



THE CAHALAN CHRONICLE
September 18, 2022

ATHLOS ACADEMY of ST CLOUD
A COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER, SCHOLARSHIP & SERVICE

Dear Athlos Family,

I wish to extend to you all a warm welcome for the 2022-2023 school year. I thank you for your suggestions and input throughout last school year and the summer months. In addition, thank you for all you have done to support our school community as we begin our school year together. You have made the first couple weeks of school a meaningful and special experience for all.

As we all know the first few weeks of school can bring some bumps along the way and this year was no exception, especially in the area of transportation. As most of you know, transportation is the area that sometimes requires the most patience for the first couple of weeks of school. Bus companies in Minnesota, including ours, are experiencing a bus driver shortage. Our Transportation Coordinator and several additional assigned administrators will continue to work on those challenges with the St. Cloud School district. We hope that in the next couple weeks, the bus routes, stops and times are routine and in place. Students K-3rd grade will have a bus tag on their back packs designating bus rider or family pick up. If your student loses their bus tag, please reach out to your student's teacher.

I want to ensure that everyone is aware of our new school leadership team for the 2022-2023 school year. They include:

Jennifer Geraghty - Director
Tracee Cahalan – Principal
Tiffany Daniels – Assistant Principal
Chloe Smith – Special Education Coordinator
Kate Hill – Business & Personnel Director

Additional administrative staff to be aware of if you have questions include:

Jada Lidstrom – Transportation Coordinator
Kristina Valezquez – Enrollment Coordinator, Attendance Clerk
Sarah Cunningham – Food & Nutrition Director
Tim Flatz – Maintenance and Security Coordinator
Eunice Gyamerah- EL Coordinator
Angela Jambretz- Intervention Coordinator
Rachel Barrett– School Nurse
Britney Hilden– Social Worker
Rachel Mushel– Lead Social Worker
Krista Swenson- Dean of Students

Maurice Duncan- Dean of Students
Andrea Lahti – Special Education Due Process Coordinator
Kelsey Keifer – Special Education Director
Lisa Loidolt– Special Education Secretary

Please know that the faculty, staff and Athlos School Board will work tirelessly to ensure that families know their student(s) are safe and achieving great things at Athlos no matter what our challenges may be. We look forward to another incredible school year!

Warmly,



Director Jennifer Geraghty MA, EdD, PhD
Athlos Academy St. Cloud, MN

HELLO FROM THE NEW PRINCIPAL

Greetings Athlos Academy of St. Cloud Families:

It is my pleasure and honor to introduce myself as Principal of Athlos Academy of St. Cloud. I am extremely proud and excited to join this K-8 school community and to support our students and their families.

This is the start of my 26th year in education. I have previously served as an Assistant Principal, a reading specialist, in several classroom teacher positions, and as a special education teacher in Minneapolis and surrounding districts.

As Athlos Academy Principal, I am dedicated to continuing our students' successes and will strive to continue building the positive relationships, rigorous learning, and the incredible environment that encourages our students to celebrate their unique strengths.

Like you, I am a parent as well. My son Treyvon is finishing up his last semester at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I couldn't be prouder of his accomplishments as a student and member of the UMD football team. My family is something that truly blesses my life and being a part of the Athlos Academy of St. Cloud family makes my life that much richer.

I view education as a lifelong process, and I will continue to learn about our special K-8 building of Athlos Academy in this year and in the years to come. Most importantly, I bring a belief that the students are at the center of all school-related decisions. I am excited to bring my experience, my openness to learn, and my child-centered approach to support our students. Because the relationships between families and the school are vital to the success of our students, I encourage you to become involved in every way possible. I look forward to the collaboration and support we will be able to give each other.

I am here to make every effort to help your child reach his/her fullest potential. I vow to give my all to our students', and I will request the same efforts from our staff and school community.

Together we will continue to move Athlos Academy students through a rich learning environment guided with love and support toward a bright future

Thank you,

Tracee Cahalan
Principal

SCHOOL HOURS

Just a reminder that our school hours changed to 9:15 AM to 4:15 PM this year. Driveline doors will open for students at 9:15 AM. Families may drop off their students at our free before care program the BREAKFAST CLUB from 7:45-9:00AM. Students are able to work on homework, play games, socialize quietly, color, do puzzles, etc.

FAMILY DROP OFF & PICK UP REMINDERS

Please make sure to call the front office staff to ensure that you are signed up for drive line. It will make your drop off and pick up of your students much more efficient!

At no time can parents park their car in the lanes on the side or front of the building on the frontage road. When cars are parked in these lanes it can block traffic or busses and become a safety issue for other families. We welcome parents to park in the front of the parking lot and walk your students into the building via the crosswalk. All staff, families, visitors and students are required to use the cross walks to get in and out of the building.

Make sure to contact the front office by 3:30PM with any changes to your student's dismissal routine. All student pick-ups after that time, must take place in the driveline.

Thank you for all your attention to these times of day, as it can be challenging to get everyone through the parking lot in a timely manner.

BREAKFAST

Upon arrival, all students have the opportunity to go to the cafeteria to get a free breakfast. Students whom choose to eat breakfast will take the breakfast from the cafeteria to their classroom and eat with their classmates. Students that do not choose to eat breakfast will go directly to their classroom.

SICK STUDENT

Students should not be in school if they have a temperature of 100 degrees or above. In addition, students who have a contagious illness or are experiencing a sore throat, a cough, runny nose, vomiting, diarrhea or other symptoms of illness that may prohibit active participation in school routines should not be in school until appropriate treatment is secured. Students should be free of elevated temperature, vomiting, and diarrhea symptoms for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Motrin prior to their return to school.

CELL PHONES



We are updating our school's current cell phone policy to one where students put their phones "Away For The Day." Electronic devices will no longer be permitted during the school day. The school day is classified as the period between 7:45AM and 4:30PM. However, students who ride the bus, their "school day" ends when they arrive at their bus stop. Athlos Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

Students using phones or electronic devices without authorization for the first time will be asked to surrender their phone to staff and can pick up the phone at the end of the day. The second time the phone will need to be picked up by a parent/guardian in the main office. The third time there will be a meeting with administration to create a personal electronics plan/contract.

We are in a technology revolution— most students desire to be on phones has impacted society, but more importantly the learning environment in schools. Students have a greater chance of doing better academically and emotionally when they are not tempted to be on their phones. Prior policies no longer support the goals of school and learning, creating more problems than solutions. We ask that families and students use the main office when communicating messages from home or school. Staff, teachers, all of us are pulled to our phones. We, too, will be working with the new guidelines around our own use.

Next week, we want to hear your thoughtful feedback and we are setting aside time for that.

HONOR ROLL

In order to recognize students with outstanding scholastic achievement, an honor roll will be published each quarter for students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. Students will also have their picture taken to be displayed, receive a letter and certificate from the Principal, and be eligible to be honored at the end of the year at the Principal Honor Roll Luncheon at the end of the school year. Students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades are eligible for the honor roll if they obtain a 3.7 GPA or higher.

TITAN TICKETS

Titan Tickets are a way to tie in Character traits, Our Pillars and the Titan Code into one initiative. The Titan Ticket initiative is a way to build positive relationships with all of our students. Positive interactions with students stimulates learning and increases their motivation to build new skills.

Helping kids recognize character traits and that they become a part of daily academic instruction and athletic activities is important to us. By understanding what performance character traits are and why they matter, our students are able to relate them to their lives. These traits act as the foundation Athlos uses to point our students towards success. We want our students to be rewarded for excellent character. Our Students will have fun with the Titan Ticket Challenges! They'll grow in character, and social interactions with their peers and staff as well.

The Titan Ticket initiative will be sustained through monthly goals, quarterly goals, rewards, games and prizes. Staff will distribute a Titan Ticket when they catch a student showing off a character trait or following the Titan Code; Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe. The whole school will participate in games and challenges that will help us all align with our common mission; A Prepared Mind, Healthy Body, & Performance Character.

Expect to see your student with Titan Tickets this year!



STUDENT OF CHARACTER AWARDS

As always, we will continue to develop and foster a school environment that values and demonstrates high levels of character amongst all adults and students within our school community. During the month of October, we will begin introducing all 12-character traits before delving deeper into each trait throughout the school year during morning meetings and instruction. Please reflect on how as a family you can reinforce character development at home by engaging in conversations about what the 12 traits look like in your family's home. The character trait development that we teach in school will have deeper meaning if our message is consistent at both school and home.

Each month, twelve students from each grade level will be chosen based on the Athlos Character Trait that they represent. If awarded this honor a student's picture will be placed in the main hallway for the month and they will receive a letter and certificate from the Principal to their listed address.

The Athlos Character traits include; integrity, initiative, focus & self-control, courage, humility, social intelligence, grit, leadership, creativity, energy & zest, curiosity and optimism.

UNITY DAY

Unity Day on Wednesday, October 19th. **Unity Day** is designed to bring our community together in support of kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. **To show unity, students and all staff are encouraged to accessorize with orange items such as socks, shoes, leggings, long-sleeved shirts under uniforms, head coverings, headbands, etc. on October 17th and 18th. Students are expected to be in uniform on this day, but, let's show our creativity!**

School Calendar 2022-2023

The 2022-2023 calendar has been posted on the school's website.

STUDENT AMBASSADOR PERMISSION SLIPS & APPLICATIONS

Students in grades 4th – 8th grades will be eligible to apply for a Student Ambassador Leadership position at Athlos. Students must be in strong academic and character standing to remain in the program. Applications will be sent home October 14, 2022. All Student Ambassadors must have their completed applications in to their homeroom teacher by October 18, 2022. Applications will be submitted to the School Leadership Team and students will be chosen by October 28, 2022 and start their assignments after November, 7, 2022.

The Athlos Student Ambassador program is designed to encourage students to become leaders within the school and our local community. An ambassador is a leader who serves as a liaison, spokesperson, and advocate. Fourth through eighth grade students who are interested in applying must be of strong interpersonal skills, have a positive attitude, be a role model and have a commitment to integrity. They must also be highly motivated and energetic, display effective decision-making skills, have the ability to motivate and inspire others and have a willingness to work

on a team. Being involved in the Ambassador program is a way to meet new friends, develop character traits and be a leader to all ages. Ambassadors are students who uphold the vision and goals associated with our school's mission and fulfill their academic and behavior obligations. The program allows students opportunities to participate in various activities around the building that may include:

- Office runners
- Tour guides
- K – 2nd grade volunteers
- School recycling
- Safety Patrol
- Special event set up
- Special projects for the school leadership team
- Reading and math tutors for other students
- Community service projects

PARENT AMBASSADOR/PARENT & TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Parent and Teacher Ambassador Programs plays an extremely important role in the marketing and support of our school community. They work in collaboration with the school leadership team, Teacher Ambassadors and Student Ambassadors to reach out to new or prospective families, support school volunteer needs, and provide essential role modeling for members of our school community. Our first meeting will be held in person on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. More information to come.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEAC)

SEAC (pronounced "seek") is an acronym for Special Education Advisory Council, which is a group that provides input on special education issues to its local school district. Its purpose is to advise and advocate, not to decide policy. Minnesota law requires each school district in the state to have a SEAC although it does not specify how the groups should be organized or what duties they should perform. As a result, each SEAC may have a unique mission and structure.

There will be a Special Education Advisory Council Virtual support meeting on October 19 (Same date as parent conferences) from 4:30-5:15PM. This meeting will be hosted by the Athlos Special Education Coordinator and Special Education Director. The primary goal of the SEAC group is to provide a forum for parents and staff to share ideas, identify concerns, and advise the Special Education Department in order to improve services along with educational and extracurricular opportunities for children with disabilities. Please email Chloe Smith at csmith@athlosstcloud.org with questions.

FREE FOOD PROGRAM – EVERY MEAL PROGRAM

Athlos will be partnering with Every Meal Program, a non-profit organization that coordinates and runs weekend food programs in Minnesota schools. Our partnership with these organizations will enable students who sign up to receive a free bag of food to take home at the end of scheduled weeks. It's completely free and your family's privacy is protected-you just need to sign up! Sign-ups will take place the third week of school through your student's homeroom teacher. Each bag typically contains a fruit, vegetable, protein, rice/pasta and a soup or boxed meal.

The first food distribution was held on Tuesday, September 13th, 2022, but requests to join the program can be made throughout the school year. If you have any questions please contact Chloe Smith at csmith@athlosstcloud.org.

DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS

The expectation is that students will dress in a manner that reflects positively on the district at all school related activities. All students are required to be in uniform daily with the exception of free dress days and spirit days that will be noted on the website calendar. Students who, in the judgment of the administration, are dressed inappropriately for school will be excluded from class until a change of clothing is secured.

All uniforms must be purchased through the Athlos Academy website at:

<http://www.athlosstcloud.org/>. Please read guidelines carefully to be sure items purchased are the acceptable styles and colors. Athlos expects all students to be in their Athlos uniform on a daily basis.

Exceptions to School Uniforms:

- Students are allowed to wear a uniform of a nationally recognized youth organization such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts on those days when that organization carries out a scheduled function.
- Students are allowed to wear attire that is required by their religion. The Principal will review and approve modifications on a case-by-case basis.
- The Principal may allow modifications to the dress code on specified days (e.g., spirit day, holiday, or another school-wide event.)
- Due to the long Minnesota winter, we will be adding options for sports sweatshirts for students to wear and these will be available for purchase during specific times of the school year. There will be a window open in the fall for families to order additional approved clothing. More information to come.
- Students may wear white, black, red or grey long-sleeved shirts underneath Athlos polo shirts and white, black, red or grey leggings underneath Athlos skorts/shorts.
- Middle school grade students may wear sports headbands or scarves up to 3 inches during the school day of any color. Middle school Somali students may wear red, white, black, navy blue or grey hijabs.

In the situation where a student does not wear their uniform to school, a Student Support Team member or the Assistant Principal will make phone calls to families for students who are not in uniform. School staff will inquire about uniform order status, as well as remind families to send students in white shirts and black pants while their order is in the process of being shipped. Students who have orders confirmed by Athlos staff will be placed on an exception list until the order arrives. If a student is still not in uniform, school staff will follow up with the family.

After the first five days of school, K – 3rd grade teachers or a Student Support Team member will continue to contact families if students are not in uniform and to review uniform expectations.

After the first five days of school, 4th – 8th grade students who are not in uniform and are not on the exception list may receive lunch and or recess detention. Multiple infractions may result in in-school suspension.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of what is taught in the classroom and an opportunity for students to apply skills and concepts learned. We ask parents to stress that homework is the students' responsibility. Homework will be given on a regular basis. The amount and type of homework varies with the age of the student and the requirements of each teacher. Contact the classroom teacher if you have any questions or concerns about your student's homework. When family emergencies prevent your student from completing assignments or if your student has questions about the concepts on their

homework, please connect with the classroom teacher so that you and the teacher can partner in ensuring student success.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

In case your students mention it, we will be practicing emergency drills over the first weeks of school. Bus evacuation drills will be held on campus as well.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

When school is closed due to inclement weather, bad road conditions, or other emergencies, please listen to a local radio stations for the announcements regarding Athlos Academy St. Cloud, MN. We will also send out an all-school phone and email message to all families and staff. This would be a good time to check in with the front desk to update cell phone numbers and email addresses in our system to ensure that you are getting messages. You can also go to most TV/radio stations and sign up for their alert system.

MN HEALTH CARE ASSISTANCE

For information on how to obtain an application for Minnesota health care programs or for application assistance, please go to the following web address. A link can be found on our school website under Parent Resources.

<https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/health-care/health-care-programs/programs-and-services/children-families-apply.jsp>

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Sept. 28	Fall Picture Day
Oct. 17 & 18	Celebrate Unity Day (Oct. 19)
Oct. 18	Conferences 4:45-7:00PM
Oct. 19	No School- Conferences 7:30AM-12:30PM
Oct. 19	SEAC Meeting
Oct. 20 & 21	No School – Fall Break
Nov. 3	Quarter I Completion
Nov. 3	Fall Picture Retakes
Oct. 28	Spirit Day – Crazy Hair Day
Oct. 31-Nov. 3	Book Fair
Nov. 4	No School – Teacher Professional Development
Nov. 18	Spirit Day – Pajama Day
Nov 23-25	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 16	Spirit Day – Animal Day
Dec. 19-30	No School – Winter Break
Jan. 4	8 th Grade High School Transition Family Meeting
Jan. 20	Spirit Day – Hat Day
Jan. 26	Quarter II Completion
Jan. 27	No School – Teacher Professional Development

I look forward to setting aside time next week to hear your thoughtful feedback!

Tracee Cahalan

Tracee Cahalan
Principal
Athlos Academy of St. Cloud