are weighted on the transcripts according to the following multiplier:

Honors 1.025

Accelerated	1.05
AP	1.10

Weighting is for transcripts only. A transcript shows only the weighted GPA. Weighting does not apply to honor rolls. Weighting DOES apply to senior graduation awards of valedictorian and salutatorian.

## **GRADE REPORTING & WILLOWSWEB**

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Teachers should update grades on WillowsWeb every two weeks, at a minimum.

## **HOMEWORK**

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Homework is regularly assigned and may include in-school as well as at-home assignments. Some assignments are long-range in nature and require planned study time for their completion.

A student is encouraged to use her assignment notebook to record her homework assignments, quiz/test dates, and other information regarding her academic responsibilities.

**Late Homework Policy:** Late homework will be penalized by 10% of the total point value of the assignment per day. For high school, no assignment will be accepted for credit after the third day. If a teacher chooses to make an exception, a student may only earn up to 50% for late assignments. For middle school students, the 10% deduction per day will continue until the assignment is submitted, or zero credit will be earned. In the event of an absence on the day that homework is due, the assignment should be submitted on the day the student returns to school.

## **HONOR SOCIETIES**

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### **Math Honor Society (Mu Alpha Theta)**

Willows Academy Mu Alpha Theta Chapter is approved by the national organization of Mu Alpha Theta. It is an organization whose purposes are to promote scholarship in mathematics and to promote the enjoyment and understanding of mathematics. Members are invited to join based on superior scholarship. Specifically each member must have a 90% or above average in mathematics courses each semester for four consecutive semesters, and an 85% or better in all other subjects. She must also be currently enrolled in a more advanced mathematics course and exhibit qualities of leadership and character that reflect the spirit of Willows Academy. Members are asked to share their talents by tutoring those in lower mathematics courses.

### **National Honor Society (NHS)**

Membership in the Willows Academy chapter of the NHS is open to eligible students following the completion of four semesters of work at Willows Academy, grades 9 – 12.

Eligible students are defined as follows:

- those juniors who have a non-weighted, non-rounded GPA of 91% with no grade below 85% and no incompletes at the completion of five semesters of work;
- those seniors who have a non-weighted, non-rounded GPA of 91% with no grade below 85% and no incompletes at the completion of six semesters of work.

If a student has only one course grade below 85%, a faculty or administrative recommendation is required for an exception to be considered.

Members are selected by a Faculty Selection Committee appointed by the Head of School and judged by their scholarship, leadership, service, and character..

### **Société Honoraire du Francais (French Honor Society)**

The *Société Honoraire du Francais* was established by the American Association of Teachers of French in 1949 and has as its aim to stimulate interest in the study of French, to promote higher standards of scholarship, to reward high scholastic attainments, to create enthusiasm for an understanding of Francophone culture and civilization, to promote international friendship, and to reward efforts toward further solidarity in the French-speaking world.

To be eligible a student must:

- have maintained a 93% average or higher in French during the semester of election and have a cumulative semester average of 93%,
- have maintained an 85% average or higher in all other subjects during the semester of selection and have a cumulative semester average of 85%,
- be enrolled in 5<sup>th</sup> semester of French and be in 11-12<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica Chapter Tirso de Molina (Spanish Honor Society)**

The society recognizes high achievement and promotes the continuity of interest in Hispanic studies. Students in the society are eligible for college and travel scholarships.

To be eligible a student must:

have maintained a 93% average or higher in Spanish during the semester of election and have a cumulative semester average of 93%,

- have maintained an 85% average or higher in all other subjects during the semester of selection and have a cumulative semester average of 85%,
- be enrolled in 5<sup>th</sup> semester of Spanish and be in 11-12<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **Tri-M (Music Honor Society)**

Tri-M Music Honor Society is based on the purpose of inspiring music participation, promoting leadership, and motivating service. Willows Academy's chapter encourages student involvement in all three of these areas. Qualifications for membership include participation in at least two music courses, an "A" average in music, and at least a 90% cumulative GPA.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

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Coursework that is incomplete at the end of a quarter must be made up according to the deadline set by the teacher. All work needs to be completed by the following mid-quarter, which is the maximum amount of time allotted. By that time the teacher must submit a grade for the student. All incomplete work at mid-quarter will be counted as a zero. Classroom policy regarding late work holds.

## **REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

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**Report cards** are issued once each quarter. The two semester grades become part of a student's permanent record. Report cards are mailed home at the end of the semester and posted to WillowsWeb within a week of issuance. Attendance records, including tardies, may be recorded on report cards and transcripts.

**Progress Updates:** Progress updates are available at least every two weeks by checking WillowsWeb. Each student, parent, and mentor is asked to review the report, discuss progress, and contact the teacher with questions or concerns.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

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In order to objectively evaluate students' progress in core academic areas and preparedness for college, students at Willows Academy participate in a variety of standardized testing.

**Terra Novas:** The Terra Nova is a series of standardized achievement tests designed to assess 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> achievement in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, vocabulary, spelling, and other areas. Students take Terra Nova in the Spring of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Test scores are sent to the parents within two months of the test completion.

**PSAT/NMSQT:** PSAT/NMSQT stands for Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. It is a standardized test that provides first hand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test™. It also gives 11<sup>th</sup> grade students a chance to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs. The PSAT is offered at Willows Academy in mid-October to students in grades 10 and 11.

**Advanced Placement (AP):** The Advanced Placement program, offered by the College Board, allows a student the opportunity to move ahead in her preparation for college by getting a head start on college-level work, improving her writing skills, sharpening her problem-solving techniques, and by helping the student develop the study habits necessary for tackling rigorous course work. These exams are given in May each year. There is a fee charged by the College Board for this exam which is paid by the student to Willows Academy at the time of AP exam registration. AP Courses offered at Willows are detailed in the High School Course Guide each year.

## **TUTORING**

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Any student receiving a D or below needs to meet with the teacher of that subject during the teacher's office hours (at least once a week). The teacher should provide a written summons to the student (Mandatory Office Hours Appointment notice). It is up to the teacher to decide whether she will negotiate regarding meeting times. A teacher may recommend additional peer tutoring or outside tutoring. (See below.)

**Peer Tutoring:** National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta members are asked to serve Willows Academy by tutoring students who are struggling in math or science only. Tutors will help students learn study skills, review concepts missed on previous homework, tests or quizzes, or re-teach concepts from class that they did not grasp in order to do their homework. They should bring their notes, homework, and textbook to each session and be prepared with questions to best utilize their time. Students should then complete their homework independently each night to be sure they have mastered what they have learned.

Tutoring is limited to twice a week per student so that students have independent study time. Students must be responsible in their preparation and attendance. Since they are asking other students to devote her study time to helping them, they should respect the relationship. If there are no questions, they may work on the next section with their tutor. Students who miss tutoring more than three times will no longer be served.

Tutors are also asked to respect the relationship by being punctual and attentive. They should not do homework for students and are encouraged to do examples not on the homework to

demonstrate the required skills. This will allow students to complete their homework independently to gain mastery.

Tutoring is intended for Honors level courses, not accelerated or Advanced Placement courses.

**Outside/Professional Tutoring:** The decision to recommend outside tutoring should be made in collaboration with the parent, teacher, grade level team, and mentor. The recommendation for tutoring should identify specific goals to be achieved by the tutoring.

## **TRANSCRIPTS & SCHOOL RECORDS**

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Willows Academy respects confidential information related to students. Student records are defined as any written or recorded information maintained by the school, by which a student may be individually identified, including, but not limited to: basic identifying information, including the student's name and address, birth date and place, gender, and names and addresses of the student's parents; academic transcripts; attendance records; accident and health reports; honors and awards received; information concerning participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, or offices held in school-sponsored organizations; enrollment/disenrollment information; and information related to student discipline.

Information will be kept confidential unless the student's parent(s) has/have given written permission for disclosure or such disclosure is otherwise required by law. Parents of current students may request copies of their child's records by submitting a request to the school office. Parents who wish to allow their student's records to be shared with individuals outside of the school must sign and submit a Request for School Records form, available on the website or through our registrar. For students under the age of 18, a written request signed by a parent is required before records can be sent.

It is each parent's responsibility to provide the school a current, full, unredacted copy of any separation agreement, parenting plan, and/or divorce decree, along with the settlement/custody agreement which includes custody and parenting plan arrangements. Willows Academy will release students to parental care, follow educational decision making and release educational and school related information consistent with the provided agreements. If a student's parent has been denied access to the student and/or student records and school-related information regarding the student, it is the responsibility of the student's other parent to provide a certified copy of the court order, parenting agreement or plan, or other documentation that specifically limits access.

Willows Academy requests certified copies of transfer student records within 14 days of enrollment. Official transcripts and other records (test scores and health records) are sent directly by Willows Academy to colleges and other schools. Once an official request is received, records are processed and sent within seven working days.

College records and recommendations are processed through the Director of College Counseling's office. Seniors are informed of this procedure at the beginning of the year. Upon graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school, only the student's transcript will be retained by the school.



# EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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The athletics and performing arts programs support the overall objectives of developing the mind, body, and soul of each young woman. Sound instruction and competition in a wide range of athletic activities round out an education by teaching personal health, the rules and requirements of various activities, and virtues that carry over into other areas of life, such as confidence, teamwork, obedience, sportsmanship, self-control, sacrifice, courage, and humility.

**Expectations:** A student who participates in the athletic and performing arts programs is expected to commit to the time and other requirements as outlined by the coach or director. Although not a sport, in the performing arts the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) or other organizing body rules shall be followed. A student whose grades or standing do not meet the IHSA and Willows Academy eligibility standards shall not be allowed to participate. (See also: Eligibility.)

**Involvement:** A student is encouraged to consider participation in athletic and performing arts programs beginning in Middle School and continuing into High School. At the Middle School level, development of knowledge of the particular activity and the coordination required for effective performance, as well as reasonable participation by all team members, take precedence over winning. At the High School level increasing emphasis may be placed on competitive success. This usually results in smaller numbers of participants in roles or on teams, and may limit playing or participation time of some team members.

**Dedication:** A student must remember that certain academic standards must be met in order to remain eligible to compete, so academic commitments must come first. Though not mandatory, a student also should expect that some year-round lessons, practice, or conditioning will be required in order to be competitive at the higher levels of the art or sport. Summer camps or similar additional training and competition also may be helpful.

## INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

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Interscholastic sports provide opportunities for more directed learning of the particular activity and additional competition. As well as attaining the overall objectives of athletic activities at Willows Academy, in high school interscholastic sports an additional emphasis is placed on developing the most competitive teams possible.

Students and adults alike are responsible for representing Willows Academy with the utmost dedication and character. Willows Academy teams are expected to represent themselves and the school to the best of their abilities, while keeping in mind higher priorities of God, family, and academics.

All students participating in interscholastic athletics must have all required forms on file, including the Pre-Participation Physical Examination form, and Illinois High School Association Sports Medicine Acknowledgement and Consent form, Sports Medicine Consent to Treat & Emergency Information Form, and a Transportation Consent Form. Athletes and families are required to complete a Post-Concussion Consent Form following a concussion and follow the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols established by the concussion oversight team. Students are only eligible to participate in sport teams consistent with their biological sex.

Willows Academy allows student athletes to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of the student's religion, cultural values, or modesty preferences.

**High School Athletics:** In athletic competition, all Illinois High School Association or other organizing body rules shall be followed. A student whose grades or standing do not meet IHSA and Willows Academy eligibility standards shall not be allowed to participate.

The decisions regarding those students most likely to contribute to an activity or team success shall be the sole responsibility of the director or coach of each activity. Regular attendance at meetings and practices may be a condition for participation.

It is the responsibility of the student to discuss and resolve in advance with the coach or activity director any projected conflicts with other activities.

Inappropriate behavior of any kind, including use of foul language, inappropriate gestures or dress, may be grounds for discipline up to and including suspension or exclusion from the activity.

**Middle School Athletics:** At the Middle School level, all High School guidelines above generally apply. Emphasis is placed on accommodating all students who desire to participate, either by inclusion or by providing additional competitive or intramural groups or teams.

## **PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS**

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The annual plays, musicals, concerts, and other performing arts events also provide opportunities for more directed learning of the particular aspect of the performing arts.

Each performer and participant is responsible to represent Willows Academy with the utmost dedication and character. A participant is expected to represent herself and the school to the best of her abilities, while keeping in mind higher priorities of God, family, and academics.

# STUDENT LIFE

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## CHAPEL & HOLY MASS

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The chapel is available for student use throughout the school day. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle in the chapel. A student is encouraged to develop the habit of greeting Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament as she enters and leaves the building and throughout the school day as her schedule allows.

The Chapel is a place of prayer and worship and is available for student use during study halls, as well as before and after school. Spiritual books, Rosaries, and other materials are available in the chapel vestibule to support prayer in the chapel. A student is reminded to act with reverence in the Chapel and should avoid distracting behavior in the areas outside the Chapel.

Mass is celebrated every day. Students, parents, and faculty are invited to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as often as possible. The decision to attend Mass is an important one that should be given due consideration by the student. During the time that Mass is celebrated in the chapel, a student makes the choice to attend Mass or to attend a silent, supervised study hall. On Holy Days of Obligation and other days of celebration, all-school Mass is celebrated during the school day. Parents are invited to attend these all-school Masses as well.

Chapel Periods are scheduled regularly for each class during Theology class time. A school chaplain gives a brief talk about the Gospel, a human virtue, or an aspect of the Catholic Faith in order to facilitate prayer. He is then available for Confession for students who desire to avail themselves of the Sacrament.

## CONFESSION

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A student is encouraged to go to the Sacrament of Confession on a regular basis and is afforded ample opportunities for this purpose. With the permission of the teacher, a student may be excused from class to receive the Sacrament of Confession or go to spiritual direction, when the chaplain is available. The chaplain is also available outside of the school day to hear confessions of students and family members.

## CLUBS

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Extracurricular and athletic activities are meant to provide students with the opportunity to discover new talents and interests, to develop skills, to work together as a team to achieve common goals, and to provide healthy recreation and competition. These activities, like studies and all of life, require the student to develop and exercise virtues such as diligence, perseverance, fairness, loyalty, humility, and temperance.

Anyone interested in a new activity not yet offered at Willows Academy may submit a thorough written proposal to the Dean.

## HOUSE CAPTAINS

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Each house has two captains. House captains must remain academically eligible and in good standing regarding attendance and behavior. Suspensions make a student ineligible to be a house leader.

## SERVICE LEARNING

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Learning through service to others is an integral component of a Willows education. The service-learning experience can be encouraged by the student's individual mentor but is an integral part of clubs, teams, and activities at Willows Academy.

Because of its importance to the success of the student in Willows Academy's program, a student is required to complete ten service hours during the academic year as a requirement for graduation.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

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There are two Student Councils: one for the High School, one for the Middle School. The two Student Councils collaborate on all-school activities, house events, as well as provide service to their individual levels. This program cultivates leadership in our students and empowers students to make decisions that affect all aspects of student life. The Student Council coordinates many of the student activities and school events.

The High School Student Council shall consist of Executive Officers, Class Officers, and a Faculty Student Council Advisor.

The Executive team consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Students in grades 9-11 vote the Executive Officers into power.

The High School Class Officers consist of a Class President and Vice President. Each class at the start of the school year elects the Class Officers with the exception of the senior class, which votes in May of their junior year.

The Middle School Executive Student Council team consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Generally two 7th and two 8th graders are part of this team.

### STUDENT COUNCIL: CLASS OFFICERS

**Meetings:** Class meetings will take place during homeroom and/or the second half of the lunch period. The lead teachers assist the officers to assure the smooth functioning of class meetings.

**Qualifications of a Class Officer**

- A student who sets an example of the "spirit" of Willows Academy. "Spirit" at Willows Academy involves being responsible, striving to do one's best, showing respect, and being charitable to others.
- A student who is concerned about the welfare and interest of all the students in her class.
- A student who shows leadership and organizational ability, who will encourage her classmates to work through proper channels in school.
- A student who meets the eligibility requirements. (See Student Handbook: Academics – Eligibility.)

**Responsibilities of Class Officers:** High School Class Officers organize and manage class meetings and help in the planning and executing of class activities.

### Class President

- Prepares an agenda and conducts class meetings as needed
- Assists homeroom teachers in planning class field trips and other events

- Handles all correspondence such as: any necessary letters or thank you notes, written requests to the school Administration for sales, outings, activities
- Communicates with the Class Coordinators as needed
- Serves as a representative of her class to Student Council

### **Vice President**

- Assists the President and acts in place of the President when she is absent Keeps record of class meetings
- Keeps a class calendar of dates of activities and deadlines
- Keeps the class financial records (ledger)
- Collects money and processes the deposit form for class projects
- Prepares check requests for money needed from the class account
- Represents her class in Student Council

**Election Procedure for Class Officers:** The officers of the Senior Class are elected in May of their junior year following the Student Council elections. Elections for all other classes are held at the beginning of each school year during class seminars.

### **Class Officer Election Qualifications**

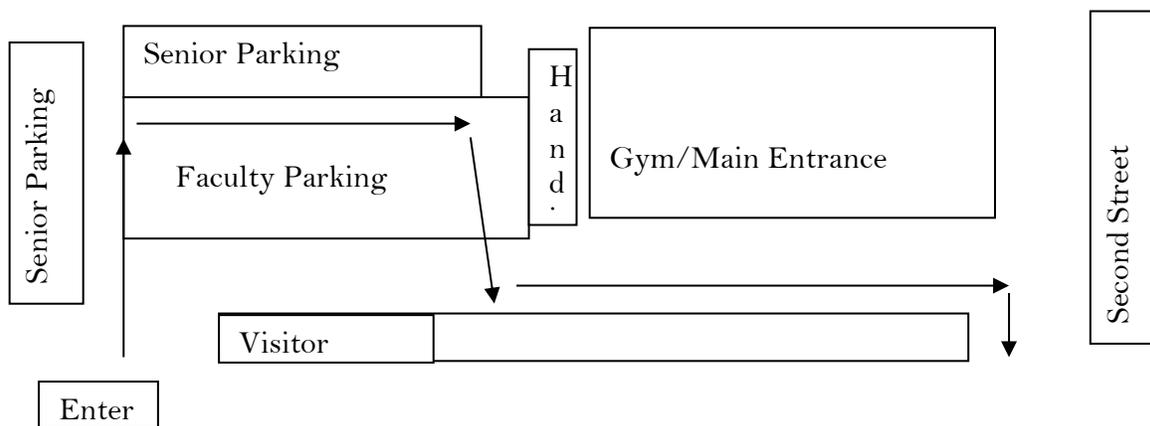
- Must meet and maintain all academic eligibility requirements according to the Student Handbook.
- Read, sign, and uphold every page of the Student Council Constitution.
- Be allowed a speech in front of her class.

# ATTENDANCE

Daily school attendance, consistent with the Willows Academy calendar, is necessary to ensure continuity in learning.

## PICK UP AND DROP OFF PROCEDURES

Willows Academy Pick Up and Drop Off Procedure is designed to increase the safety of our students, parents, faculty, and neighbors and to make the street accessible for any emergency or non-emergency vehicles. This procedure eliminates the need for the students to exit or enter cars on the street, as well as reduces the chances that our neighbors will be blocked by Willow's traffic.



All drivers are asked to treat Rose Avenue as a one-way street westbound in the morning and afternoon. Cars should turn onto Rose from First Street and be mindful of blocking any driveways. Upon exiting the lot, please proceed left (west) to Second Street.

Students, parents, and faculty parked in the lot should be patient and attentive when pulling into and out of a parking spot.

## ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Parents must email [attendance@willowsacademy.org](mailto:attendance@willowsacademy.org) or call the Front Office at 847-824-6900 before 8:00 a.m. each day their daughter will be absent. Valid reasons for absence include illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, attendance at a civic event, or family emergency and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student, as determined by the School administration. Willows Academy discourages parents from excusing their daughters to leave school for anything except medical appointments. In case of illness, students should be at least symptom free for 24 hours prior to return to school or per the student's health provider's recommendations whichever is longer..

Upon return to school, it is expected that the student obtains any missed assignments and makes up any missed tests and quizzes pursuant to the "Make Up Work" section below.

**Half-Day Absences:** To count as a half day as opposed to a full day absence, the student must be present in school from at least homeroom through all of period 4, or at least all of period 4 through the close of school. If a student is present for any part of a day, she is expected to complete all work required for that day including taking any tests or quizzes and handing in any required work.

**Pre-Planned Absence:** If a student knows she will be absent, even for a few days, she should inform her teachers ahead of time and make a plan to complete work or tests that will be missed as soon as possible upon return. Teachers are not responsible for having any advanced work prepared.

**Absence – Vacations:** Parents are discouraged from taking students out of school for family trips during the school year. If it is necessary for a student to miss school for a family vacation, the burden of the responsibility of making up missing work rests with the student. Parents are asked to notify an administrator in advance if a student will be absent from school due to a trip. It is the responsibility of the student to check with each of her teachers to discuss what she can do to keep up-to-date in class during the time of her absence and to make up work following her return. It is not the responsibility of the teachers to re-teach subject matter missed, accept late projects or papers, or to schedule makeup tests or quizzes.

Family trips may not conflict with December midterm testing and May/June final exam testing. Should a student miss an exam due to a family trip, she will receive a 0% as an exam grade unless prior approval was provided by the Administration.

**Extended Absence:** In order to accommodate the student's learning and to ensure continuity of learning, a parent must contact an administrator immediately upon realization of an extended absence (more than 3 days) from school. The parent should be prepared to provide the administrator with all pertinent information regarding the absence, including the instructions from physicians or other qualified practitioners regarding the student's ability to continue course work during her absence. The school will do its best to accommodate the student's learning needs during this time; however, the school is unable to provide individual instruction or tutoring.

**Excessive Absences:** Excessive full and half day absences, whether with or without a valid reason, greatly impede a student's opportunity to learn. In the case of excessive absence, the Administration reserves the right to drop a student from a class should the absence become so great there is no possibility of mastery of the course content. A student who is excessively absent without justification from a physician or other qualified practitioner is subject to all standing rules regarding participation and makeup work.

**Unexcused Absence Without Parent Permission:** If a student is absent from school for a whole day, or for any part of a day, without prior parental knowledge and notification of the school, it will be considered an unexcused absence. If a student has an unexcused absence, she will not be allowed to make up any tests, quizzes, or assigned work for the day absent.

The School does not accept responsibility for a student who is absent from school or a class without appropriate permission whether she is on or off school property. Regardless of a student's age, if a student leaves school without proper permission, the parents will be contacted and appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken by the Administration.

**Truancy:** Repeated unexcused absences may result in dismissal from Willows Academy and referral to local authorities. Chronic or habitual truant" shall be defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days and may be subject to the truancy laws of the State of Illinois.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

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No student is ever to leave school early without the permission of her parents. Parents are required to sign students out in person at the Front Office either directly or with a signed note or email to [attendance@willowsacademy.org](mailto:attendance@willowsacademy.org).

If it becomes necessary for a student to be dismissed early from school, the parents should send their child to school with a written note explaining the reason for the early dismissal and the time they will be picking up their child or the time the child is allowed to leave. The student should bring this note to the Front Office prior to the start of the school day; the Front Office will give the student a pass to be excused from class at the required time.

If a student requires early dismissal due to an illness or injury at school, the student's parents will be contacted directly by the Front Office.

## **TARDINESS TO SCHOOL**

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A student is expected to be in the homeroom on time (8:05). If a student arrives at school after 8:05 a.m., she should report to the Front Office immediately to receive an Office Pass. A student cannot be admitted to homeroom or a class without this pass from the office. After a third tardy, a detention will be given by the Front office. Every tardy after 3 will result in a detention; tardies will reset at the semester. After two detentions of this type, a parent meeting will be held with the Dean of Students in order to discuss the underlying issues of current tardies and their consequences.

## **TARDINESS TO CLASS**

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Students are expected to arrive punctually to each class and study hall in proper uniform and with the necessary materials. Individual tardy policies will be determined by the classroom teacher. Detentions may be issued.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

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A student is responsible for making up all work and tests missed as a result of an excused absence.

A student is expected to take a missed test the day she returns to the specific class. Since tests are announced in advance, if a student is absent the day before a previously announced test and returns to school on the day of the test, she is required to take the test. Requests for a postponement of a test or quiz must be approved by the student's teacher. A teacher reserves the right to give an alternate form of a test or quiz.

A teacher may require an absent student to hand in a pre-assigned writing assignment (paper, essay, etc.) on the due date via email. This is done at the discretion of the teacher and is indicated in the teacher's syllabus.

If a student has missed work (not tests or quizzes), she has the corresponding number of days to make up the work. Quizzes may or may not be required to be made up according to an individual teacher's choice.

In the case of an extended absence (one week or more) the student must contact each teacher within two days of her return to set up a schedule for making up missed work and tests. The teacher will work with her to set up a schedule to make up a reasonable amount of work. The student is expected to submit the work according to the schedule agreed upon.

A teacher does not have to accept or give credit for assignments that are turned in after one week. Nor need she do so if an earlier deadline has been set. A student is expected to take her make-up test at the scheduled time. A make-up test will cover the designated material and have the same value; however, the format of the test may vary from the original test.

December midterm exams and May/June final exams may not be rescheduled unless a student is absent due to a serious illness.

## **COLLEGE VISITS**

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Seniors are permitted to take up to three excused absences for documented college visits per school year. Any additional college visits that require missing school will be considered and may impact a senior's exam requirement. (See Exams.) Seniors planning to miss school to visit a college should complete a college visit form. A parent signature will be required.

## **EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD STUDENTS**

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Although legally an adult, a student who is eighteen years old should consult her parents or guardian via phone before signing out of school. A student is expected to be in school as scheduled for the entire school day.

# **BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES**

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## **DISCIPLINARY PHILOSOPHY**

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The goal of discipline at Willows Academy is to form a student to act responsibly and with virtue, accept responsibility for her actions, and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning and the effective operation of the many activities of the school day.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

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A student may be disciplined for misconduct that occurs on or within sight of school grounds; on a school bus; at a school bus stop; traveling to or from school or a school event; off school grounds at a school event or activity reasonably related to school; or before, during or after school hours. A student also may be disciplined for misconduct that occurs anywhere or anytime, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school, the school environment, school operations or processes, school personnel, another student, or an educational function. Disciplinary interventions will be based upon the severity of the infraction and the disruption of the learning community. Responses may range from modifying the behavior, discussing the situation with others involved, peer mediation, restitution for damage, detention, suspension from school, expulsion from school, and legal action. Consequences for disciplinary infractions may not be progressive.

## **DEMERITS**

Demerits are used in the Middle School only. Demerits are warnings to the student that she is acting in a way contrary to school rules and in a way opposed to her growth and development.

A demerit is given at the teacher's discretion in the best interest of the student for misbehavior that impedes the learning environment of the class as well as behaviors including tardiness and failure to complete homework as assigned.

A copy of the demerit will be given to the student, to the Dean of Students, and to the student's mentor. The student's mentor will then meet with the student to discuss the action and ways to make better choices in the future.

After the Dean of Students records three demerits given to a student for any reason, the Dean will give that student a detention.

## **DETENTIONS**

Detentions are used in both the Middle and High Schools. A detention is a warning to the student that she is acting in a way contrary to school rules and in a way opposed to her growth and development. This warning carries with it a consequence of spending time with the Dean or another teacher in order to help the student understand the seriousness of her choice and the need to revise her decision making.

A copy of the detention will be given to the student by the teacher, who will give the appropriate copy to the Dean of Students and the student's mentor. The student's mentor will then meet with the student to discuss the action and ways to make better choices in the future. The Dean will email the parent about the detention.

Detentions are served on as follows:

Detention will be held on designated weekdays from 3:20 until 4:00 p.m.

Transportation, jobs, activities, etc. are not acceptable excuses for missing detention. Detention needs to be served the week it was issued. Students must attend After-School Detention in complete and proper uniform.

## **INFRACTIONS**

An infraction occurs when the disrespect or behavior of a student is such that learning in the classroom/activity is no longer possible, and is therefore deemed more serious than a demerit or detention. At such time, the student is sent to the Dean of Students. At a later time, the teacher and the Dean will confer and decide on the appropriate action to follow.

## **DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

The Disciplinary Committee consists of the Administration: the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, the Dean of Students and Parents, and the Athletic Director, when applicable. The purpose of this Committee is to meet and hear discipline cases beyond the ones considered ordinary. It is convened or called by the Dean of Students and Parents, who will be the primary point of contact for the parents during a disciplinary-decision process.

## **SUSPENSIONS**

A suspension is warranted when a student has acted in a way that is unsafe for herself or for others, or has made learning or any other activity impossible by disrespectful or other inappropriate behavior.

Suspensions are warranted for, but not limited to, those actions listed in the Unacceptable Behaviors section in the Code of Conduct as well as unexcused absences from school or from a chronic inability to comply with school rules.

The Administration, in a conference with the student's parents, will designate the chosen school day(s) on which the suspension is to be served.

The status of work required during the suspension will be decided on a case-by-case basis based on the student's age, the infraction, and the impact of missed work on the student's academic future.

Students serving an out-of-school suspension may not appear on school grounds for the duration of the suspension nor may they attend any school-related function (before school, after school, during the evening, or over the weekend) while suspended. Students in violation of this policy will be considered trespassing.

#### **DISMISSAL FOR BEHAVIOR**

Per the discretion of the Administration, any serious violation of school policy or continuous infractions may be grounds for immediate dismissal from Willows Academy at the sole discretion of Willows Academy. Willows may dismiss a student when at the sole discretion of Willows Academy a student does not possess the ability or desire to positively participate in the life of Willows Academy. Parents and students will have the opportunity for direct dialogue with the school's Disciplinary Committee prior to a final decision being made. Dismissal will be communicated in writing to the parents. The Head of School serves as the final court of appeal for any disciplinary action related to a student.

#### **DISMISSAL FOR ACADEMICS**

At the sole discretion of Willows Academy, Willows may dismiss a student when it becomes apparent, after consultation with parents and attempts by the faculty team at differentiation and remediation, a student continues to not meet academic expectations in Willows Academy's program. This action occurs in collaboration with the student, parents, teachers and mentor, and with the best interest of the child in mind. Dismissal for academic reasons typically occurs at the quarter or semester break and is preceded by a parent conference and period of probation outlined in the Academic Advisory section. The Head of School serves as the final court of appeal for any academic dismissal or action related to a student

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

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#### **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

A student is expected to behave as a well-educated, well-formed young woman at all times, consistent with dignity as a woman and as a daughter of God. It is expected that all students of Willows Academy and members of Willows Academy community act in a respectful and responsible manner at all times during the school day, while on school property, on school transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity. A student of Willows Academy is expected to behave as an emissary of her school and to demonstrate sound character values.

The faculty and Administration of Willows Academy firmly believe in giving students realistic opportunities to exercise self-discipline, mutual respect, and responsibility to the school and each other.

**Respectful Behavior:** It is the responsibility of all students and members of Willows Academy community to conduct themselves in a respectable manner. A student must govern her behavior so as to promote her own excellence and prevent herself from infringing on the rights and

personal freedoms of others. This includes the equal treatment of all students and members of the school community regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, ability, or other protected classes. Students will address adults by their proper titles and last name.

**Adherence to School Rules:** School rules have been established based on consideration for the dignity and rights of others, the safety and welfare of all, and respect for the property of others. School policies and classroom rules are designed to promote learning and a school climate in which all may take pride.

**Safe Behavior:** It is the responsibility of each student to maintain a safe environment at Willows Academy. If a student becomes aware that a fellow student is in possession of illegal substances, weapons, or any items that could endanger her safety or the safety of others, the student must immediately inform an adult, such as a parent, teacher, administrator, mentor, or staff member. This information will be used to ensure the safety of the student(s).

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## UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

The following behaviors are considered unacceptable by Willows Academy. Failure to behave responsibly in these areas during the school day, while on school property, on school transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity are considered serious violations of conduct and will lead to disciplinary action such as removal from class or activity, detention, suspension, or dismissal from Willows Academy.

### Bullying

Willows Academy strives to promote and maintain a healthy, safe, and orderly learning environment. We expressly reject any form of bullying, harassment, verbal abuse or intimidation by any member of the Willows Academy community towards any other member for any reason. These are antithetical to the spirit of Christian relationships and to our fundamental commitment to human dignity. We are acutely aware of the fact that bullying substantially interferes with a positive educational experience and is contrary to State law.

Bullying, including cyberbullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student(s) in reasonable fear of harm to the 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 Willows Academy.

Specific and unprovoked acts of bullying may include but are not limited to: physical confrontations (attacks), verbal taunts, threats, intimidation, extortion, hazing, harassment, stalking, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, retaliation and cyber-bullying.

**Cyber-bullying:** Cyber-bullying is any harassment or intimidation which is accomplished by means of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation: e-mail messages, text messages, instant messages, social networking sites, video sites, and/or blogs. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

It is beyond the school's jurisdiction to regulate off-campus bullying. However, Willows Academy reserves the right to investigate these incidents and take appropriate action when such activities threaten violence against another Willows student or otherwise disrupt the learning environment or orderly conduct of the school. Any off-campus incidents of this nature that come to the attention of Willows Academy will be reported to the parent(s) of the involved student(s). The school may request that content be shared in an investigation, but will not request a student's username and password.

**Application of the Policy:** This policy is in force:

- While in the school building before, during, or after school hours
- While on any bus or other vehicle as part of a school activity
- While traveling to or from school and waiting at any bus stop before or after school
- During any school function, extracurricular activity, or other school activity or event
- While enrolled at Willows Academy
- Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
- Through the transmission of information 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 School if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of the School. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program

**Procedures for Reporting an Act of Bullying:** All members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are strongly encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Any student who believes she has been the target of bullying, or witnesses any acts of bullying, should immediately report the alleged acts to a staff member. Teachers or staff members who witness or receive individual reports of bullying are **REQUIRED** to immediately report these to the Administration. Anonymous reports also are accepted. No disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any individual who reports an act of bullying should do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

**School Response to a Report of Bullying :** Each reported incident of bullying is taken seriously. When the alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy, the Administration will determine the appropriate disciplinary consequence. Willows Academy may promptly inform parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying. Communication will be consistent with Federal and State laws regarding student privacy.

Investigation of a bullying incident shall be initiated within five school days of receipt of a report and completed within 10 school days, unless the Administration grants an additional 5-day extension due to extenuating circumstances. The investigation shall include:

- a. Identifying the perpetrator(s), target(s) and bystander(s), as well as any adult who witnessed the incident or may have reliable information about it.
- b. Conducting an individual interview in a private setting with the alleged perpetrator and target. The alleged perpetrator and target should never be interviewed together or in public. Individual interviews shall also be conducted in private with student and adult bystanders.
- c. Determining how often the conduct occurred, any past incident or continuing pattern of behavior, and whether the target's education was affected.
- d. Assessing the individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety, and assigning school staff to create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for the target and other students who have been impacted.
- e. When appropriate, prepare a Misconduct Report identifying the Administration's recommendation for individual consequences.
- f. Comprehensively documenting the details of the investigation.

During an investigation, the Administration will take into consideration that a part of healthy growth is developing new friendships and becoming less close with existing friends. Though it can be confusing and even painful to have relationships shift, this is a normal experience in adolescence.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information about actual or threatened bullying, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing false information will be met with disciplinary consequences and appropriate remedial actions consistent with this policy.

**Consequences and Interventions:** Violation of this policy may result in an intervention, suspension, expulsion, or any other consequence that the Administration considers appropriate. Students making false claims of bullying will be subject to disciplinary consequences as well. Retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports a bullying incident will result in additional disciplinary consequences. Any student who violates this policy for a second time during the school year will be subject to review by the Administration.

Any student who is suspended for a violation of this policy will be allowed to return to Willows Academy after serving the suspension and having a meeting with the Administration. The meeting will also include the parents of the suspended student.

The Administration may also use interventions to address bullying, including but not limited to: mediated conversations, classroom lessons, mentoring support, social and emotional skill building, and referrals to counseling or community-based services.

Any form of reprisal or retaliation directed against any person who reports bullying or provides information during an investigation about actual or threatened bullying is prohibited. Any such act by a student will be met with disciplinary consequences and appropriate remedial actions consistent with this policy.

**Review and Evaluation of the Policy:** Willows Academy Bullying Policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the Administration every two years. To assess policy effectiveness, the Administration will take into consideration the frequency of victimization, student/staff/family observations of safety at school, identification of areas where bullying occurs, types of bullying

being utilized and information or guidelines issued by the Illinois State Board of Education. The policy will be revised as necessary in light of such review.

### *Behavior Endangering Persons*

Any behavior which disrupts the educational process or jeopardizes the safety and welfare of any member of Willows Academy community will be appropriately dealt with by the staff of the school. Unacceptable behavior includes threatening to cause, causing, or attempting to cause physical or psychological harm to another student or staff member including but not limited to: verbal or physical threats; fighting; “hit lists;” bullying; hazing; sexual harassment; use of profane, vulgar, or abusive language and slurs against students, staff, or members of the community; or any use of violence, force, coercion, threats, or other such conduct, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.

Sexual activity and sexually suggestive behavior are prohibited including offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, and sexual assault.

Other prohibited conduct includes violations of criminal law, including assault, battery, theft, gambling, eavesdropping and other acts that directly or indirectly jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of school personnel or students.

The Head of School will immediately notify the local law enforcement officials of written complaints from school personnel concerning instances of battery committed against school personnel at the school. The Head of School will also notify the Illinois State Police within three days of each incident through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

### *Conduct Endangering Property*

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, threatening to cause, causing, or attempting to cause damage to school or private property; theft; tampering with padlocks for lockers; improper release of a school fire alarm or tampering with fire extinguishers.

### *Fireworks, Weapons, and Ammunition*

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, purchase (including exchange of money for such purchase), possession, transmission, or use of fireworks, weapons (including a knife, martial arts device, or any other object that may be construed to be a weapon, including look-alikes), and ammunition: such infractions will result in immediate suspension from school pending further disciplinary action including and up to dismissal.

### *Firearms*

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, possession, use, or display of an actual or reasonable look alike of a firearm or weapon will result in disciplinary action such as removal from class or activity, detention, seclusion, suspension, dismissal, and/or referral to the proper authorities dependent upon the circumstances of the incident. The Head of School is responsible for notifying the Illinois State Police of firearm incidents in the school.

All school personnel, including teachers, school counselors and support staff must immediately notify the Head of School in the event they observe any person in possession of a firearm on school grounds, except for persons known to be law enforcement officials engaged in conduct

related to his/her official duties. The Head of School will immediately notify local law enforcement. If the person in possession of the firearm is a student, the student's parent or guardian will also be immediately notified. Any written, electronic or verbal report from school personnel of a verified incident involving a firearm on school property or school transportation will be immediately reported to local law enforcement and the Illinois State Police through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

### *Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping*

Willows Academy believes that respect for the law and good health are prerequisites to success in any endeavor. It is our responsibility, therefore, to promote a respect for law and a healthy lifestyle among students both through educational programs and by providing a safe, positive learning environment.

Toward this end, the school curriculum and instructional delivery shall explain and reinforce the health and safety risks associated with illegal substance use and substance abuse; inform students of the laws related to controlled illegal substance use; and encourage positive alternatives to the use of these substances.

The following policy prohibits certain conduct on school property, on school-sponsored transportation, or at school-related events. This policy is related to illegal substance use and defines disciplinary consequences for such conduct. The provisions of this policy shall be in force at all school-sponsored events whether on campus, off campus, or on school-sponsored transportation.

Unacceptable behavior includes possession, transmission, or use of illegal drugs or substances, including look-alike substances, alcohol, tobacco or tobacco products, or vape cigarettes and vaping devices (including cartridges or components of a device), on campus or during school-sponsored activities. Conduct may lead to immediate suspension and, after parental conference, may be removed from the School.

Faculty and staff members must report instances of illegal substance use directly to the Head of School. As required by law, any written, electronic or verbal report from school personnel of a verified incident involving drugs, including cannabis and narcotics on school property or school transportation will be immediately reported to local law enforcement authority immediately and to the Illinois State Police within 3 days through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

**Consequences:** Each case will be reviewed to determine past history, the harm incurred by the school community or its reputation, extenuating circumstances (e.g., unsolicited personal admission vs. public scandal), and the most appropriate and timely manner of assigning consequences. When it has been determined that disciplinary consequences are necessary, the student(s) involved may be subject to some or all of the actions listed below:

- temporary suspension or permanent dismissal from school;
- referral to legal authorities;
- referral for parental or professional counseling;
- community service;
- temporary or permanent ineligibility to participate in student government, athletics, theatrical productions, and other co curricular activities according to the following scale:
  - Any student who possesses, uses, or remains in the company of anyone using illegal substances, and acknowledges full responsibility for such behavior, shall be

excluded from participation for one full season or its equivalent and participation in student government and other co-curricular activities for one school semester. A first infraction without acknowledgement or a second infraction involving illegal substances shall result in exclusion from a sport for a full year and from participation in student government and/or co-curricular activities for one full year.

- Any student who possesses or uses alcohol and any participant who uses tobacco products, and acknowledges full responsibility for such behavior, shall be excluded from participating in student government, athletics, and co-curricular activities for a minimum of three weeks. A first infraction without acknowledgement or a second infraction shall result in removal from the sport for one full season or its equivalent and from student government and other co-curricular activities for one full semester.
- other actions deemed appropriate by the Administration of the school.

A student is strongly advised to remove herself as quickly as possible from the company of anyone (other than a parent or other responsible adult) who is using alcohol, and they should avoid patronizing establishments that are oriented primarily to the selling of alcohol.

All students are expected to cooperate in the process of gathering accurate information, even though this may be a difficult task. If a student is found to have deliberately misled or excessively obstructed this process, her consequences may be more severe than those assigned to students who are forthcoming with relevant information.

All parents and students are encouraged to inform the necessary persons when they become aware of concrete information regarding a student's behavior that presents potential harm to self or others. Common sense should be utilized anytime an immediate health risk is involved (i.e. signs of alcohol poisoning or drug overdose) by calling for immediate parental and medical attention. Seeking immediate help and putting someone's health or safety ahead of personal repercussions will be considered an extenuating circumstance when evaluating appropriate consequences.

# STUDENT DRESS CODE

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In the spirit of Willows Academy tradition, we wish to maintain a standard for uniform and personal appearance that reflects the dignity of women and that is also appropriate in an atmosphere of serious learning and study. Willows Academy's dress code stems from our core belief in respect for the individual.

The following guidelines have been developed to clarify the school dress code. These guidelines are standards to be followed at all times:

- Shirts and blouses must cover the upper torso completely and cover the shoulders; no cleavage should show;
- Skirts and dresses should be knee-length or must be no shorter than two inches above the top of the knee in the front and the back;
- Slits in dresses/skirts must not be higher than the knee;
- Undergarments may not show or show through clothing at any time;
- Clothing should be worn as designed and not rolled, unfastened, etc.;
- Masculine attire (masculine suit, tie, etc.) is not permitted;
- Shoes should completely cover the front and back of the foot (i.e. no flip flops, open-back Birkenstocks, or sandals);
- Symbols on clothing must be positive and respectful in tone; clothing considered lewd, obscene, profane, libelous, containing insulting or 'fighting' words which by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace are strictly banned. Additionally, any clothing with language or pictures conveying express or implied obscenities or sexual vulgarities, promoting the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, inciting violence or other illegal acts, or conveying other messages inconsistent with community values is also banned. Determination of the appropriateness of symbols on clothing or of the clothing item itself is at the discretion of the Administration;
- Hair should be kept neat and clean and maintained in a natural color;
- Makeup should be appropriate to the age of the student and appropriate for a professional workplace environment;
- Tattoos may not be displayed at school

A student's appearance and the appropriateness of her dress are her responsibility. Parents are expected to counsel their children regarding acceptable school attire.

A student who chooses to attend school or a school-sponsored event inappropriately attired will be required to adjust or change her clothes before she is allowed to participate. If a student does not have appropriate attire available, she will be withheld from the activity and her parents will be contacted.

Willows Academy does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, or twists.

## REGULAR SCHOOL DAY UNIFORM DRESS CODE

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A student is expected to be in proper uniform at all times. If a student is improperly dressed, the teacher will ask the student to change into the proper uniform before coming to class. A detention may be issued.

If a student is wearing an improper item, the teacher will ask the student to remove the item and take the item from the student. The item is given to the Dean of Students for storage, and the student should then see the Dean of Students to recover the item.

***The following school uniform items are sold by Schoolbelles and are required uniform pieces:***

Skirt:

- Middle School: Navy/Light Blue Plaid Wrap Around Kilt Skirt
- High School: Navy Glen Plaid Wrap Around Kilt Skirt
- Skirts should be knee-length. They must be properly hemmed and clean.

Blazer (Required October-April):

- Middle and High School: Navy blue blazer with Willows crest.

P.E:

- Willows PE Uniform Shorts and T-Shirt and Gym Shoes. Optional PE sweatpants available for cold weather.

***The following school uniform items may be purchased at your favorite store or Schoolbelles:***

Blouse:

- White girl's or women's fit oxford blouse with button-down collar, long or short sleeved.

Socks or Tights:

- Middle School white knee socks or white tights
- High School navy knee socks or navy tights

Shoes

- Black dress shoes with black soles (i.e., loafers, mary janes, flats).
- Shoes may not have laces; buckles and tassels are permitted. No moccasins, gym shoes (except for PE), boots, or open-backed shoes.

Camisole:

- A plain white camisole is strongly recommended to be worn under the blouse.

Optional Piece

***The following piece is optional, but uniform approved, also available at Schoolbelles:***

- Sweater: Navy blue V-neck sweater vest

Because everyone wears the same uniform, all parts of the uniform must be indelibly marked with the student's name.

A student who chooses not to dress appropriately for PE will be provided with a uniform to change into. When she is properly dressed, she will participate in PE class. Non-participation in PE is not an option for students at Willows Academy.

## **NON-UNIFORM DAYS**

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On certain designated days, the students may dress in non-uniform clothing. Non-uniform days will be announced to the students prior to the scheduled date. Regardless of the attire for the day, students are expected to be dressed modestly, in appropriately fitting clothing, following all dress code requirements listed above. A student who chooses to come to school improperly attired will be required to adjust or change her clothes before she is allowed to attend class or participate in the day's activities. If a student does not have appropriate attire available, she will be withheld from class or the activity and her parents will be contacted.

**Dress-Up Days:** Clothing of a more elegant fashion, typically dresses or skirts, should be worn. Dress pants may be worn on dress-up days provided they reflect the appropriate formality required for the activity. Jeans, shorts, capris, and khakis are not acceptable dress-up attire.

**Jeans Days:** On days designated in the calendar as "Jeans Days" and on a student's birthday, she may wear jeans to school according to the following guidelines:

- A birthday or half birthday is a free jeans day;
- A student must pay the fee for the Jeans Day as determined by the day's sponsor;
- Jeans should not be shorts or leggings; jeans should be in good condition (no ripped jeans or holes) and fit appropriately and modestly. Skinny jeans are generally not appropriate;
- Shoes should cover the entire foot (no flip flops).

**College Jeans Days:** Upon acceptance to college, a senior may select one day to wear jeans with her college sweatshirt/t-shirt in place of her uniform; the number of jeans days for college acceptances is limited to 3. The same guidelines for jeans as above apply.

# **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

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## **ADVERTISING POLICY**

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It is the policy of the school to refuse acceptance for distribution to students, parents, or teachers any item which is primarily produced for advertising purposes, unless such items have been produced by Willows Academy or its companion organizations. The school may cooperate, at the discretion of the Head of School, with community or other organizations in publicizing projects or activities, not of a business or political nature, that directly benefit the immediate student body. No free materials, circulars, or flyers of any kind shall be distributed to students, parents, or teachers without the explicit permission of the Head of School.

## **BACKPACKS**

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Backpacks or book bags are typically not allowed in the classroom during the school day. They must be stored in students' lockers, homeroom closets, or gym lockers at that time. Students may bring pencil cases and purses to class to store items needed for class. Individual accommodations will be made for students with special circumstances. Students may not enter their homeroom during another class to obtain items they left in the closet, except in the case of an emergency.

## **BIRTH CERTIFICATES**

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State law requires parents provide a certified copy of each student's birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity within 30 days of enrollment. The school will retain a photocopy of the certified copy. The school will request a copy from any transfer school. The school is required to notify local law enforcement of failure to provide required documentation.

The school will interact with students according to their biological sex as registered at birth. School personnel will address students by the original name and nickname (when applicable) with which the student was registered. All will use the pronouns corresponding to the individual's biological sex.

## **CALENDAR**

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A master calendar of school activities is published on [WillowsAcademy.org](http://WillowsAcademy.org) and [WillowsWeb](http://WillowsWeb). The calendar includes activities that are organized in conjunction with the school including: Admissions, Development/Public Relations, and individual class activities.

When planning a school-related function, please call the school to check dates in order to avoid conflicts in dates and to help assure the activity's success.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

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The School Directory is available on [WillowsWeb](http://WillowsWeb). Parents may contact the Registrar to opt out of inclusion on the parent directory. The Willows Academy directory may not be used for business, commercial, or political purposes, or for the purpose of solicitation. Pre-approval is required prior to sharing the Willows Academy directory with a third party.

## **DRIVERS' ED**

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Willows Academy does not offer drivers' education classes. The school is happy to verify student eligibility to take drivers' ed as needed. A student needing verification should submit her forms to the Dean of Parents and Students - complete with all the necessary information - and should allow one business day for processing.

## **END-OF-YEAR CHECK-OUT FORM**

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Each student must complete a check-out form indicating that she has returned all textbooks and cleaned out her locker before leaving for summer break. Failure to do so will put a hold on her official report card or generate a fine for lost materials.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

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Field trips are a regular part of the curriculum. Participation in a field trip is a privilege and is earned by a student through appropriate study and behavior. Teachers will explain these expectations to students so each student may earn the right to attend the field trip. If a teacher has determined that a student has not earned the privilege of attending a field trip, that student is still expected to attend school on the day of the trip. An appropriate alternate assignment will be provided and the student will be supervised by an adult while in school.

Appropriate behavior is expected and all school rules remain in effect during the field trip. Inappropriate behavior will result in disciplinary measures, which may include the possible loss of future trip privileges.

Parents sign a release each year as part of the Enrollment Contract in order for their daughter(s) to participate in field trips and co-curricular school activities. Fees for field trips are determined by the cost of each particular trip. Fees must be paid by the date designated in order for a student to participate in an event.

The school dress code applies to all school activities, including field trips. The specific dress for the day will be determined by the teacher coordinating the field trip.

If 50% or more of a grade level attends a field trip, classes for that grade level may be canceled for the day.

## **HALL PASSES**

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A student must have a pass when she is in the halls during class time. The three types of passes are:

**Gold Office Pass:** issued by the Front Office for attendance-related situations.

**Green Hall Pass:** to be used for mentoring and miscellaneous needs – issued by the teacher to whom the student is going.

**Washroom Pass:** (lanyard and tag) to be used only for trips to the restroom. \*Students must have a hall pass to be in the halls during classes or Mass/study.

## **LOCKERS**

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All lockers, including book and gym lockers, are the property of the school and are under the direct control and supervision of the Administration. Lockers can be inspected by any member of the Administration. Each student is responsible for the cleanliness and order of her locker.

In order to keep the appearance of the hallways appropriate, a student is expected to keep the outside of her locker clear. A student may use magnets on the outside of her locker to facilitate communication with her mentor, teachers, or classmates. A student may also decorate the inside of her locker. Decorations on the inside of the locker must be appropriate to her dignity and easily removable.

The Administration reserves the right to examine locker contents at any time without notice.

**Book Lockers:** Each student is assigned a book locker on the first day of school.

**Padlocks:** At the start of her career at Willows Academy, a student may request one padlock to use on her book locker; a padlock will be given to her to use on her gym locker. Only these locks may be used on school lockers. If a lock is lost or misplaced, additional locks may be purchased from the Administrative Coordinator. The first lock is free.

The student is responsible for her own locker and padlock. Safeguarding belongings is the student's personal responsibility. If a student chooses not to use her padlock, she does so at her own risk, as the school will not be responsible for any items taken from an unlocked locker. In order to prevent anyone from being tempted to enter a student's locker – even for a good reason – a student is encouraged to keep her locker locked at all times.

Tampering with another student's padlock or locker is strictly prohibited. A student who tampers with a padlock and/or accesses a locker that does not belong to her is subject to serious consequences, including the possibility of suspension from school. A student is reminded to make sure she keeps her locker combinations to herself.

**Gym Lockers:** All middle school students enrolled in PE are assigned a gym locker which they will share with one other classmate. A student and her locker partner can keep their PE uniforms along with any appropriate hygiene products in their lockers.

All high school students enrolled in PE and/or those students who play on a high school team may choose to have a locker in the high school locker room. The locker guidelines that apply to the book lockers apply to the gym lockers. Like the book lockers, a student is reminded to keep her locker locked at all times and not to share her combination with anyone other than her locker partner.

## **LUNCH**

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A student has the choice to bring her own lunch from home or purchase hot lunch from Marla's Lunch. Food ordering and delivery is not allowed during the school day. A parent or guardian may deliver lunch to the front office.

Students in grades 6-11 may eat lunch only in the lunchroom; students may take advantage of the second half of lunch for club meetings, tutoring, or free time in the gym and/or green space. In good weather, high school students may eat in a supervised outdoor space. Seniors may eat lunch in the designated senior lunchroom. Each student is responsible for leaving the area where lunch was eaten clean.

Students grades 6-11 are expected to remain on campus during and after lunch. Seniors have open lunch every day, except during presentations from colleges.

## **OFF-LIMITS AREAS**

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Certain areas of the school building and grounds are "off-limits" for everyday school activities. Other areas are designated as "special use only."

Off-Limits areas:

- All areas outside of the building except designated recreation areas
- All exits except the main entrance area (Doors 7 and 8)
- Front Office
- Faculty Lunchroom – including Xerox machine
- Teachers' 2<sup>nd</sup> floor workroom (213)

- Chaplain’s Office
- Facility Manager’s rooms
- Business Office
- Storage Closets
- Teachers desks, closets, and filing cabinets
- Tower offices
- Classrooms/hallways during lunch times

**For Use with Faculty Supervision Only:**

- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| ● Auditorium    | ● 05               |
| ● Stage         | ● Atrium           |
| ● Kitchen       | ● Conference Rooms |
| ● Storage areas | ● Gym              |
| ● Classrooms    | ● Art Rooms        |

**PARKING**

All cars of faculty and students must be duly registered and display a Willows Academy parking permit on the rear view mirror. Parking registration forms and parking permits are available from the Administrative Coordinator.

Parking is available for visitors, faculty/staff, seniors, and students selected in a lottery in the school lot. Faculty spaces are identified as “staff/guest”; student spaces are numbered.

Parking is available in the school lot as follows:

- Visitors parallel parking in front of parking lot on Rose Avenue or in a parking spot marked “staff/guest”
- Faculty- front section of parking lot in spaces marked “staff/guest” with GREEN parking permit on the rear view mirror
- Seniors -spaces marked “#” with BLUE parking permit on the rear view mirror
- Handicapped spaces marked as Handicapped with appropriate Handicap Permit and tag

Street parking is available on Rose Avenue after 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, on Thacker, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street before Thacker or after Rose.

Please note that student driving on the Willows Academy campus is a privilege, not a right. Because the operation of a motor vehicle has serious safety implications, both for the passengers as well as all others on campus, deviation from the following standards will not be tolerated. Each driver must observe the speed limit; possess a valid license and insurance. The speed limit on campus is 10 miles per hour. Students are expected to use hands-free devices and wear seat belts when driving on campus. The school reserves the right to search student vehicles parked on school property. Willows Academy is not responsible for the automobile or its contents while parked on school property.

**PHOTOGRAPHS & MEDIA**

Willows Academy may publish photographs, videos, and/or names of students or families engaged in school-related activities for a variety of purposes including news releases or public relations materials for local papers regarding various academic and extracurricular activities at the School, developing materials for admissions purposes, and similar public relations and

marketing activities. In addition, the School reserves the right to publish school pictures, videos, and interviews of students in publications such as, but not limited to, the School website, newspaper, yearbook, and other physical or electronic publications used for either communication or advertising purposes. Parents sign a media release annually as part of the enrollment contract.

## **SCHOOL PHONE USE**

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Students are not permitted to use their cell phones until 3pm each day. (See the Technology Section for the Cell Phone Policy.)

The school maintains a landline telephone in the Front Office that a student is able to access – free of charge - with the permission of the Receptionist.

Students may use the school landline phone during break, lunch, during study halls, and before and after school. Except in the case of an emergency, a student may not leave a class to make a phone call on the school landline phone.

## **RESTROOMS & LOCKER ROOMS**

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In order to facilitate an optimal and cooperative learning environment, students are encouraged to limit their restroom use to passing periods in between classes, lunch and break. Students are allowed to go to the restroom during class at the discretion of the teacher. In middle school, the number of times each student is permitted to leave the classroom is limited by special passes issued to that student at the beginning of each quarter. Students must carry a hall pass (lanyard and tag) and follow the teacher's procedures for leaving the classroom. Only ONE student will be allowed to leave the classroom at a time.

All students, staff, faculty and visitors are to observe modesty when using changing facilities, locker rooms and restrooms, and may only use the facilities that correspond to the individual's biological sex. The doors of a restroom with multiple stalls will usually be propped open, to ensure a safe environment.

## **SCHOOL EQUIPMENT**

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General school equipment (computers, chromebooks, projectors, iPads, cameras, televisions, office equipment, etc.) is for general school use. Approved student use for clubs and activities may be obtained from the appropriate teacher or club leader.

If an item in the building is damaged or defaced, the student should report the damage and the circumstances of the damage to the Front Office.

## **STUDY HALLS**

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A study hall is time to be used for concentrated, academic study independently with a teacher.

In general, study halls should remain silent and this will be enforced by the adult supervisor. A quiet atmosphere in the study hall fosters reflection and quality work for all students. A student is expected to use her study halls for academic purposes. A student is also expected to refrain from socializing during a study hall as it disrupts the environment of the study hall and distracts students from their academic pursuits. Collaborative group work is better done during lunch, break and bonus periods.

A student may NOT use an electronic device to listen to music or play games during study halls. For middle school students, chromebooks are never permitted during study halls.

## **VISITORS**

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All visitors to Willows Academy must sign in at the main office where they will receive a temporary identification badge to wear throughout their visit to the school. Visitors must be escorted while on school premises and will not be left unattended. Members of the public visiting the school to attend public events, such as an open-house, athletic competition, or public performance may proceed directly to the event venue without visiting the main office. All visitors must comply with all school rules for the duration of the visit.

All exterior doors are to remain locked during the hours when classes are in session. Accordingly, entrances and exits should not be propped open during this time. Students may not allow visitors to enter through any exterior door.

## **WORK PERMITS**

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Work permits are available from the Business and Development Coordinator. A student must provide a letter from the prospective employer stating his/her intent to hire prior to the permit being issued. A student must also provide a copy of her birth certificate and social security number prior to the permit being issued.

# HEALTH & SAFETY

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## ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

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In accordance with state regulations, Willows Academy maintains asbestos inspections of the building every three years. The Willows Academy Asbestos Management Plan, as well as the results of the 2023 three-year inspection, are on file in the front office. Asbestos mitigation conducted over the summer included minor removal and encapsulation. The school is due for its next three-year state inspection in September 2026.

## CONCUSSION CARE

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If a student receives a head injury at school, parents will be notified. If concussion symptoms are present, it is recommended that a student be taken to a doctor for a thorough examination. If a student athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during a practice/game/event, the concussion oversight team, led by the Athletic Trainer, will enact the Concussion Care Protocol including the Return to Play and the Return to Learn protocols.

## DRILLS

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As part of the school's overall emergency preparedness plan, Willows Academy holds safety drills throughout the year. Three types of drills are held several times a year: severe weather drills (for fire and tornado); evacuation drills; and law enforcement lockdown drills.

During a drill, a student is expected to follow the directions posted in each classroom. A student should walk quickly, but not run, to her assigned area until an "all clear" signal is given. Absolute quiet is essential during all drills. In order to make sure that all students are accounted for, attendance is taken for each class during a drill.

Compliance with behavioral expectations during a drill is a serious obligation for each student. Failure to fulfill this obligation, therefore, is a very serious matter. Tampering with fire alarms or fire-fighting equipment will result in suspension from school. Bus evacuation drills are performed before field trips.

## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

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If inclement weather or other emergencies necessitate closing school, parents will be informed via an automated text message, phone call and/or [emergencyclosings.com](http://emergencyclosings.com), as well as through the broadcast school closing list on radio and television.

Every attempt will also be made to place the information on WillowsWeb as soon as the decision is made.

## HEALTH EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

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All students entering 6th and 9th grades must submit a current [Certificate of Child Health Examination Form](#) and [IDPH Proof of School Dental Examination Form](#) by the first day of school. Students in all grades must be up-to-date on required immunizations. For more information, please see [IDPH Minimum Immunization Requirements Entering a School in Illinois](#). An [Eye Examination Form](#) is required for students entering an Illinois school for the first time (e.g., from out of state, homeschoolers).

**Students participating in sports:** All students participating in sports are also required by the State of Illinois to submit a current health exam form each year they are involved in any sport

activity. [IESA/IHSA Pre-Participation Examination Form](#) OR [State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination](#).

<b>6th Grade</b>	Must submit a current <a href="#">Certificate of Child Health Examination Form</a> with a record of immunizations and <a href="#">IDPH Proof of School Dental Examination Form</a> .
<b>7th and 8th Grade</b>	No specific requirements for returning students. New students can submit a copy of their 6th grade examinations or a current exam form.
<b>9th Grade</b>	Must submit a current <a href="#">Certificate of Child Health Examination Form</a> with a record of immunizations and <a href="#">IDPH Proof of School Dental Examination Form</a> .
<b>10th and 11th Grades</b>	No specific requirements for returning students. New students can submit a copy of their 9th grade examinations or a current exam form.
<b>12th Grade</b>	Second meningococcal conjugate vaccine in 12th grade or after age 16.

**Exemptions/Contraindications:** If necessary, there is a [Religious Exemption form](#) that must be completed by both the parent and the student's provider. If a vaccine is contraindicated, then the provider should indicate this on the [State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination](#) form.

**Submission:** Health records should be uploaded to Willows Academy via WillowsWeb by parents and/or a student's previous school by the first day of school.

If a student fails to present proof of the required health examination form and/or immunization records by October 15, unless an exemption or extension applies, the student will be excluded from school.

If a student fails to present proof of the required eye examination by October 15, Willows may hold the student's report card until the student presents proof: (1) of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within sixty (60) days after October 15.

If a student fails to present proof of the required dental examination by May 15, Willows may hold the student's report card until the student presents proof: (1) of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within sixty (60) days after May 15.

## **ILLNESS IN SCHOOL**

If a student becomes too ill to attend class, she should notify her teacher or Dean and go to the Front Office. The Front Office personnel will call her parents or another authorized person who can come to school and take her home.

## **MEDICINE**

Students may receive medication during school hours with proper authorization and provided under the supervision of school personnel who have been authorized or delegated the task; or self-administered by the student consistent with the student's health care plan or other governing

document which typically occurs under supervision of the Dean of Students, the Front Office Manager, or the Athletic Trainer. Willows does not have a school nurse on staff.

A student is not allowed to take any medicine without first checking with the Front Office for parental permission. Exceptions to this rule may be granted for students who have asthma, severe allergies, or other serious medical conditions. A student should come to the Front Office for the medication. At this time, the Receptionist will call the parents for approval and a written log will be completed.

Because of safety implications, a student is never permitted to give medicine of any type to other students. (See also: Substance Abuse Policy.)

#### **NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

Non-prescription medication will only be administered with written permission from the parent. All medication must be stored in the school office in its original container. Students may not self-carry or self-administer non-prescription medications. **If a student needs non-prescription medication, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen,** the student should come to the Front Office for administration of medication. At this time, the Front Office Manager will call the parents for approval and a written log will be completed.

#### **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

Willows Academy administers medication to students in compliance with applicable State laws and regulations, specifically 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21, 105 ILCS 5/22-30, and 23 Illinois Administrative Code § 1.540, pertaining to the administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school-related activities. Only prescriptions authorized by a physician will be administered in accordance with State regulations. The physician's order is valid for one year from the date it is written. Non-prescription medications will only be administered by the school if approved by the parent. Absolutely no verbal orders from a physician will be accepted.

The student's parent/guardian must provide a Medication Authorization form completed by a physician, signed by the parent/guardian, and returned to the school office. All prescription medications must be in the original pharmaceutical container and have a pharmacy label that includes the student's full name, doctor or prescriber's name and telephone number, name of the medication, refill/expiration date, the prescription dosage, and specific directions regarding administration of the medication. All medication must be provided by the parent. Willows does not purchase or provide medication, prescription or otherwise, to students. Any change in medication requires a new Medication Authorization form. Written Medication Authorization forms must be renewed annually. Parents should notify the school of their daughter's acute or chronic health conditions even when medication is not expected to be necessary during school hours.

#### **STUDENT SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

As needed, students may self-administer and/or self-carry asthma, diabetes, and seizure medication, as well as epinephrine autoinjectors upon receipt of an Asthma Action Plan, an Individual Health Care Action Plan, an Illinois Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan and Treatment Authorization Form, a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

or a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and/or a Medication Authorization form. The student's parent is responsible for providing Willows Academy with all required forms and releases prior to allowing a student to self-administer medication, including a Medication Authorization form. The parent must provide the prescription label for the medication, which must contain the name of the medication, the prescribed dosage, and the time or times at which or the circumstances under which the medication is to be administered. Willows will also adopt an emergency action plan for any student authorized to self-administer medication.

Willows and its employees and agents are exempt from liability or professional discipline, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication. Parents must sign and return an acknowledgement to Willows that they indemnify and hold harmless Willows and its employees and agents against any claims, except for a claim based on willful and wanton conduct arising out of a student's self-administration of medication.

### **DIABETES AND EPILEPSY CARE**

For a student with diabetes or epilepsy, the student's parent must submit a care plan, signed by the student's parent, to the school. The student's parent must submit a care plan for the student at the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment, as soon as possible following diagnosis, or when the student's care needs change during the school year. Parents are responsible for informing the school in a timely manner of any changes to the care plan and their emergency contact numbers.

It is the responsibility of the student's parent to ensure that the student's health care provider's instructions concerning the student's diabetes or epilepsy management during the school day are clearly set forth in the diabetes care plan. The diabetes care plan must include the treating health care provider's instructions concerning the student's diabetes management during the school day, including a copy of the signed prescription, the methods of insulin administration, and a uniform record of glucometer readings and insulin administered (Illinois State Board of Education form). A copy of the care plan will be provided to any school employee responsible for transporting the student to a school-related activity.

### **P.E: EXCUSED ABSENCE**

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To be excused from P.E class, a student must have a written note from home the morning of the day her class meets. If a student is excused for more than one week, the note must be from her physician.

In the case of a permanent inability to participate in P.E. due to a health condition, arrangements must be made with the Administration to substitute Willows Academy P.E. credit with a physical education program mutually acceptable to the parents and to the Administration. Students not in P.E. due to a health condition are still required to participate in the health unit.

# TECHNOLOGY

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## TECHNOLOGY PHILOSOPHY

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At Willows, we believe technology is a tool to be directed towards the true good of humanity. Our program seeks to *nurture human capacities in a digital world* and *develop technological competencies*. We want our graduates to be *person-centered, principled users, searchers and communicators of truth*, and *empowered creators who engage the challenges of life*.

The Willows technology philosophy is lived out in our classrooms as well as through our partnerships with parents, advising, seminar talks, student life, and our school policies.

The Willows technology curriculum is addressed in technology and skills classes and integrated into academic courses. Our goal is to refine and expand our technology course offerings, while more clearly articulating features of the curriculum that integrate technology.

### **Person-centered, principled users.**

- Protect time and space for study, silence, prayer, and reflection.
- Prioritize friendships with family and friends.
- Engage in authentic conversations with charity.
- Live with integrity both on and offline.
- Use technology mindfully and purposefully.
- Set their own limits for digital technology.

### **Searchers and communicators of truth.**

- Gather sources and evaluate information for truth.
- Consume, create, and share information responsibly.
- Safeguard freedom and privacy.
- Evaluate the safety, ethical, and moral implications of technology.
- Develop a spirit of solidarity and a sense of global citizenship.
- Foster the common good for all people and individual persons.

### **Empowered creators who engage the challenges of life.**

- Use technology with confidence and professionalism.
- Create, collaborate, and innovate with digital tools.
- Leverage the power of technology to analyze data and problem-solve .
- Develop computer programs that address human needs.

## CELL PHONES

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Cell phones are not required for Willows students, and, in fact, we highly discourage parents against their use for middle school students at all. The school maintains a telephone in the Front Office that a student is able to access – free of charge – with the permission of the Receptionist.

Cell phones (or any device with messaging features or internet connection- see electronic device section below) must be kept off and put away in a locker once the student has entered the building until the end of day dismissal at 3:00 p.m. If the student is registered for a bonus period activity, cell phones are not allowed during these periods. Cell phones should not be kept in backpacks or pockets, nor used in bathrooms. The school is not responsible for the loss, damage, theft or misuse of personal electronic devices brought to school or school-sponsored events.

After 3:00 p.m. a student may use her cell phone for quick and necessary communications, always keeping in mind appropriate cell phone etiquette that reinforces the importance of in-person socialization. Any middle school student not engaged in organized activities such as a sports team or bonus period class should report to the supervised study hall in a 1st floor classroom. In addition, any student wanting to take advantage of a facilitated environment in which to do homework and make-up work can opt for the after school supervised study hall which will run from 3:20-4:00 pm on designated weekdays. From 4:00-5:00 pm, the atrium will be supervised to ensure limited device usage.

Violations of the above guidelines will result in the following:

**First Offense:** The phone will be taken away, given to the Dean of Students, and returned to the student at the end of the day. An email will be sent home to the parents.

**Second Offense:** The phone will be confiscated, given to the Dean of Students, and returned to the student at the end of the day. An email will be sent home to the parents.

**Third Offense:** The phone will be confiscated and given to the Dean of Students. The parents will be asked to meet with the Dean to get the student's phone back.

## **LAPTOPS, CHROMEBOOKS, AND PRINTING IN SCHOOL**

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For grades 6-9 personal laptops, Chromebooks, and tablets are not allowed in class or during study halls. Teachers may use class sets of Willows Chromebooks to facilitate a supervised lesson on the computer.

Seniors, juniors and second semester sophomores may use a personal laptop or Chromebook during a class lesson where computers are used and in study hall only. Freshman and sophomores taking an accredited online class may receive special permission from the school administration to bring a personal laptop or Chromebook.

No computers at all are allowed during Mass/Study period for any reason.

A student is personally responsible for the care and security of her electronic devices. The school assumes no responsibility for electronic devices. Willows Academy is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of any electronic device brought to school.

A teacher reserves the right to confiscate any technology that is being used improperly. A student may retrieve any confiscated technology from the Dean.

A student is expected to follow all acceptable use guidelines appropriate to school computers. A student is reminded to keep her device in a locked locker or on her person when not in use.

It is in the student's best interest to have access to a computer with the Internet to complete assignments at home.

Student access to printers at school is limited. A printer on the second floor will be available to students during the day, but it is expected that students should print at home documents to be submitted in school.

## **OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

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### **SMART WATCHES, GAMES AND MUSIC DEVICES**

Smart watches, hand-held electronic games, mp3 players, and other such devices are not for use during the school day and must be kept in the student's locker from the start of the school day

until 3:00 p.m. In view of the increasing prevalence of watches with texting and internet capabilities, we will now treat any watch or fitness tracker with a screen as a smart watch and ask students to follow the cell phone policy above.

### GRAPHING CALCULATORS

The high school math curriculum makes use of graphing calculators. A student may choose to purchase and bring her own calculator to school for use in her coursework. As regarding the use of all technology, a student is reminded to act with integrity when using a graphing calculator. To cheat with the aid of a graphing calculator not only lacks integrity, but violates the trust relationship necessary for the free and open use of technology in the classroom. (See also: Academic Integrity.)

### TECHNOLOGY USE

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Willows Academy employs a number of on-line systems, including a technology network to improve student learning in a manner consistent with the educational mission of Willows Academy. Willows expects legal, ethical, and efficient use of the network by all users. Use is a privilege, not a right. Students have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored, transmitted, or received via Willow's electronic networks or computers or devices. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

Parents must complete the technology use agreement in the enrollment contract and students read and sign an agreement at the beginning of each academic year.

**Acceptable Use:** Access to the school computer network must be for bona fide educational or research purposes consistent with the school's educational mission. Use of technology for non-school related or entertainment purposes is strictly forbidden. Access also must comply with the Policy, these Rules and Regulations, other rules, regulations, or other terms or conditions of computer network access promulgated by Willows Academy, and all other disciplinary policies and regulations necessary for the safety and pedagogical concerns of the school.

**Unacceptable Use:** Any use which disrupts the proper and orderly operation and discipline in the school; threatens the integrity or efficient operation of the school computer network; violates the rights of others; is socially inappropriate or inappropriate for a student's age or maturity level; is primarily intended as an immediate solicitation of funds; is illegal or used for illegal purposes of any kind; or constitutes gross disobedience or misconduct is an unacceptable use. Use of the school computer network for any unacceptable use will result in the suspension or revocation of computer network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

**Student Use of the Internet:** The school's primary concern in maintaining Internet access is that student safety and security not be compromised at any time. Some of the most effective safety measures can only be implemented by students themselves. The school expects students to follow the guidelines below while on the internet:

- Students should never give out such personal information as their name, age, home address, telephone number(s), photograph, their parents' or guardians' work address or telephone number, or the name or location of the school over the Internet or through email. Students should never give out such personal information about other individuals over the Internet or through email.

- Students should immediately inform their parents, guardians, or a member of the school staff if they come across any information on the Internet or in an email that makes them feel uncomfortable. Students should not respond to any email or other message which makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Students should never agree to meet someone in person whom they have “met” online.
- Students should never agree to send or accept any item to or from a person whom they have “met” online without parental knowledge, permission, and supervision.
- Students should never use a proxy server to avoid internet security.

Students who fail to abide by these safety guidelines will be subject to appropriate consequences based on their age and experience.

**Downloads:** Users may only download text files, images, or other files or software obtained through the Internet, email, file transfer protocol (ftp), or other means of file-sharing with the permission of the school. Users must scan all such files with virus detection software before installing, executing, or copying such files onto a school computer.

**Privacy:** Any electronic communications or files created on, stored on, or sent to, from, or via the computer network are the property of the school. Users do not have any expectation of privacy with respect to such messages and files. Users should remember that such messages and files can be recovered from the computer network’s back-up system even after they have been deleted from a user’s individual account. The school may access and review such messages and files when necessary to maintain the integrity and efficient operation of the computer network; to monitor compliance with the Policy, these Rules and Regulations, and all other rules, regulations, or other terms or conditions of computer network access promulgated by Willows Academy; and to further all other educational, safety, and pedagogical concerns of the school. The school also reserves the right to intercept, access, and disclose to appropriate authorities all information created with, sent to, received by, or stored on the computer network at any time, with or without user notice. Use of the school’s computer network to create, store, send, receive, view, or access any electronic communication or other file constitutes consent by the user for the school to access and review such files consistent with this paragraph.

**Technology Protection Measures:** Consistent with the school’s educational and pedagogical concerns, the school shall implement technology protection measures, which may include filtering and/or blocking software, on every school computer which has access to the Internet. Such technology protection measures shall be implemented in the best manner practicable to prevent access to any material, including visual depictions, which is obscene; which constitutes pornography, including child pornography; or which, with respect to use of computers by minors, would be harmful to minors. The school may disable the technology protection measure on an individual computer during use by non-student adults to enable access to material needed for bona fide research or other lawful purpose. The school shall monitor the use of the computer network by students and any other minor users in order to ensure compliance with the Policy, these Rules and Regulations, other rules, regulations, or other terms or conditions of computer network access promulgated by the school, and other disciplinary policies and regulations necessary to further the educational, safety, and pedagogical concerns of the school.

**Security:** The security and integrity of the school’s computer network is a high priority. Users are to keep their accounts and passwords secure and confidential at all times. If a user believes at any time that he or she has identified a security gap, weakness, or breach on the school’s computer network or on the Internet, the user must notify a school staff member immediately. The user

may not exploit the gap, weakness, or breach, and the user may not inform any other individuals of it. Any user who violates this security policy may be subject to a suspension or revocation of computer network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

**Enforcement:** The failure of any user to abide by the Policy, these Rules and Regulations, or other rules, regulations, or other terms or conditions of computer network access promulgated by the school will result in the suspension or revocation of the user's computer network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

**Social Networking Sites and Passwords:** In accordance with the Right to Privacy in the School Setting Act (105 ILCS 75/1 et seq.), Willows Academy is required to provide notification regarding student accounts/profiles on social networking websites.

- School officials may not request or require a student or his parent to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.
- School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

# FINANCIAL POLICIES

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## FINANCIAL POLICIES

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At Willows Academy, all expenses are tightly budgeted to keep annual tuition fees as low as possible. The annual budget, however, assumes full payment of all tuition contracts for all students. We strive to keep all tuition payment plans on schedule so that we may meet our budgetary needs throughout the year. To ensure this, we have in place the following policies:

1. All families must have a tuition deposit and payment plan on file in the business office prior to July 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming academic year.
2. All student receivable accounts must remain current to their family payment plan for the student(s) to remain in good standing.
3. Upon written notice to parents, if student tuition accounts fall 30 days past due, the School may undertake any or all of the following measures to encourage payment:
  - Students may be denied participation in extracurricular activities and athletics;
  - Students may be held out of classes or examinations;
  - Students may be denied registration for classes for the subsequent semester/academic year;
  - Official transcripts, diplomas and summer work materials may be withheld from students; or
  - Students may be denied participation in summer camps.
4. Graduating students must have their student receivable accounts paid in full prior to graduation activities (which includes the Gala). Failure to pay in full may result in the graduate being withheld from graduation activities.
5. Any past due payments made after May 1<sup>st</sup> must be made in the form of cash, cashier's check, or credit card. No personal checks will be accepted.

## ADMISSIONS & REENROLLMENT

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Admission to the program does not guarantee a re-enrollment contract will be offered for the following year; admission to the Middle School program does not guarantee admission to the High School program. Enrollment contracts are offered to current families in February of each year. Successful completion of the current academic year and recommendation of Willows Academy is required for re-enrollment. Willows Academy shall be the sole arbiter of whether a student has successfully completed the school year and such determination may include non-academic considerations. Re-enrollment is conditional upon the successful completion of the current academic year (including any missing credits), recommendation from the School, and satisfaction of all outstanding tuition/other amounts. Enrollment is complete when the online enrollment contract is completed, a deposit has been paid, and a payment plan is created.

# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

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This handbook provides an overview of Willows Academy, its mission and philosophy and its policies and procedures. The information contained in this handbook applies to all parents and students of Willows Academy. Willows Academy reserves the right to amend, modify, or delete, without prior notice, this Handbook and the school rules, policies, and procedures contained herein as may be needed for the routine operation of the school and to ensure continued compliance with federal, State, or local laws. Willows Academy will make every effort to notify students and parents/guardians in a timely manner of any changes. The official version can be found on the school's website. Further information about the school can be found in the administrative offices of Willows Academy, at 1015 Rose Ave, Des Plaines IL 60016.