



## **Family Handbook**

2021-2022



Dear families,

Thank you for choosing Atlas Elementary! Our administration, teachers, and staff understand the importance of selecting the right school to nurture and support your child's growth and development as they go through their childhood years. We are excited for the opportunity to partner with you as we work to create a fantastic school community that is designed to set each and every one of our children up for success.

We believe each student's potential is best realized within a safe, supportive, and positive learning environment. We recognize that the rights of all students must be respected. We believe that there is a corresponding responsibility for students to follow school behavioral expectations along with these rights.

We acknowledge the right of parents/guardians to be responsible for their children – to guide and encourage them to conduct themselves respectfully and appropriately at school. We invite parents/guardians to become active members of our school community. Educational success for all students cannot be achieved without family partnerships. You are the most essential part of your child's education. It is essential that we build a solid relationship to best serve your child's educational needs.

The policies and procedures in this handbook are designed to help our school run efficiently and effectively so that we will have a successful year. This information has been carefully prepared to acquaint you with the school's operational procedures and help you become an integral part of the Atlas family. Please read this handbook carefully and thoroughly. The student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach form the basis for the regulations included in this handbook.

At Atlas, we believe in a school that is collaborative in nature and that draws on the strengths of all stakeholders in striving toward improving student outcomes. We believe that the time is right to rethink public education and are thrilled to have you join us in this journey. Our team looks forward to a year full of joy and discovery with your families!

In partnership,

The Atlas Founding Team

# ATLAS ELEMENTARY



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## **Please Note:**

This handbook provides guidance and guidelines for students and their parents. However, in every instance in which there is a governing board policy, the board policy always governs and supersedes any statement in this handbook. We will periodically make revisions to the handbook, and the updated version will be available on our website at [www.atlaspublic.org](http://www.atlaspublic.org).

## **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Atlas Public Schools is committed to maintaining a workplace and educational environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, services, activities and facilities. In accordance with law, the school strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment against employees, students or others on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, familial status, disability, age, veteran status, veteran status, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. Atlas Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer.

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## Who We Are

### **Our Vision**

At Atlas, we envision a time when all students in St. Louis have the skills and habits needed to be successful in the 21st century and where St. Louis is heralded as a model of a flourishing, diverse, and empowered community. We believe that high-quality public schools will be the catalyst for community transformation that will result in a thriving city.

### **Our Mission**

The mission of Atlas Public Schools is to educate the whole child by combining a rigorous academic program with authentic, real-world experiences so all students thrive in middle school, high school, and beyond.

### **Our Values**

Atlas community members are kind, respectful, show integrity, demonstrate excellence, and are stewards of the community. These values serve as the foundation of all that we do, and we do our best to live them out on a daily basis. We also appreciate that it's not easy to always model our values - especially in times of challenge - and we rely on each other to help us see and understand when our values are not being upheld. As we teach our children, we approach challenges with an inquiry mindset by asking questions, seeking to understand, and collaborating to find a solution.

- **Kindness:** We treat others the way we want to be treated. We are friendly, generous, and considerate and choose to be kind, not only when it's easy, but when it's hard to be.
- **Integrity:** We do the right thing, even when nobody's watching. We are honest, keep our commitments, and take responsibility for our actions.
- **Respect:** We are proud of who we are and respect ourselves. We treat others with consideration and understanding, respect their point of view, and treat them fairly.
- **Excellence:** We have a growth mindset and learn from our mistakes to grow stronger. We focus on achieving our goals, and when we reach them, we raise the bar even higher.
- **Stewardship:** We are change-makers. We are empowered to be active citizens and work to make a difference in our community.





## **Foundational Beliefs**

The following beliefs serve as the pillars of our school. Each pillar is upheld in every element of our school design, and manifests in our work with students, families, educators, and the community. These beliefs help guide our actions, reinforce what matters most, and communicate broadly who we are.

### **We Celebrate Diversity & Practice Equity**

We believe there are real and lasting benefits to representing varied perspectives and cultures within a school community. For this reason, we are diverse by design with a schoolwide approach that reflects and actively includes the rich socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of students and families

### **We Learn Through Meaningful, Real-World Experiences**

We seek to instill a true love of learning in each of our students that lasts well beyond their elementary school experience. At Atlas, we believe that students learn best when they are engaged in experiences that are relevant and allow them to apply their prior knowledge in meaningful ways. By grounding the learning in real-world topics and authentic experiences, we give students the opportunity to work collaboratively, think critically, and be true problem solvers.

### **We Acknowledge the Power of Excellent Educators**

We know and value the role educators play in our students' trajectory, and believe there is a direct correlation between teacher quality and the overall success of our students. We believe that we must recruit, develop, and retain excellent educators who are equipped with the resources, structure, and creative autonomy needed to support all students.

### **We Hold High Expectations while Instilling a Growth Mindset**

At Atlas, we know that all kids are capable of rigorous work which is why we set high expectations and lofty goals for each of our students. We also understand that there will still be times when our students will undoubtedly struggle. This is why we will work to instill a growth mindset in our students. We will never lower the bar when a student does not reach their goal. Instead, we work as a team to provide the personalized instruction each child needs to thrive.

### **We Build Community Through Partnerships**

Our most significant partners are our families. They play an active role in their child's learning, and staff will build long-term relationships to ensure students develop personally and academically. We will also establish strong relationships with local organizations so that our students engage with the city as a living classroom, our families receive supports to thrive, and we learn alongside others to iterate on and contribute to best practices in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

## **Expanded Definition of Student Success**

Atlas' curriculum, teaching methods and services are designed specifically to meet the educational needs of our children. Atlas believes, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that all students are capable of excellence and can learn at high levels when supported properly. Atlas aims to develop students who are creative and critical thinkers, lifelong learners, culturally competent citizens, well-rounded individuals, collaborative team players, and academically exceptional scholars. In order to ensure that all students realize these graduate aims, we put supports and structures in place that are tailored to meet the individual needs of each student. Below are Atlas' Graduate Aims:

- **Creative and Critical Thinkers:** Our graduates think outside of the box. They see every opportunity as a learning experience and approach vexing challenges with perseverance and creativity.
- **Lifelong Learners:** Our graduates have a true passion for learning. They are insatiably curious and question everything. Our graduates are self-aware and can identify both their strengths, and areas for growth. They are highly motivated and have the ability, and desire, to self-direct their learning. They have a growth mindset and work hard. They show academic grit and do not give up. Our students are ambitious goal setters and know how to stay organized in order to achieve their goals.
- **Culturally Competent Citizens:** Our graduates know why diversity is important and why it makes the world a better place. Our graduates know who they are and what makes them unique. Students use culture as a vehicle for learning.
- **Well-Rounded Individuals:** Our graduates are well-rounded individuals, having interests and passions both inside and out of the classroom. When our students graduate they are responsible decision makers, socially and self-aware, have strong relationship skills, and are good at self-management.
- **Collaborative Team Players:** Our graduates are collaborators. They are able to work together in a group as equals to reach a common goal. They have the ability to delegate tasks, communicate effectively, and produce quality outcomes with other individuals.
- **Academically Exceptional Scholars:** Our graduates excel academically, and leave us performing on or above grade level. They are on a trajectory to thrive in middle school, high school, college or in the career of their choice.



**Atlas Founding Team Members**

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**Atlas Board of Directors**

Russ Kirk	President
Alice Dickherber	Secretary
Kwofe Coleman	Treasurer
Gay Lorberbaum	Member
Mark Minden	Member
Sonia Park	Member
Lorna Sanchez McClellan	Member



## **Educational Model**

At Atlas, we place students at the center of learning by providing relevant, rigorous, and meaningful learning opportunities. We believe that elementary students need a balance of structured instruction, particularly within literacy and mathematics, as well as time to explore and learn interdisciplinary concepts through hands-on real-world experiences. At Atlas, we have created a detailed graduate profile. We want our students to become creative and critical thinkers, lifelong learners, culturally competent citizens, well-rounded individuals, collaborative team players, and academically exceptional scholars. To accomplish our goals and develop students who are prepared to thrive starts with our curricular choices. This is why we have adopted two researched-based curriculums from EL Education and Achievement First. Our core values of joy, equity, integrity, excellence, and stewardship are woven throughout each of our curricular programs.

### ***Literacy***

Atlas' literacy program aims to foster voracious, lifelong readers and writers. We are deeply rooted in our commitment to ensuring that students find true joy in the study of literacy and acquire a deep appreciation for great books, new information, diverse perspectives, and the power to express ideas of their own. Our literacy program is designed to cultivate a critical curiosity in our students. We hope to expand their knowledge of the world through asking questions, reading, writing and discussion. We strive to spark students' inquisitiveness and develop a sense of joy for building their knowledge. Our program promotes proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening to complex text and ideas. Through the use of multiple strategies, we help our students develop into lifelong learners both academically and socially.

### ***Mathematics***

Atlas' math program aims to prepare students for middle school, high school, and beyond. For students to thrive in the 21st century, they must be able to make sense of the world through a mathematical lens. Rigorous math instruction at Atlas pursues conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity. Atlas' Math Vision focuses strongly where the Missouri Learning Standards focus and provides coherence across grades and links to major topics within grades. We want our students to enjoy math and see themselves as mathematicians who have the critical thinking and problem solving skills to solve complex problems.

### ***Lab***

Labs at Atlas support and extend student learning from our literacy and mathematics lessons. They are designed to help teachers ensure that all of their students get the time to play and explore, become immersed in oral language and content knowledge, and practice skills and habits of character that they need--both to live joyfully and to be fully successful and proficient. Our labs highlight our interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning and give students the opportunity to learn through authentic real-world experiences that are rooted in the local context of St. Louis.

## ***Visual & Performing Arts***

The arts program at Atlas provides students with a well-rounded curriculum, where students explore the worlds of drama, music, and visual arts, with the goal of helping them to develop a rich understanding and appreciation of the performing and fine arts. Research has shown that concentrated study in the arts contributes to a child's positive self-esteem, social skills, and understanding of different cultures and experiences. Atlas' visual and performing arts curriculum is connected to the learning that is taking place in our literacy classes and designed to extend the learning for our students. Students will have the opportunity to participate in arts-related excursions or field trips, where they often get to meet and interact with professionals in the arts or view professional performances and art galleries.

## ***Technology***

Technology skills and digital literacy are integral to any student's education in the 21st century. Students utilize technology to bolster their creativity and innovative capacity, and progressively develop an understanding of how to use technology effectively to communicate, collaborate, and conduct research. This means that beginning in kindergarten, students will use computers, the Internet, and other multimedia devices as learning and communication tools to better understand the world around them. Learning goals will include basic computer fluency, the creation of multimedia projects, demonstration of basic Internet research skills, and online collaborations.

## ***Exploration Kits***

At Atlas we are reenvisioning homework. Instead of nightly homework that can be stressful, monotonous, and boring, our Exploration Kits are designed to be fun and joyful and will serve as an important resource for students and families. The purpose of Atlas' Exploration Kits is for students to bring home books, resources, and activities that are connected to what they are learning in school. It gives students an opportunity to share their learning with their families, hone skills in partnership with their loved ones, and extend the learning that is taking place at school. Your teachers will set expectations that are both developmentally and grade level appropriate, and give families the flexibility to complete the kits in a timeframe that works best for your family.

## ***Co-Teaching Approach***

At Atlas, we believe all students should receive the personalized instruction they need to thrive. In order to set our kids up for success, each of our classrooms will be co-taught by two educators. This allows us to have flexible groups to more effectively support our students and meet their individual needs. Below are a few specific scenarios of what this will look like at different times throughout the day:

- Both teachers co-teaching the same lesson with all students working on a similar project
- One teacher supports two or three students while the other teacher leads the larger group
- Students working in four groups of six or seven students; students rotate between four stations; two of the stations are led by a teacher, and two of the stations are student-directed
- The class is split into two groups of roughly thirteen students, and each group is taught by one of the teachers

- One teacher leads a whole group lesson while the other teacher circulates the room offering support where needed
- Both teachers pulling either individual students or small groups while all other students work on an independent assignment

Our co-teacher model allows for more flexibility and enables our teachers to personalize instruction and ensure all students are actively engaged in the learning. We're able to provide both enrichment and remediation within the classroom and do so in a way that maintains the dignity of all students. It also allows us to support our students with special needs in an environment that is more inclusive and without stigma.

### ***Inclusion & Differentiation***

An inclusive education is essential to the culture of Atlas Elementary. Inclusion is about how we develop and design our classrooms, programs, and activities so that all students learn and participate together. We are proud to embrace a variety of learning styles and it is our responsibility to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students in an appropriate manner. Our educators have a shared sense of responsibility for the success of all students. To this end, educators meet students where they are at so that everyone has access to the learning environment. Inclusion fosters not only a physical presence but also meaningful participation in one's education. We collaborate with families because they are an essential part of their child's education. The various supports and services we provide ensure students receive the accommodations and modifications needed to access and learn in the classroom alongside their peers whenever appropriate.

### ***Personalized Learning***

Personalized Learning is a key pillar of Atlas' philosophy, and it begins with knowing each individual child. We will get to know each student's strengths and areas for growth, as well as their interests, passions, and ambitions. From there, we create a learning environment where students' individual needs are met and their collective potential is tapped. Teachers use effective differentiation strategies such as flexible grouping and ongoing assessments to inform their instruction.

### ***English Language Development***

A core part of Atlas' mission is to meet the educational needs of all students in an environment that fosters an appreciation and understanding of other languages and cultures. To support all English language learners (ELLs), Atlas Public Schools complies with federal and state mandates regarding ELL education, re-designation of ELL students, and equal access to the curriculum for English-language learners.

### ***Special Education Program***

We strive to meet the needs of all students, including but not limited to those with disabilities and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). We are open to all students and will not discriminate on the basis of disability. Additionally, we follow all state and federal laws regarding students with disabilities and the development, implementation, and monitoring of Individualized Education Plans and 504 plans. If you have a belief that your student may have a disability, he or she may be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or under the Individuals with Disabilities In Education Act to receive special services. Please first request a conference with your teachers to share your concerns and/or receive more information about eligibility, assessment, IEP/Section 504 Plan development and implementation, and monitoring. All Special Education services will be coordinated through our Director of Student Support. We partner with Miriam Learning Center ([www.miriamstl.org](http://www.miriamstl.org)) for service delivery, resource sharing, guidance and compliance oversight.

## **Building a Safe & Supportive Learning Environment**

### ***Equity***

Equity is essential in creating a safe and supportive learning environment at Atlas Elementary. Equity can mean many things to many people. At Atlas, equity means that every child receives exactly what they need to be successful in the school environment, even if that varies across lines of difference, so that each individual student has an equal chance to thrive. By providing equitable outputs of time, resources, and positive experiences for students, we will work towards accomplishing educational equity so that a child's outcome (i.e. well-being, academic proficiency, college graduation rate, future income) is not predetermined by race, socio-economic status, or any other factor.

Working towards equity involves:

- Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses;
- Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor;
- Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children.

Equity work is not always easy and at times the process can feel difficult, bring up tough conversations, and push us to grow in new ways. We expect our children, staff, and families to approach equity work with an open mind, asking questions, and seeking to better understand the reasoning behind how equity plays into our decisions

### ***Social Emotional Learning (SEL)***

In attending to the whole child, we incorporate social emotional development into all aspects of teaching and programming. We view SEL as the process of identifying and applying skills to know oneself, setting and working towards goals, empathizing, building positive relationships, engaging in conversations about diversity and inclusiveness, and making responsible decisions.

SEL is a focus at every grade level and a primary component of teacher development. We recognize that SEL cannot be taught and exercised in bursts, but must be demonstrated and practiced continuously. The majority of explicit SEL instruction takes place through activities, individual and group conversations, and verbal transparency in Crew which is our morning meeting. However, SEL is also a mindset that all staff model in every interaction: in the classroom, amongst staff, and in family and community relationships.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has created a framework with common language around SEL guiding principles. SEL Core Competencies include:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision making



## ***Conscious Discipline***

Atlas uses the Conscious Discipline approach to develop and sustain a safe and orderly climate. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive classroom management program and a social-emotional curriculum. It is based on current brain research, and contains a set of trauma informed, evidence-based and research-backed Social Emotional Learning (SEL) best practices that draws on research about learning, teaching, mental health, human development and neuroscience to ensure a safe and orderly learning environment. Conscious Discipline provides an array of behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers will utilize to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities.

## ***Responding to Challenging Behaviors***

As a school, our ultimate priority is to maintain the safety of all members of our community, both emotionally and physically. This applies inside classrooms, around our school building, outside at the park, and on field trips. Atlas complies with all state and federal statutes pertaining to school safety, including but not limited to RSMO 160.261, and the Missouri Safe Schools Act. As stated above, teachers take a proactive approach by teaching conflict resolution skills, setting clear expectations, reinforcing positive behavior, and redirecting misbehavior. In response to any sort of misbehavior that infringes on the safety of our community, our goal is to be focused on being rehabilitative rather than punitive, while maintaining compliance with the law. As first-line approaches to misbehavior, all staff employ natural and logical consequences whenever possible. We believe that consequences are one element of responding to challenging behavior; however, Atlas Elementary prioritizes teaching replacement behaviors when assigning next-steps after a student engages in misbehavior. As part of that, maintaining all students' dignity rather than shaming or blaming them is central to a restorative approach to discipline.

When a behavior crosses a line, is disruptive, or unsafe (emotionally and/or physically), our intervention ladder serves as a guideline for defining tiers of unacceptable behavior and associated consequences. This is not intended to be a comprehensive, exhaustive list but rather a snapshot of the types of behaviors that fall into each category and the associated types of responses these tiers of behaviors trigger. The school always retains discretion to take into account a myriad of factors to determine consequences for misbehavior including context, if a behavior is rare or recurring, whether malice or ill intent preceded the behavior, if a student has a disability impacting behavior, and/or if the student is already on a specific behavior plan. Atlas follows state and federal law with respect to student discipline and interventions.

## ***Corporal Punishment***

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school. Corporal punishment is any form of physical punishment administered by an adult to the body of a child for the purpose of discipline, reformation of attitudes or behaviors deemed unacceptable.

Likewise, parents/guardians are prohibited from displaying any form of corporal or physical punishment toward a student while on school premises. Should this occur, Atlas may be required by law to contact the Department of Child Protective Services in an attempt to serve the best interest of the child. Additionally, Atlas faculty, staff, and administrators are legally obligated to report evidence (verbal or physical) of abuse of a child.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

All faculty report suspected truancy, child abuse, or educational neglect to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline of the Missouri Department of Social Services per RSMo 210.115. Teachers and staff can call in seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As mandated reporters, Atlas faculty can make an online report for non-emergencies. If it is an emergency or life-threatening situation, teachers will call 911 immediately and then report it directly to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.

## **Bullying Policy**

All students have the right to a safe and supportive school environment. At Atlas, we work hard to build a positive school climate that is inclusive, compassionate, and bully-free. The school and community members have an obligation to promote our values of kindness, respect, integrity, excellence, and stewardship. Atlas will not tolerate behaviors that violate the safety of any student. The state of Missouri and Atlas Public Schools define bullying as:

*"Bullying" means intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of any student without exception; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may consist of physical actions, including gestures, or oral, cyberbullying, electronic, or written communication, and any threat of retaliation for reporting of such acts. Bullying of students is prohibited on school property, at any school function, or on a school bus. "Cyberbullying" means bullying as defined in this subsection through the transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.*

If you are concerned that a child is being bullied, please bring it to the attention of your teachers immediately. The following process is in place to address concerns:

- Teachers immediately bring the concern to the Director of Support Services
- When appropriate, the Director of Support Services begins an investigation by taking into account the above factors in addition to: context provided by the student in concern, the student being accused of bullying, and staff members who have witnessed the interactions [if applicable] in order to determine the appropriate response
- The Director of Support Services will engage both sets of families as appropriate throughout the process, share their determination and the set of next steps to repair the harm done, to the extent permitted by law.
- If either family disagrees with the Director of Support Services' determination or approach, the issue will be elevated to the Heads of School for further consideration

## **Suspension & Expulsion**

Pursuant to RSMo 167.171, Atlas Public Schools' Board of Directors, by general rule and for the causes provided in section 167.161, may authorize the summary suspension of students by the Head of School for a period not to exceed ten school days and by the Executive Director for a period not to exceed one hundred and eighty school days. In case of a suspension by the Executive Director for more than ten school days, the student, the student's parents or others having custodial care may

appeal the decision of the Executive Director to the Atlas Board or to a committee of Board members appointed by the Board President. No student shall be suspended unless:

- 1.) The pupil shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against them;
- 2.) If the pupil denies the charges, such pupil shall be given an oral or written explanation of the facts which form the basis of the proposed suspension;
- 3.) The pupil shall be given an opportunity to present such pupil's version of the incident; and
- 4.) In the event of a suspension for more than ten school days, where the pupil gives notice that such pupil wishes to appeal the suspension to the board, the suspension shall be stayed until the board renders its decision, unless in the judgment of the Executive Director, the pupil's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, in which case the pupil may be immediately removed from school, and the notice of hearing shall follow as soon as practicable.

In advance of such hearings, Atlas will notify families, the student, and when applicable, the appropriate division of the juvenile or family court, pursuant to RSMO 167.161. Atlas will make a good-faith effort to have the parents or others having custodial care present at the student's hearing. Suspensions and expulsions are a last resort after Atlas has exhausted its in-school discipline system or when the in-school discipline system is not appropriate under the circumstances.

#### Notification

Pursuant to RSMo 167.115, Atlas will notify the appropriate division of the juvenile or family court upon the suspension for more than ten days or expulsion of any student that Atlas knows to be under the jurisdiction of the court. In addition, Atlas will report to the appropriate law enforcement agency any crimes that occur on school grounds to law enforcement, in accordance with law.

#### ***Discipline of Students with Special Needs***

Atlas strives to meet the individualized needs of its students, and will provide the supports needed for students to thrive in school academically, emotionally and socially. In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. Atlas shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons. Students for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the Director of Support Services for consideration of a change in the guidelines.

#### ***Confinement & Restraint***

Atlas teachers and staff do not seclude or confine students, as defined by DESE Rule 160-5-1-.35, except in an emergency situation while awaiting law enforcement or Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Seclusion and confinement mean leaving students unattended in a locked space. Likewise, Atlas faculty only physically restrains students in emergency situations where they pose immediate danger to themselves or others, and they do not respond to behavioral interventions, verbal

directives, and other de-escalation techniques. This type of restraint does not include chemical, mechanical, or prone restraint (as defined by DESE Rule 160-5-1-.35), all of which are prohibited at Atlas. Faculty terminate physical restraint if a student no longer poses a threat, cannot be restrained safely, or appears in severe distress. Guardians are notified of any physical restraint within one school day. Guardians are notified immediately if emergency medical or law enforcement personnel are called.

### ***Threats of Violence***

Employees who receive information concerning threats of violence (suicidal and/or homicidal) will report the information to the Director of Support Services or designee. The student who made the threat will never be left unattended. The Head of School will investigate and if necessary, the Director of Support Services or other trained professional, will administer either a suicidal or homicidal risk assessment, determine next steps, and report the findings to the Head of School. The Head of Schools will respond according to policy based on the risk level identified through the risk assessment. If law enforcement or EMS are asked to respond, families will immediately be notified.

### ***Records***

The Director of Operations with support from the Heads of School, ensures records are maintained for any act of school violence or violent behavior; any offense that occurs on school property, on school transportation, or at a school activity which is reported to law enforcement officials, and any offense which results in an out-of-school suspension for more than ten school days.

## Schedule & Calendar

### ***Year-Round Programming***

In order to more effectively meet the needs of our students and families, Atlas has adopted a year-round school calendar. Our calendar supports our whole-child approach to learning. From academics, play, the arts, wellness, and social emotional learning, we are committed to ensuring the success of our students - academically, emotionally, and physically.

For the 2021-2022 school year, our first day of class begins September 8, 2021 and our school year ends on August 12, 2022. Our school year consists of seven academic sessions, each consisting of roughly five weeks of instruction. Each academic session is followed by an intersession break.

**Session 1:** September 8-October 15 (28 Days)

Intersession 1: October 18-29

**Session 2:** November 1-December 17 (31 Days)

Intersession 2: December 20-January 3 - Winter Break

**Session 3:** January 4-February 11 (28 Days)

Intersession 3: February 14-18

**Session 4:** February 22-March 18 (19 Days)

Intersession 4: March 21-April 1 - Spring Break

**Session 5:** April 4-May 6 (25 Days)

Intersession 5: May 9-20

**Session 6:** May 23-June 24 (24 Days)

Intersession 6: June 27-July 15 - Summer Break

**Session 7** - Extended Summer Term: July 18-August 12 (20 Days)

Intersession 7: August 15-September 5 - Summer Break

### ***Intersession Programming***

We've designed our intersessions so that they fall on a similar timeframe as traditional districts' breaks. For example, Intersession 2 occurs during Winter Break and Intersession 4 falls on the third week in March when SLPS typically has their Spring Break. Together, Intersession 6 & 7 make up our extended summer break where students have roughly six weeks off of school and have time to enjoy the summer. During intersessions that don't fall on traditional breaks (Intersessions 1, 3, & 5), Atlas will provide affordable programming for students with the help of community partners.

Intersession programming will take place at our school and will run throughout the normal school day so that families don't have to worry about finding childcare. For students, they will have the opportunity to participate in camp-like experiences that are designed to be fun and engaging while extending the learning that's taking place in the classroom. While we have visual and performing arts classes during the school day, this is a great opportunity for students to try new activities with partners such as COCA, Building Futures, LitShopSTL, Unleashing Potential, and others. This helps break up the school year for kids and keeps things fun and engaging while providing a safe space, access to meals, and extra academic support.

## 2021-2022 School Calendar

August 2021							August 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Teacher Onboarding: August 9-September 3						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30	31											
September 2021							September 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
			1	2	3	4	6: Labor Day						
							7: Atlas Back to School Bash						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	8: First Day of School						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18							
19	20	21	22	23	24	25							
26	27	28	29	30			Session 1: September 8-October 15 (28 Days)						
October 2021							October 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
					1	2							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9							
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Interession 1: October 18-29						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	18-22: Staff Inservice-No Students						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	25-29: All School Break						
31													
November 2021							November 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1: Start of Session 2						
							11: Veterans' Day--No Students						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	17-23: Extended Term						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25: Thanksgiving						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	24-26 Thanksgiving Break--No Students						
28	29	30					Session 2: November 1-December 17 (31 Days)						
December 2021							December 2021						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
			1	2	3	4							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11							
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Interession 2--Winter Break: December 20-January 3						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	20-21: Staff Inservice--No Students						
26	27	28	29	30	31		22-31: All School Break						
January 2022							January 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
						1	1: New Year's Day						
	3	4	5	6	7	8	3: Teacher PD--No Students						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	4: Start of Session 3						
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	17: Martin Luther King Day--No Students						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29							
30	31						Session 3: January 4-February 11 (28 Days)						
February 2022							February 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
		1	2	3	4	5	Interession 3--February 14-18						
							14: All School Break						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	15-16: Staff Inservice--No Students						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	17-18: All School Break						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	21: Presidents Day--No Students (Makeup Day)						
27	28						22: Start of Session 4						



March 2022							March 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
		1	2	3	4	5	Session 4: February 22-March 18 (19 Days)						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Intersession 4 - March 21-April 1						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	21-23: Makeup Days						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	21-25: All School Break						
27	28	29	30	31			28-1: Staff Inservice - No Students						
April 2022							April 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
					1	2							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	4: First day of Session 5						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16							
17	18	19	20	21	22	23							
24	25	26	27	28	29	30							
							Session 5: April 4-May 6 (25 Days)						
May 2022							May 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intersession 5--May 9-20						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	9-10: Makeup Days						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	9-13: Staff Inservice--No Students						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	16-20: All School Break						
29	30	31					23: First Day of Session 6						
							30: Memorial Day--No Students						
June 2022							June 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
			1	2	3	4	Session 6: May 23-June 24 (24 Days)						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11							
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Intersession 6--June 27-July 15						
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	27-29: Staff Inservice--No Students						
26	27	28	29	30			30: All School Break						
July 2022							July 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
					1	2	1-13: All School Break						
							14-15: Staff Inservice--No Students						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	4: Independence Day						
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	11-15: Makeup Days						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	18: Start of Session 7						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30							
31							Session 7 Extended Term: July 18-August 12 (20 Days)						
August 2022							August 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
	1	2	3	4	5	6							
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Intersession 7--August 15-September 5						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20							
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	15-29: All School Break						
28	29	30	31				30-31: Staff Inservice--No Students						
September 2022							September 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
				1	2	3	1-2, 6: Staff Inservice--No Students						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	5: Labor Day--No Students						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	7: Start of 2022-2023 School Year						
18	19	20	21	22	23	24							
25	26	27	28	29	30								

## **Logistics**

### ***Field Trips or Expeditions***

At Atlas, traditional field trips are called Expeditions, and they are an important part of learning. We use both our local neighborhood as well as the myriad of opportunities around the city to explore and research throughout the school year. As part of your registration packet, guardians were asked to sign a permission slip for all walking field trips. For expeditions that involve transportation, a permission slip will be sent out in advance of the day.

### ***Morning Arrival & Afternoon Pick-up***

Students who are not in before care may begin to enter the school building at 7:45am. We ask that all students are in the school building by 8:00am so we can begin our day promptly at 8:00am.

Students will be dismissed promptly at 3:30pm each day. We will attempt to make pickup flow as smoothly as possible.

### ***Non-Parent Pick-Ups***

We will only release students to adults who are authorized to pick them up, as provided during registration. This list is maintained on our student information system (SIS) and can be updated as needed. We ask unfamiliar adults to verify their identity by showing an ID. In the event of an emergency where you should need someone to pick up your child who is not on the authorized pick-up list, please email your child's teacher and the office manager or call the school.

### ***Late Pick-Up***

If you are unexpectedly delayed at dismissal time, parents should call the school immediately. Please leave a message on the school voicemail if no one is able to answer your call. We understand that things come up from time to time which is why we have after school programming available. If your child is not picked up from school by 3:45pm, they will go directly to After Care. If they are picked up before 4:15pm a fee of \$5 will be assessed upon pick up. If they are picked up after 4:15pm the daily rate of \$15 will be required upon pick up.

### ***Early Pick-up***

Picking your child up early from school can disrupt the learning environment and your child will miss valuable time in the classroom. We ask that families avoid picking up their children from school early. And yet, we also know that things come up. If you need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, you must notify their teacher prior to pick-up via email or call the school office to notify the Office Manager. If you will be picking up your child before the end of the day on a regular basis, a valid reason and documentation must be provided.

### ***Before and After Care***

Atlas will offer both before and after care programming for students. Before care runs from 7:00-8:00am each day and aftercare runs from the end of the school day until 5:30pm.



### ***Transportation***

Atlas will not offer bus transportation to and from school for our general student body. That said, Atlas is committed to removing barriers to enrollment. We encourage families to utilize apps such as GoKid to coordinate carpools to and from school, and will work with families to find solutions to transportation barriers.

If a child needs transportation because of an IEP or if a child is eligible because of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Atlas will arrange a transportation plan with the family by using modes such as A. Best Taxi Service, LLC, Metro Call-A-Ride, and RideFinders. All transportation options will have background checks and appropriate licensing.

Atlas does provide bus transportation to and from field trips during the school day and will be utilizing a bus company such as First Student for transportation related to field trips and expeditions.

### ***Parking***

There are a limited number of street parking spots available on Washington in front of the school. Families also have the option of parking in Lot 3 or Lot 4 when they come to the school. Parking Lot 3 is located on the south side of Washington Blvd. across the street from the school. Lot 4 is on the northwest corner of Washington and T.E. Huntley.

### ***Allergies***

We believe that a safe, inclusive and successful school environment is one that: 1) is aware of and sensitive to the issues surrounding students' health; and 2) supports parents in the safeguarding of their child's well-being. This is particularly important for students who have severe, life-threatening allergies. To this end, the school will avoid the use of known allergens in class or school wide projects, parties, and events where food-allergic students are present. On an annual basis, we will release our protocols and process for ensuring that all families and staff understand the safety procedures and precautions we will take as a school.

### ***Snacks & Water***

All children need to bring a healthy snack to school each day, such as proteins, fruits, and vegetables. We encourage parents to send snacks that are low in sugar and other additives. Peanuts, products containing peanuts or peanut butter, (for allergies), carbonated beverages, gum, and candy are prohibited.

Children need to drink water throughout the day and water will be available on campus. However, we cannot provide disposable cups, so it's important that your child bring a water bottle everyday.

## School Policies & Procedures

### **Enrollment & Lottery**

Atlas will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate, for admission or otherwise, on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender, income level, or proficiency in the English language. Atlas may limit admission to students within a given age group or grade level, but will not have specific requirements for admission (e.g. minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.)

Atlas aims to be an institutional asset to the neighborhoods closest to our school, so our lottery policy gives preference to students in our target zip codes. Seats remaining after the lotteries are open to students in St. Louis City on a first-come, first-serve basis. Pursuant to [RSMo 160.410](#), the enrollment process at Atlas Public Schools will be open to:

- all students who reside within the boundaries of the St. Louis Public School District
- non-resident students who transfer from an unaccredited district
- those eligible under the terms of judicial settlements or through urban voluntary transfer programs as defined by [RSMO 160.410](#)

Families must submit a complete application for their child prior to the application deadline. Upon receiving an application, a team member from Atlas will follow up to explain our enrollment process and timeline. Atlas' initial application will meet all the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act.

If the number of applications exceeds capacity, a lottery will be held.

Atlas will hold three lotteries to enroll students. If the number of applicants for each lottery exceeds capacity, Atlas will enroll students randomly, with preference for eligible new students given in the following order:

1. Children of faculty & staff
2. Siblings of students currently enrolled as of the lottery date
3. Students who reside in the 63103, 63108, or 63110 zip codes
4. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, and
5. Other student applicants

Should a lottery be held, all completed and accepted applications submitted during the enrollment period will be publicly drawn in random order until capacity is reached. Lotteries will be randomized by computer and certified by a third-party public official or outside firm to attest to the lottery's fairness.

Additional applicants after the lottery will be added to a "waiting list," which will rank applications that were submitted during the enrollment period. Applications received after the enrollment period will be added to the bottom of the waiting list. These applicants will be identified by number and by grade. Additional seat capacity after the third lottery will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis to eligible students.

### **Arriving on Time**

Work begins promptly when students arrive. Students can enter the school beginning at 7:45am. If a student enters the school after 8:00am, they are counted tardy. Tardiness to school decreases learning time, impacts focus and concentration, and breaks continuity of the teaching process. Parents are encouraged to make every effort to get their child to school on time and to contact the Office Manager for support if facing extenuating circumstances. It is important for children to develop the habit of arriving to school on time and helps them to learn responsibility and respect. When students are habitually late to school, this results in missing entire days of instruction over the course of the school year.

### **Attendance Policy**

We view each and every day as an essential learning opportunity, and therefore expect excellent attendance from all of our students. Missing school regularly is not only detrimental to a child's learning, but it can create poor learning habits. A child is considered absent when they are not in school. A child is considered tardy when they are not with their class at 8:01am.

We receive the majority of our state funding based on our school's attendance. In short, if we have outstanding attendance school-wide, our state funding will be maximized. The school loses funding for every absence and tardy, even when excused. For these reasons, it is imperative that families take attendance seriously and not plan vacations or other absences while school is in session.

Please note that attendance is compulsory in Missouri for students aged 7 and older. A child is considered truant after three (3) unexcused absences. After excessive absences, excused or unexcused, a family may be referred to the Atlas Student Attendance Review Board, where an action plan will be created. As mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect, if student attendance continues to be a challenge, Atlas employees may refer the case to Children's Division for educational neglect. Please review the table below to understand Atlas' process for dealing with unexcused absences.

<b># of Unexcused Absences</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>	<b>Possible Additional Supports</b>
1st absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li></ul>	
2nd absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li></ul>	
3rd absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li><li>● 1st Notification of Truancy notice sent home via email</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Meeting with the Director of Support Services</li></ul>

5th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li> <li>● Meeting with the Director of Support Services to develop support plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Home visit by Director of Support Services</li> <li>● Carpool assistance</li> </ul>
7th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li> <li>● Second Notification of Truancy</li> <li>● Home visit by Director of Support Services or designee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Carpool assistance</li> </ul>
10th absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Email/Phone call home to guardian if no documentation is provided</li> <li>● Third Notification of Truancy</li> <li>● Meeting with Heads of School to review support plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased Supports</li> </ul>
11+ absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family is referred to the Family Court Children’s Division and/or MO Department of Social Services for truancy and educational neglect.</li> </ul>	

***Excused and Unexcused Absences***

The following may be considered excused absences:

- Illness (a doctor’s statement may be required as verification after 3 consecutive days absent or absences throughout the semester due to illness)
- Medical Appointment which cannot be scheduled outside of school hours
- Days of Religious Observation
- Death in Family
- Extreme Emergencies
- Other, as approved by administration

The following may be considered unexcused absences:

- Family trips/out-of-town
- Family outings
- Time with family or out-of-town visitors
- Lack of sleep or over-sleeping
- Lack of interest/motivation
- Lack of transportation or car troubles
- Other Excessive Absences

### ***What to do if your child will be absent or late to school***

In order for us to fulfill our mission of educating the whole child, it is imperative that all students attend school on time when they are able to. If you know that your child will be out of school in advance, please let our Office Manager know as well as your child's teacher as soon as possible. If your child will be absent or late to school due to an illness, transportation issue, etc. please notify the Office Manager by 8:20 a.m by texting the main line at (314) 437-4898 or emailing [attendance@atlaspublic.org](mailto:attendance@atlaspublic.org).

### ***Covid-19***

In order to keep our community safe, Atlas is following guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Evidence compiled by the CDC shows that schools can safely reopen, and stay open, with consistent implementation of prevention strategies. Currently, the CDC guidelines emphasize the importance of using a combination of layered prevention strategies to avoid COVID-19 transmission in schools, including:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks
- Physical distancing
- Hand washing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state and local health departments.

Atlas has developed a detailed Covid-19 Health and Safety Plan that can be found on our website at [www.atlaspublic.org](http://www.atlaspublic.org). This plan was developed in consultation with the agencies listed above and with the feedback we were getting from our community. Atlas will continue to update our Covid-19 Health and Safety Plans as new information becomes available.

### ***Missouri Department of Health Regulations***

The following guidelines are based on the MO Department of Health's Prevention and Control of Communicable Disease. Students with the following symptoms will be excluded from school.

1. Chicken Pox: Until all blisters have scabbed, usually five to seven days after the rash begins.
2. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):
  - a. *Purulent Conjunctivitis* (redness of eyes and or eyelids with thick white or yellow discharge and eye pain) Exclude until appropriate prescribed treatment has initiated, or discharge has stopped, unless a doctor has diagnosed it as non-infectious.
  - b. *Non-Purulent Conjunctivitis* (redness of eyes with clear, watery discharge. No pain or fever or eyelid redness) No exclusion necessary.
3. Diarrhea-Free of diarrhea for 24 hours.
4. Fifth Disease (Parvovirus) No exclusion necessary. When rash appears, it is no longer contagious.
5. Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: Until fever is gone and the child is well enough to participate in school.

6. Head Lice: If live lice are present, exclude until first treatment has been completed and no live lice are seen. A nurse or medical designee will assess the student upon return to school.
7. Impetigo: If impetigo is confirmed by a healthcare provider, exclude until 24 hours after prescribed treatment is completed. Lesions on exposed skin should be covered with water-tight dressing.
8. Mononucleosis: No exclusion necessary. Student may return upon feeling well enough to participate in school.
9. Ringworm: Until treatment has been started. If the lesion cannot be covered, or the lesion is on the scalp, until 24 hours after starting treatment.
10. Scabies: Until 24 hours after treatment begins.
11. Strep Throat or Scarlet Fever: Until 24 hours on prescribed antibiotic treatment begins and the student is fever free.
12. Vomiting: Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

### ***Medications***

If your child needs to take medication during the school day, you must fill out the authorization form, giving Atlas staff permission to administer medication. Please note, by law, we are not allowed to administer any medication, including children's Tylenol or ibuprofen, without a completed authorization form. If the medication is over-the-counter, we only need parents to fill out the top half of the form. If the medication is prescribed, we will need the doctor to fill out the bottom half of the form. Prescribed medications should be in the original pharmacy RX bottle and over-the-counter medicine should be in the original container. Please bring the medication to the office along with the signed authorization form.

### ***Immunizations***

It is the policy of Atlas Public Schools that all students attending Atlas Elementary be immunized in accordance with law. Students cannot attend school without providing satisfactory evidence of immunization, unless they are exempted from immunization and provide proper documentation of exemption.

A student is exempted from obtaining immunizations if Atlas has on file the completed original forms necessary to prove that the student will not be immunized for religious or medical reasons. To protect inadequately vaccinated individuals and the entire community, unimmunized students could be excluded from school during disease outbreaks.

Medical Immunization Exemption - an exemption for medical reasons requires certification by a licensed doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy that either the immunization would seriously endanger the child's health or life or that the child has documentation of laboratory evidence of immunity to the disease. The original copy of MO Department of Health and Senior Services form IMM.P.12 must be on file at the school with the immunization record.

Religious Immunization Exemption - an exemption for religious reasons requires written certification that immunization of the student violates his or her religious beliefs. Religious exemption cards must be obtained from the MO Department of Health and Senior Services. The original Form Imm.P11A card, as is required by law, will be retained in the student's school health record.

### ***Health Records***

Except as otherwise required to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), records containing student health information will be stored separately from other student records in a locked file cabinet or in a secure computer file.

### ***Lice Policy***

Children from all backgrounds can get lice, and head lice do not pose any health risk. If we think your child has lice, a staff person will check his or her hair. If a lice or nit is found, we will call you to come pick up your child. Your child may come back to school once one lice treatment is done. However it's important to keep monitoring their hair for more lice or nits for up to 2 weeks after the initial treatment of lice. The best way to prevent your child from getting lice is to keep their personal belongings to themselves. This is especially important with jackets, hats, and combs.

If we discover an incident of lice in your child's classroom, we will notify the entire grade level within 24 hours of the exposure. Your child's name will not be shared in any lice-related notifications sent out.

### ***Promotion***

At Atlas, promotion to the next grade means that a student is academically prepared for success in that grade level. It is the school's responsibility to help all students meet promotion criteria through high quality instruction, targeted interventions, and partnerships with families. However, in the event that a student does not meet these criteria, we believe it is a disservice to promote them into the next grade for which they are not yet academically prepared.

Our philosophy is that some students may meet standards at different times, but all students must meet them. At Atlas, our mission is to educate the whole child by combining a rigorous academic program with real-world, place-based learning experiences so all students thrive. We are an intentionally diverse school that believes all students can achieve at high levels when properly supported; this includes students who have been historically underserved, and are considered to be at-risk. The team at Atlas is aware of the risk that non-promoted students could potentially withdraw from Atlas to attend a school with less rigorous academic standards or one that believes in promotion based on age versus academic mastery. As such, we will communicate intensively with families whose children are in danger of retention. At the beginning of each year, and whenever new students enter the school, the Leadership Team will explain the promotion criteria in detail to ensure families understand the rationale behind our high expectations. Promotion criteria will also be clearly and explicitly described in the Family Handbook.

Students must meet the following criteria in grades kindergarten through 5th grade in order to be academically prepared for the next year. Please note that if a student's IEP sets specific targets for promotion, the school will use these criteria. With this exception, all students will be held to the following standards in order to be promoted:

<b>Promotion Criteria</b>	
Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment	Kindergarten Students: F&P Level of B or higher 1st Grade Students: F&P Level of F or higher 2nd Grade Students: F&P Level of K or higher 3rd Grade Students: F&P Level of N or higher 4th Grade Students: F&P Level of Q or higher 5th Grade Students: F&P Level of T or higher
Course Grades	Students must receive a passing grade (70 percent or higher) in at least three of the four following classes: Math, Math Facts & Math Stories, Content Based Literacy, Integrated Studies

At the end of the second, fourth, and sixth academic sessions we will systematically check in with families and revisit action plans to support students as they work to meet promotion standards. The following table summarizes the type of communication required at each checkpoint if the student is in danger of retention.

<b>Student Orientation</b>	<b>End of Session 2</b>	<b>End of Session 4</b>	<b>End of Session 6</b>
Conversation regarding promotion criteria  Family Handbook that addresses student promotion criteria  Signed document by family member acknowledging that promotion criteria was thoroughly addressed	Conversation at report card night (if parent is not present, must at least have a conversation on the phone)  Letter stating that student's promotion is in doubt & why. Atlas team member will discuss what the school is doing to support the student and how families can support at home	Conversation at report card night (if parent is not present, must at least have a conversation on the phone)  Letter stating that student's promotion is in doubt & why  Parent must come in for an in person meeting with teacher and Head of School (beyond report card night meeting)	Conversation and Letter stating that student's promotion is in doubt & why OR that student will definitely be retained  Parent must come in for an in person meeting with teacher and Head of School  Signed document by family member recognizing that promotion is in doubt and why



	Signed document by family member recognizing that promotion is in doubt and why	Signed document by family member recognizing that promotion is in doubt and why	
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This communication is designed both to ensure families are aware as soon as the possibility of non-promotion arises, and also to engage parents in supporting the specific interventions provided by the school. Family support is particularly important when interventions are provided outside the traditional school day, such as before or after school, or when attendance problems are reducing instructional time for a struggling student.

**Public Information Program**

Open communication with Atlas’ students, parents/guardians, employees and the public is essential for our school to operate effectively. The Atlas Public Schools Board of Directors places high importance on conveying information concerning Atlas’ goals, achievements, activities, and operations to our stakeholders.

Atlas will provide parents/guardians and members of the public information as required by law. Board policies and related documents, including current versions of our Family Handbook, will be posted on our website. Atlas will also post notice of Board Meetings on our website, and all meetings of the Atlas Board of Directors are open to the public. Other public information will be available in the school’s buildings for viewing by the public during the office’s normal business hours, as required by law and in accordance with board policy.

**Visitors at School**

During the 2020-2021 school year, most schools throughout the country significantly limited visitors of all kinds. Looking ahead to the 2021-2022 school year, Atlas will rely on updated guidance from the CDC which indicates that local factors such as COVID-19 cases and transmission in the local community should determine when visitors should be permitted.

In order to best serve our students and considering their safety and wellness first and foremost, Atlas Elementary will implement the following guidelines regarding visitors to campus:

- All visitors must be wearing a properly fitted mask before entering the building and sanitize hands once in the building
- All visitors must sign-off on the Visitor Screening Form and use the Sign-In Shee
- No tours during the school day until it is safe to do so
- Contractors will ideally come after hours or before the start of the school day
- No classroom volunteers or visitors
- No parents in the building except for scheduled visits and emergencies

### ***Parent Custodial Issues***

As a general rule, Atlas will allow a parent access to his or her child and/or the child's records unless we have a copy of a current court order prohibiting such access. It is essential for a custodial parent to notify the Office Manager when there are legal restrictions regarding access to records or releasing the child to the non-custodial parent. This information must be on file in the office. Please contact the Office Manager if you have any questions. No parent will be permitted access to students in a manner that causes disruption to the learning environment or jeopardizes the safety of students. Parents are discouraged from using Atlas as a visitation site.

### ***Smoke, Alcohol & Drug-free Campus***

Atlas is a drug, alcohol & smoke-free campus. We would like to take the opportunity to specify that this policy includes the use of electronic cigarettes and smoking outside on the sidewalk.

### ***Dress Code***

At Atlas, we believe that all students shall come to school in a comfortable manner that allows them to be authentically who they are, while also making their school environment more conducive to learning and playing. School uniforms reduce economic and social barriers between young people. They also provide a sense of belonging and create the opportunity for all to be included. In conclusion, Atlas students will wear a uniform so that they are more focused on expressing themselves through their personalities and school work, rather than their outward appearance. Students are required to wear a branded Atlas polo shirt or branded Atlas t-shirt purchased from the school or from the online store. The online store can be accessed through the Atlas website under the "Families" tab. Branded sweatshirts are also available if students would like to wear an additional layer. Students must wear khaki bottoms- shorts, skirts, jumpers, or pants. The khaki bottoms do not need to be purchased through Atlas. Students can wear closed-toed shoes of their choice. Questions about obtaining uniforms should be directed to Heather Fitzsimmons, our Director of Support Services. You can email Heather at: [heather.fitzsimmons@atlaspublic.org](mailto:heather.fitzsimmons@atlaspublic.org)

### ***Toys at School***

Although we appreciate the enthusiasm with which children bring in their toys to share with their classmates and teachers, toys tend to cause distractions to the learning environment and we ask that all toys and other items that are irreplaceable and/or of value be kept at home. The school will have sensory manipulatives (like balls, fidgets, or play-doh) on hand to help ease transition for students. Please connect with your child's teacher directly regarding the use of sensory manipulatives in the classroom.

### ***Personal Belongings/Lost & Found***

All personal belongings (including backpacks) should be clearly labeled with your student's full name. We ask that items of great personal value (irreplaceable items) stay at home in order to avoid loss or theft. For lost and found items, see the New School SF Lost and Found. Unmarked articles and unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each month on a designated Friday so please check the Lost and Found regularly. Make sure to label your child's clothes with their name - a staff member will go through the Lost and Found and return all labeled items before donating.

### ***Personal Electronic Devices***

Atlas values the use of technology for both learning and communication. The expectation for staff is that cell phones are to be used for urgent updates, emergencies and classroom documentation. They are not to be used for personal needs during instruction time. We ask that students only carry a cell phone if absolutely necessary (parent permission to carry a phone must be on file at school). Phones must be turned off and stored out of sight during school hours in cubbies/backpacks. Phones may not be used to talk, take pictures, play games, record, or text during school hours, including recesses and during after school (if applicable).

### ***Birthday and Other Celebrations at School***

At Atlas, we want kids to have a joyful birthday and have the opportunity to celebrate with their classmates on their special day if they so choose. We ask that if families decide to share a birthday treat, that they coordinate with the classroom teacher prior to the birthday. The treat must be store bought and nut-free. If you bring in a treat, there must be enough for the entire class.

### ***Celebrations Outside of School***

We believe in creating and sustaining a strong and inclusive school community for parents, staff, and students as well. To that end, we ask that students/families who wish to distribute invitations at school include all the children in your child's class. For smaller get-togethers and parties of any sort, we ask you to distribute invitations outside of school, and use discretion when commenting on school campus. This is in keeping with maintaining an inclusive environment and cultivating a strong community at Atlas.

## **Parent Rights and Notifications**

There are a number of federal and state statutes which require school districts to provide parents, guardians, and students with information pertaining to Atlas Public Schools' Board policies that affect them. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation has significantly added to the list of required parental notifications.

The following policies are available in the school office for parent review at any time. These policies provide the guidelines for how such incidents at Atlas will be handled.

- Bullying
- Student Records
- Student Suspension/Expulsions
- Weapons & Dangerous Instruments
- Child Abuse
- Nondiscrimination

### ***Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

1. Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
2. Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
3. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

### ***Concerns/Complaints***

Most concerns or issues can be handled through simple communication with those involved. If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, then it is appropriate to contact the Head of School about the concern or complaint. If the issue cannot be resolved with the Head of School, parents may contact the Executive Director. If the issue still cannot be resolved, parents may contact a member of the Board of Directors. A list of the Board of Directors and their contact information can be found at the end of the handbook. If the issue cannot be solved at the school level, parents of charter school students may contact Atlas Public School’s sponsor, the Missouri Charter Public School Commission (MCPSC). Contact information for MCPSC can be found at the end of the handbook.

### ***Parent Concern Communication Protocol***

When addressing problems, please follow this simple protocol:

Teacher » Head of School » Executive Director » Board of Directors » MCPSC

### ***Non-Discrimination***

Atlas Public Schools is committed to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital or parental status, religion, genetics, ancestry, or veteran status, in admissions, educational programs and policies, activities, and employment. Atlas Public Schools’ Executive Director serves as the Title IX/Compliance Coordinator and can be reached at [heckendorn@atlaspublic.org](mailto:heckendorn@atlaspublic.org) or 314-226-8896.

### ***Equal Education Opportunity***

It is the policy of Atlas Public Schools to provide a free and appropriate education for disabled students. Atlas’ programs and services available to meet the needs of these students will be in accordance with The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and 162.670 - .995 RSMo. In addition, the identification of disabled students and the services provided by Atlas will be in accordance with the Missouri State Plan for Special Education, Regulations Implementing Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Atlas has special education and related service providers to provide direct services to students with IEPs and professional development to all instructional and administrative staff. When appropriate, direct services will be provided within the classroom. Parents must sign a release to allow Atlas and its special education staff to evaluate a student for special education services.

### ***Parents' Right To Know Guide Qualifications***

Atlas is required to inform you of certain information that you, according to the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), have the right to know. Upon your request, Atlas is required to provide you in a timely manner, the following information:

- Whether your student's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether your student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- Whether your student's teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition to the information that parents may request, a school receiving Title I.A funds must provide to each individual parent:

- Information on the level of achievement and academic growth of your student, if applicable and available, on each of the State academic assessments required under Title I.A.
- Timely notice that your student has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who has not met applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

### ***ESSA Complaint Procedures***

This section explains how to file a complaint about any of the programs that are administered by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) under the Every Students Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). Programs include Title I. A, B, C, D, Title II, Title III, Title IV.A, Title V.

#### **1. What is a complaint?**

For these purposes, a complaint is a written allegation that a local education agency (LEA) or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) has violated a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under ESSA.

#### **2. Who may file a complaint?**

Any individual or organization may file a complaint.

#### **3. How can a complaint be filed?**

Complaints can be filed with the LEA or with the Department.

#### **4. How will a complaint filed with the LEA be investigated?**

Complaints filed with the LEA are to be investigated and attempted to be resolved according to the locally developed and adopted procedures.

**5. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the local level (LEA)?**

A complaint not resolved at the local level may be appealed to the Department.

**6. How can a complaint be filed with the Department?**

A complaint filed with the Department must be a written, signed statement that includes: 1. A statement that a requirement that applies to an ESSA program has been violated by the LEA or the Department, and 2. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated.

**7. How will a complaint filed with the Department be investigated?**

The investigation and complaint resolution proceedings will be completed within a time limit of forty-five calendar days. That time limit can be extended by the agreement of all parties.

The following activities will occur in the investigation:

**1. Record** - A written record of the investigation will be kept.

**2. Notification of LEA** - The LEA will be notified of the complaint within five days of the complaint being filed.

**3. Resolution at LEA** - The LEA will then initiate its local complaint procedures in an effort to first resolve the complaint at the local level.

**4. Report by LEA** - Within thirty-five days of the complaint being filed, the LEA will submit a written summary of the LEA investigation and complaint resolution. This report is considered public record and may be made available to parents, teachers, and other members of the general public.

**5. Verification** - Within five days of receiving the written summary of a complaint resolution, the Department will verify the resolution of the complaint through an on-site visit, letter, or telephone call(s).

**6. Appeal** - The complainant or the LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the U.S. Department of Education.

**8. How are complaints related to equitable services to nonpublic school children handled differently?**

In addition to the procedures listed in number 7 above, complaints related to equitable services will also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, and they will receive all information related to the investigation and resolution of the complaint. Also, appeals to the United States Department of Education must be filed no longer than thirty days following the Department's resolution of the complaint (or its failure to resolve the complaint).

**9. How will appeals to the Department be investigated?**

The Department will initiate an investigation within ten days, which will be concluded within thirty days from the day of the appeal. This investigation may be continued beyond the thirty day limit at the discretion of the Department. At the conclusion of the investigation, the

Department will communicate the decision and reasons for the decision to the complainant and the LEA. Recommendations and details of the decision are to be implemented within fifteen days of the decision being delivered to the LEA.

**10. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the state level (the Department)?**

The complainant or the LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the United States Department of Education.



## Additional Resources

### ***Earthquake Safety***

In compliance with Missouri State School Law, Section 160.455, Atlas Public Schools is required to distribute to each student the following information on earthquake safety.

**The New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ)** extends 120 miles southward from the area of Charleston, Missouri, and Cairo, Illinois, through New Madrid and Caruthersville, following Interstate 55 to Blytheville and on down to Marked Tree, Arkansas. The NMSZ consists of a series of large, ancient faults that are buried beneath thick, soft sediments. These faults cross five state lines and cuts across the Mississippi River in three places and the Ohio River in two places.

**The New Madrid Seismic Zone and surrounding region is active**, averaging more than 200 measured events per year (1.0 or more on the Richter scale), about 20 per month. Tremors large enough to be felt (Magnitude 2.5 – 3.0) are noted annually. Every 18 months the fault releases a shock of 4.0 or more, capable of local minor damage. Magnitudes of 5.0 or greater occur about once per decade. They can cause significant damage and be felt in several states.

**The highest earthquake risk in the United States outside the West Coast is in the New Madrid Seismic Zone.** Damaging tremors are not as frequent as in California, but when they do occur, the destruction covers more than 20 times the area due to the nature of geologic materials in the region. The 1968 5.5 magnitude Dale, Illinois, earthquake toppled chimneys and caused damage to unreinforced masonry in the St. Louis area, more than 100 miles from the epicenter. A 5.2 magnitude earthquake in April 2008 in southeast Illinois, did not cause damage in Missouri, but was felt across much of the state.

**A damaging earthquake in this Area, which experts say is about a 6.0 magnitude event, occurs about once every 80 years** (the last one in 1895 was centered near Charleston, Missouri). There is estimated to be a 25-40 percent chance for a magnitude 6.0 – 7.5 or greater earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone in a 50-year period according to the U.S. Geological Survey reports. The results would be serious damage to unreinforced masonry buildings and other structures from Memphis to St. Louis.

**A major earthquake in this area - the Great New Madrid Earthquake of 1811-12** was actually a series of over 2,000 shocks in five months, with several quakes believed to be a 7.0 Magnitude or higher. Eighteen of these rang church bells on the Eastern seaboard. The land was destroyed in the Missouri Bootheel, making it unfit for farming for many years. It was the largest burst of seismic energy east of the Rocky Mountains in the history of the U.S. and was several times larger than the San Francisco quake of 1906.

**When will another Great Earthquake the size of those in 1811-12 happen?** Several lines of research suggest that upheavals like those in 1811-12 visit the New Madrid region every 500-600 years. Hence, emergency planners, engineers, and seismologists do not expect a repeat of the intensity of the 1811-12 series for at least 100 years or more. However, even though the chance is

remote, experts estimate the chances for a repeat earthquake of similar magnitude to the 1811-12 New Madrid earthquakes over a 50-year period to be a 7 – 10 percent probability.

**What can we do to protect ourselves?** Education, planning, proper building construction, and preparedness are proven means to minimize earthquake losses, deaths, and injuries.

### **When the Shaking Begins**

- Drop, cover and hold on. Move only a few steps to a nearby safe place. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you're sure it's safe to exit. Stay away from windows.
- In a high-rise building, expect the fire alarms and sprinklers to go off during a quake.
- If you are in bed, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.
- If you are outdoors, find a clear spot away from buildings, trees, and power lines. Drop to the ground.
- If you are in a car, slow down and drive to a clear place (as described above). Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

### **AFTER the Shaking Stops**

- Check yourself for injuries. Protect yourself from further danger by putting on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes, and work gloves.
- Check others for injuries. Give first aid for serious injuries.
- Look for and extinguish small fires. Eliminate fire hazards. Turn off the gas if you smell gas or think it's leaking. (Remember, only a professional should turn it back on.)
- Listen to the radio for instructions.
- Expect aftershocks. Each time you feel one, drop, cover and hold on.
- Inspect your home for damage. Get everyone out if your home is unsafe.
- Use the telephone only to report life-threatening emergencies.

### **Prepare a Home Earthquake Plan**

- Choose a safe place in every room--under a sturdy table or desk or against an inside wall where nothing can fall on you.
- Practice DROP, COVER AND HOLD ON at least twice a year. Drop under a sturdy desk or table, hold onto the desk or table with one hand, and protect the back of the head with the other hand. If there's no table or desk nearby, kneel on the floor against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases, or tall furniture that could fall on you and protect the back of your head with one hand and your face with the other arm.
- Choose an out-of-town family contact.
- Take a first aid class from your local Red Cross chapter. Keep your training current.
- Get training in how to use a fire extinguisher from your local fire department.
- Inform babysitters and caregivers of your plan.

### **Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit for Home and Car**

- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.

- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.
- Written instructions for how to turn off gas, electricity, and water if authorities advise you to do so. (Remember, you'll need a professional to turn natural gas service back on.)
- Keep essentials, such as a flashlight and sturdy shoes, by your bedside.

### **Helpful Websites**

- Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services ([www.health.mo.gov](http://www.health.mo.gov))
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources ([www.dnr.mo.gov](http://www.dnr.mo.gov))
- Center for Disease Control & Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov))
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Missouri Office ([www.dps.mo.gov](http://www.dps.mo.gov))
- American Red Cross ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))

### **Trauma Informed School Initiative**

Pursuant to Missouri Senate Bill 638, Section 161.1050, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has established the "Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative."

For the purposes of this initiative, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. "Trauma-informed approach" - an approach that involves understanding and responding to the symptoms of chronic interpersonal trauma and traumatic stress across the lifespan
2. "Trauma-informed school" - a school that:
  - a. realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery
  - b. recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in students, teachers and staff
  - c. responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into its policies, procedures and practices; and
  - d. seeks to actively resist re-traumatization

The implementation of a trauma-informed approach is an ongoing organizational change process. A "trauma-informed approach" is not a program model that can be implemented and then simply monitored by a fidelity checklist. Rather, it is a profound paradigm shift in knowledge, perspective, attitudes and skills that continue to deepen and unfold over time. Some leaders in the field are beginning to talk about a "continuum" of implementation, where organizations move through stages. The continuum begins with becoming trauma aware and moves to trauma sensitive to responsive to being fully trauma informed. Visit <https://dese.mo.gov/traumainformed> to learn more.

### **Virtual Learning Opportunity**

The Missouri Course Access Program (MOCAP) offers students equal access to a wide range of high quality courses and interactive online learning that is neither time nor place dependent. Because virtual instruction can be an effective education option for some students, there may be courses available through MOCAP that are of interest to your family. Please contact Heather Fitzsimmons, Director of Support Services, for more information about virtual learning opportunities. Additional information can also be found online on Atlas' website at [www.atlaspublic.org](http://www.atlaspublic.org) or [www.mocap.mo.gov](http://www.mocap.mo.gov).