

POLARIS K-12 SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK



Mission Statement

Polaris K-12 has an evolving program that creates an environment challenging students, teachers, and parents to personal excellence, lifelong learning, and ethical responsibility to self, community, and the world.

Belief Statements

- Polaris is a community of learners including students, staff, and parents.
- Learning for life happens when students are engaged in authentic and meaningful experiences.
- Learning takes place in a variety of settings in addition to the classroom.
- Students have the freedom and responsibility to create their own unique educational options.
- Students who are intrinsically motivated to learn lead more fulfilling lives.
- Students become independent, lifelong learners by taking an active role in educational decisions and in the governance of their school.
- Community members encourage and model excellence.
- Community members foster relationships which respect and honor self, community, and world.
- Positive, caring relationships between community members support the learning process.
- Community input regarding Polaris policies is valued and expected.
- Teachers guide students' academic choices by providing developmentally appropriate learning activities.
- Varied teaching methods accommodate diverse learning styles.
- Everyone is a teacher.

Leading the Pack!

Table of Contents

School of Choice	4
Our Polaris Program	4
ASD Lottery Process	5
Polaris Application Process	5
School Hours	5
School Tours	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	6
Advisory Board	6
All School Communications	6
Assessment	6
Attendance	6
Cafeteria	7
Closed Campus	7
Community Schools	7
Curriculum	7
Discipline	7
Driving and Parking Lot Regulations	8
Dress Code	8
Extended Absences	8
Fee Payments	8
Field Trips	8
Grading and Reporting	8
Habitat	8
Homework	8
Intensives	9
Library Services	9
Lost and Found	9
Nurse's Office	9
Polaris PTA	9
Personal Contact Information	10
Polaris Learning Communities (PLC)	10
Safety/Security	10
School Colors and Mascot	10
Student-Led Activities (Clubs)	10
Student-Led Conferences and Portfolios	10
Student Messages	10
Teacher Communication	10
Technology and Personal Electronics	11
Telephones	11
Visitors	11
Yearbook	11

ELEMENTARY	12
Before and After School	12
Elementary Behavior	12
Classroom Supplies	12
K-5 Representatives	12
Lunch/Recess Times	12
Multiage Family Groups	12
Non-Graded Program	12
Recess Expectations	13
Specialists	13
SECONDARY	14
Academics	14
Advisory	14
Athletics	14
Attendance in Block Courses	14
Dances	14
Grades and Reporting	14
Lockers	15
Lounges	15
Operational Group	15
Post-Secondary Planning	15
Registration	15
Schedule	15
Sixth Grade Intensive	16

School of Choice

The Anchorage School District has a number of special-purpose programs for students with distinct interests and needs. It is important when choosing a school of choice to understand what we are; and what we are not.

Polaris is a school of choice within the ASD that emphasizes the individualization of student learning, prioritizing hands-on, real-world, and problem-based investigations. Our program is characterized by curricular innovation and skill development in multi-age classrooms where we rely on students to be self-motivated in order to be self-directed learners. Students in our Secondary program earn credits and meet district requirements in various ways. We encourage interested secondary applicants to consider the degree of responsibility and involvement they that this program will require. It is also important for potential students to consider their interest in attending a school with both elementary and secondary students fully integrated into the learning environment.

As a school of choice, it is also important for prospecting families to recognize that we may not be able to offer the same level of support for your child as a traditional neighborhood program; if your child has specific needs, has an IEP or 504 plan in place, please contact the sitting administrator to set up a meeting– it is important that we discuss how we can support your child prior to applying for our lottery.

Our Polaris Program

Polaris K-12 School is Anchorage’s only school to have all grade levels from kindergarten to 12th grade. This unique learning environment allows for an integrated curriculum and multi-age group learning based on student interests, needs, and developmental levels.

As an ASD alternative program, we differ in educational philosophy, grade level organization,

student evaluation, curriculum, instructional methods, and student involvement. This optional program is for students, parents/guardians, and teachers who want an emphasis on self-directed learning and active participation in the community.

Parental participation in our program is vital to the success of each student.

Our instructional methods focus on experiential learning. In practice, this means extensive use of manipulative teaching materials, forming and testing hypotheses, engaging in numerous field trips, and classroom visits by a variety of community stakeholders. Students are active participants in creating a rigorous curriculum that exposes them to 21st-century skills, traditional academic standards, and developing civic responsibilities and policies while also meeting their personal educational interests.

While not every student enters our program with a desire to be politically, academically, and socially involved in all aspects of our community, that is our goal for our students

Generally, students who do well within our program are:

- compassionate and empathetic to the feelings and needs of others;
- able to set goals and find ways to attain them;
- able to take responsibility for their learning;
- creative;
- Self-disciplined and determined;
- able to recognize and build on personal strengths, and learn anything they want to learn.

ASD Lottery Process

Lotteries are held two times each year: during the last week of March and the week prior to registration in the fall.

In order to participate in a school or program outside of your child's neighborhood school, an application must be submitted. ASD's online system allows parents/guardians to easily apply to the desired school or program. If your child is currently attending a school/program as a result of a lottery or zone exemption placement, a new application is not necessary for that school each year. Your child may continue attending until aging out of the school/program.

Parents log into the lottery system where they can apply to multiple schools or programs for each school-age child and check the status of each application. Once the lottery has been run, the wait list number or acceptance into the school or program is also listed for each application. Parents/guardians are notified by email of changes to the application status as well as acceptance into the school or program. The system is accessible from both traditional laptop and desktop computers or mobile devices to apply, check status, and confirm or decline positions.

The system produces randomly selected student lists that have been organized and ranked according to the district's lottery policy.

No student shall be denied participation because of a learning disability, handicapping condition, or special need; however, we do ask that you set up a time to discuss your child's needs prior to applying—we want to ensure that we have the supports in place that will help your child thrive.

Lottery procedures are determined by school board policy 322.3.

Polaris Application Process

When a seat is offered to your student through the ASD lottery process, students in grades four through twelve must also complete an enrollment packet prior to the start of the academic year.

This information can be found on the Polaris website.

School Hours

Elementary*/Middle School: 8:15 AM - 3:00 PM

High School: 8:15 AM - 2:05 PM

K-12 Intensives: 8:15 AM - 2:00 PM

The front door opens at 7:45 AM.

*Elementary students arriving before 8:05 need to report to the gym or library.

The school closes at 3:30 PM every day (2:30 PM during Intensives). All students must be off campus by this time; however, high school students need to leave campus immediately following dismissal at 2:05 PM. There is no supervision outside of these hours.

Bi-weekly PLC dismissal time is 11:30 PM (please refer to our school calendar for our PLC days).

School Tours

School tours are typically conducted between January and March. Call the front office for details: (907) 742-8700.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Advisory Board

The purpose of the Polaris Advisory Board is to review, recommend, and establish policies concerning issues affecting the Polaris community, consistent with the Polaris Mission Statement. The Advisory Board is comprised of the three stakeholder groups: students (Operational Group), administration/staff, and parents/guardians (PTA).

All School Communications

As a school community, we make every effort to communicate efficiently while reducing paper waste. The best source for current information and upcoming events is the school's website polaris.asdk12.org. You are encouraged to bookmark this site and check it regularly. Students and families are also encouraged to download the ASD app for smart devices. Families will also receive a Wolf Weekly newsletter update via email every Thursday. If you are not receiving those emails once school starts, please contact the front office at (907) 742-8700.

Assessment

At Polaris K-12, student growth is continuously documented through an e-portfolio that is presented bi-annually. Polaris students are uniquely responsible for the direction and evaluation of their own learning through the process of building their portfolio.

In addition, Polaris students participate in a variety of classroom assessments, as well as district and state testing.

Attendance

An unique feature of Polaris K-12 is the block schedule that is used for classes at the secondary level. This, combined with project-based and seminar-style learning, allows for a student to be involved and engaged in the educational experience. It is vital that your student contacts each of their teachers to discuss making up missed work during the absence. Please review our [Attendance Statement](#).

Students can miss no more than 15 days of school per year. If a student misses more than 15 days per year (or 8.5 days per semester) they may be:

- Unable to successfully finish the course.
- Advised to retake the course.
- Intensive absences will be discussed and reviewed on an individual basis.

For further questions, please refer to the [Student Handbook](#) or the [ASD website](#).

Parents/guardians are responsible for calling the office at 742-8700 by 9:00 AM to report their child's absence for that day. Failure to contact the office will result in an unexcused absence.

It is important that your child attends school daily but we understand that illnesses occur. If your child will be absent, please call or email Samantha at bucher_samantha@asdk12.org. Sometimes students need to leave campus for appointments, etc. In order to maximize learning time and ensure your child's safety, elementary parents/guardians must come into the office to pick-up their child. Secondary parents/guardians must come to the office or contact the office by telephone prior the expected pick-up time. No student is allowed to wait outside or sign themselves out. Parents/guardians should refrain from texting their child during school hours. The office will gladly assist you in contacting your child during the school day.

Arriving to class late, regardless of how late, is a tardy. Students who are tardy need to go to the office and sign in before going to class. Excessive tardies may result in academic or disciplinary consequences.

Cafeteria

ASD Student Nutrition provides services to all K-12 students. Lunch is served daily. Menus and pricing are available on the ASD Student Nutrition website. <https://www.asdk12.org/studentnutrition/>

Closed Campus

Students are prohibited from leaving the campus during the school day EXCEPT during lunch for grades 9-12. Other exceptions are for students who attend King Career High, have pre-approved late arrival or early dismissal privilege, or who have pre-approved “on-the-job training.” Students who leave campus during class time or passing time are subject to a truancy. Students who need to leave campus during the school day for any reason, must have prior parent/guardian permission.

Parents/guardians must contact the office BEFORE the student leaves and a blue pass will be issued for each occurrence by the administration and/or its designee.

Students from other high schools or school-aged students who are out of school are not permitted to enter the school during regular school hours unless accompanied by an adult.

Community Schools

After school opportunities for students may be offered through Community Schools. Adult Polaris community members, or students with the assistance of an adult, may offer a Community Schools session. Examples of previous Community Schools include Running Club, Twirling, Glass Mosaics, Perler Beading, Lego Robotics, Unicycling, Basketball, Pokemon, Board Games, Swing Dance Club, Chess Club and Science Club. If Community Schools are being offered, information will be sent via email.

Curriculum

Curriculum at Polaris is driven in part by students’ individual learning choices, in part by needs that are assessed by the teacher, and in part by the Anchorage School District curriculum. Learning is based on student interests, needs, and developmental levels. As an alternative program, our curriculum and instructional methods may vary from the ASD.

Currently, our teachers are guided using the following adopted curriculum; however, all teachers are given professional autonomy to implement these curricular programs in a way that best meets the needs of all students in their classroom:

- Bridges in Mathematics (K-5)
- Ready Math (6-8)
- Units of Study Reading/Writing (K-8)
- Amplify CKLA Skills (K-3)
- mClass Intervention (K-5)

Discipline

Teachers will make every reasonable attempt to redirect students who exhibit behavior problems or disruptive behaviors. This may include conferencing with students, calling the parent/guardian, and implementing classroom consequences. If a behavior persists or causes a risk of harm or significant disruption to learning, the student will be referred to safety/security staff and appropriate action will be taken.

Parents/guardians will be informed of any disciplinary interventions and the actions taken to correct the situation.

We recognize that all students are still learning appropriate behaviors, including how to solve problems. Students may work with staff to help develop these skills. Alternative consequences from traditional disciplinary actions may also be implemented– including community service, attendance into a social skills group, etc. At Polaris, we are aligned with ASD disciplinary guidelines; however, follow Restorative Practices first-and-foremost.

Driving and Parking Lot Regulations

During peak drop-off and pick-up times, the parking lot is a busy place with many students and families with small children. Extreme caution and courtesy should be exercised by everyone. Safety is always the highest priority. Take time to review our [parking safety rules and etiquette](#).

Dress Code

The dress code is designed to allow for student comfort while maintaining an environment conducive to learning and appropriate for the educational setting.

Student attire is primarily a matter of personal preference and family guidelines. However, students' dress may not be disruptive, unsafe, obscene, or promote violence, alcohol, drug or gang involvement. Dress that is disruptive to the educational process is not permitted.

The general dress code policy requirements are outlined in the ASD High School Student Handbook. The Principal or the Principal's designee has the final authority for interpreting whether a student's apparel conforms to the dress code. When it is determined that a student's clothing does not comply with the dress code, a parent/guardian may be asked to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school.

Extended Absences

Any student who is planning an extended absence (5 or more days) from school for any reason should obtain a [Pre-Arranged Absence](#) form and submit at least one week prior to the absence. The form contains additional information regarding make-up work and the impact of an extended absence. Refer to *Attendance*.

Fee Payments

ASD's preferred method of payment for intensive costs and class fees, including field trips, is through Parent Connect using a credit/debit card. Other forms of payment must be made to the office.

Field Trips

One way we provide students with real world experiences is through field trips, especially during intensives. We rely on parents/guardians to provide transportation. ASD requires any parents/guardians driving for a field trip to provide the following to the office at least one day prior to the trip: a valid driver's license, proof of registration, and proof of insurance that shows coverage amounts that include auto liability insurance in the minimum amount of 100,000 / 300,000 bodily injury and 25,000 property damage. Forms are available on our [website](#).

Grading and Reporting

At Polaris K-12, grading and reporting is done through the ASD student system at the secondary level. Instructors regularly update progress in a timely manner.

Habitat

Our schoolyard habitat was purchased with funds raised by our school community and the World Wildlife Fund. This parcel of land is an extension of our campus and allows for an outdoor learning space and a regular vegetable harvest.

Homework

At Polaris K-12, we acknowledge that there exists a rich variety of learning styles and teaching methodologies. We believe that acquiring new

skills happens in classroom with a teacher as the facilitator and the student as an active learner. Ideally, no new content-based materials should be started at home.

Homework exists to practice and further extends skills taught in the classroom. The current Polaris secondary block schedule was created by the teaching staff with the intention of reducing the amount of time assigned as homework and increasing meaningful and guided learning in the classroom, where the teacher is there to answer questions. Current educational research was used by both administration and staff to create a schedule that best supports the pedagogical needs of the students.

Time spent on homework will become more significant with upper level courses such as advanced placement classes, lab-based science courses, and university level courses.

Goals for homework include:

- To reinforce classroom instruction
- To develop good work habits, responsibility, self-direction, and organizational skills
- To extend and enrich curricula
- To assess independent work

Intensives

Intensives at Polaris K-12 offer exciting learning opportunities. Students and staff join together in an intense study of specialized, interest-based curriculum of choice for an extended period of time. Intensives allow students to explore ideas in depth, work on projects in the community, focus on the creation of art, travel, and much more. Elementary and Secondary students often work together during Intensives. Secondary students participate in three intensives: fall, winter, and spring. Elementary students participate in two intensives: winter and spring. Intensive hours are 8:15 AM. - 2:00 PM for all students. Each intensive has a fee which varies based on the cost of materials, field trips, etc. Need-based scholarships are available to help defray the cost.

Library Services

The Polaris library will be open to scheduled classes and individual students throughout the school day. The library is open from 7:45 AM to 3:15 PM. Both print and non-print materials are available for students. The library will follow the District and Polaris policies regarding computer use and behavior expectations.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located near the playground doors. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to check the bins regularly. The Lost and Found bins are cleaned out at the end of every

quarter, and any remaining items are donated to a local charity.

Students who believe they have lost an item or who have found an item should report it to safety/security staff.

Nurse's Office

The health office is staffed by a full-time registered nurse, and is open and available to students throughout the school day. Students who become ill or injured must check in with the school nurse and should NOT call home until they have done so. The nurse will contact caregivers if it is decided that the student needs to go home.

All parents/guardians should ensure that the school is given a list of current contact information as well as emergency numbers in case parents/guardians are unavailable. All medications prescribed for students during the school day should be delivered to the Health Office in the original Rx container. All medication must be dispensed by the school nurse and will be given only with the appropriate paperwork completed and on file. Students with histories of asthma or serious allergies requiring emergency medicine may carry medication on their person at school with physician and parents/guardians approval and completed Care Plans. All herbal and alternative medications, or medications containing alcohol are not allowed at school.

Polaris PTA

Parents and guardians who are involved in their child's school from Kindergarten through High School have students who are more successful in school. All caregivers with a student enrolled at Polaris are encouraged to become a [member of the PTA](#). Parents/Guardians are invited and encouraged to attend meetings and contribute their unique set of skills and interests in support of the school community.

Personal Contact Information

Every effort should be made to use district resources to communicate school business. Due to the nature of intensives and off-campus opportunities, teachers, parents/guardians and students sometimes exchange personal contact information (i.e. mobile phone numbers). Personal contact information should ONLY be used for the intended purpose and duration of the event and not abused or shared without prior approval.

Polaris Learning Communities (PLC)

The Polaris Learning Community (PLC) is a professional development model that allows our instructional staff the time to make strategic data-driven decisions; to collaborate on instructional strategies and assessments to improve academic achievement; to cultivate social and emotional learning, and to serve as a model through a commitment to life-long learning.

On a bi-weekly basis, teachers participate in collaborative instructional time focusing on student achievement and school improvement.

On these days, both elementary and secondary classes will end at 11:30 AM. All elementary students will report to the playground and must have a parent/guardian come to the playground area to sign them out. Middle and high school students are dismissed as usual. Refer to the [Polaris calendar](#) for specific PLC early release dates for the upcoming school year.

Safety/Security

Polaris has one safety/security staff. They have many roles at Polaris, working with students, staff, and parents/guardians to help to maintain a safe school environment. They work with students experiencing behavior challenges in both elementary and secondary programs. This may include providing support/coaching in learning and practicing social skills, conflict mediation, and giving disciplinary consequences.

School Colors and Mascot

Polaris K-12 Schools' colors are green and gray. Our mascot is the wolf.

Student-Led Activities (Clubs)

A student-led activity is a meeting of students for a designated purpose wherein the tasks, responsibilities, and other dealings fall to the student members and the student director(s). Students interested in facilitating an activity should refer to the [Student-Led Activities Policy](#).

Student-Led Conferences and Portfolios

Student-Led Conferences at Polaris are unique. Elementary Family Group teachers and Secondary Advisors meet with students and their families twice a year for 30-minutes for student-led conferences with the purpose of documenting and celebrating learning over an extended period of time using student electronic portfolios. This practice empowers students to proactively discuss their academic, social, and emotional growth in his/her own words. Student-Led, Teacher-Supported Conferences invite parents/guardians into the learning environment, helping them better understand the unique developmental needs of their children and provide an opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to share observations and assessment information.

Student Messages

Emergency messages from parents/guardians will be taken to students during class time. During passing times or lunch, an effort will be made to deliver non-emergency messages or items from home that were dropped off at the office (e.g. books, school projects, lunches, etc.).

Teacher Communication

Grade reporting systems serve only as one tool and is a limited window into the classroom. It does not replace effective communication between student, teacher, and parents/guardians. Self-advocacy is a

life skill. Please encourage your child to have an open dialogue with their teacher. As parents/guardians, if you have any further questions or concerns throughout the year, please don't hesitate to make contact with your child's teacher either through email or setting up a time to meet in person.

To help keep families informed, teachers may use e-mail or web sites. Elementary teachers send home a bi-weekly newsletter. Secondary teachers send class updates monthly.

Technology and Personal Electronics

While Polaris embraces the use of technology to enhance and expand learning, personal electronic devices, including phones, are often a distraction. Along with ASD, Polaris expects middle and high school students to bring their ASD assigned Chromebook to school daily to use as a learning tool as directed by the classroom teacher. Elementary students will have access to Chromebooks at school as needed. Students will abide by the Anchorage School District Internet Guidelines, the Student Internet User Agreement Form, and the Internet and Electronic Communication Guidelines. Inappropriate use of electronics, school owned or privately owned, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the ASD student handbook and Polaris expectations. This may include confiscation, parent contact, or other disciplinary actions.

To best support student learning, Polaris has implemented a cell phone free experience in classrooms. All students should silence and put away their devices before entering the building in the mornings. Secondary students may use their devices at lunch for personal use. At the start of each class, students will place their phone in the designated pocket or bin in the classroom. Students who fail to follow these guidelines will have to relinquish their phone to safety/security staff and will be given progressive discipline consequences.

We encourage parents and guardians to 'be present' with their child and model this same behavior by putting your phones away when entering the building. Please review our Polaris [Technology Expectations](#) and [ASD's BYOD guidelines](#).

Telephones

Phones are available in classrooms and in the office for students to call home for school business only.

Visitors

Parents/guardians are welcome at Polaris, as are other adults who have legitimate school business. All visitors must check in with the front desk upon entering the building. Students from other high schools or school-aged students who are out of school are not permitted to enter the school during regular school hours unless accompanied by an adult.

Yearbook

Students will have the opportunity to pre-purchase yearbooks between August and February. Purchase early to get the best price. The yearbooks usually arrive back at the school in early May for distribution. It is recommended that students retain their receipt to ensure proof of purchase when the yearbooks are distributed. Only a limited number of yearbooks will be produced so students and families are encouraged to pre-purchase.

ELEMENTARY

Before and After School

Classrooms open at 8:10 AM. Students who arrive before this time should report to the gym or library. When school ends at 3:00 PM., students not picked up from their classroom, should go to the lobby or wait outside for their ride. All intensives, K-12, end at 2:00 PM. Students must be off campus within 30 minutes of dismissal time.

Elementary Behavior

Teachers will make every reasonable attempt to redirect students who exhibit behavior problems or disruptive behaviors. This may include conferencing with students, calling the parent/guardian, and implementing behavior modification strategies. If behavioral problems persist, or if a student has a discipline problem severe enough to warrant a referral to the office, safety/security staff will be involved and appropriate action will be taken. Parents/guardians will be informed of the disciplinary interventions and the actions taken to correct the situation.

We recognize that elementary students are still learning appropriate behaviors, including how to solve problems. To further support the family group teacher and your child, safety/security staff may work with students to help develop these skills.

Classroom Supplies

In our K-5 classrooms, teachers will purchase communal classroom supplies and request families make a classroom donation to cover the cost. Please contact your child's teacher for more information.

K-5 Representatives

Each elementary class has two elected representatives that participate in K-5 Reps, which is the elementary student council. These representatives meet twice a month.

Lunch/Recess Times

K-1 Recess 10:10 - 10:50
Lunch 10:50-11:10

2-3 Recess 11:00 - 11:40
Lunch 11:40 - 12:00

4-5 Recess 11:40 - 12:20
Lunch 12:20 - 12:40

On early release days the schedule for all elementary students will be:
Recess 11:30 - 12:15

Multiage Family Groups

Elementary classrooms at Polaris K-12 are multi-aged communities of learners with a wide range of gifts and abilities. Family groups are comprised of two grade levels (K-1, 2-3 or 4-5) and students stay with the same teacher both years. Teachers use developmentally appropriate practice in all decisions by considering the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of each child. Students are active participants in their learning and teachers expect and encourage children to learn at their own rate. Curriculum is oriented towards process (rather than product) and uses authentic work and assessments.

Non-Graded Program

In the elementary grades, portfolios are used in place of report cards to celebrate and demonstrate a student's growth in general knowledge, skills and learning processes. Teachers utilize the Common Core State Standards, as adopted by ASD, to help guide instruction. Students participate in a variety of district, state, and classroom assessments.

Recess Expectations

[Recess expectations](#) focus on being respectful, being responsible, being safe, and having fun. Noon Duties help students on the playground. Any student needing further support or engaged in unsafe behavior will be referred to Safety/Security. Students need to come to school daily with appropriate clothing and footwear for outdoor play.

Specialists

Elementary students have one hour each of art, PE, music, and library every week. Your family group teacher can give you a copy of your child's schedule.

SECONDARY

Academics

The majority of secondary courses taught at Polaris are taught at an accelerated pace. Students demonstrating readiness for work beyond the typical courses offered at each grade level may be recommended for higher-level courses. High School AP Courses are offered based on student demand, and certain courses may only be available in alternating years. Additionally, there are numerous options for extending learning through Credit by Choice. These include Challenge Courses, Independent Studies, PE Waivers, and Correspondence, as well as others. Students must contact the secondary counselor and complete the Credit by Choice Application before starting coursework. Students are encouraged to discuss opportunities for additional challenges with their teachers, advisor and counselor.

Advisory

Students entering the secondary program are assigned an advisor who works with them throughout their 6-12 years at Polaris. This teacher advises and guides enrollment in specific classes, meets for student-led conferences, supervises and encourages discussion and involvement in the political process of the school, supervises any academic or behavioral contracts, and provides a continuing connection to the school regardless of the classes a student is taking. Detailed information and expectations can be found in the [Advisory Framework](#).

Athletics

Polaris students have the option to participate in interscholastic activities at other ASD schools per Alaska Student Activity Association (ASAA) bylaws. Students should work with the school counselor to discuss their options.

Attendance in Block Courses

A unique feature of Polaris K-12 is the block schedule that is used for classes at the secondary level. This, combined with project-based and seminar-style learning, allows for a student to be involved and engaged in the educational experience. When a student misses a single block class this is equivalent to two days of missed learning. It is vital that your student contacts each of their teachers to discuss making up missed work during this absence. Teachers are not always able to provide work in advance of lengthy absences. In these cases, the student will need to coordinate with the teacher while they are gone or immediately following the absence. It must also be understood that many class experiences cannot be replicated and a lengthy absence may affect your child's grade and/or credit earned.

Dances

Polaris Secondary dances are open to grades 6-12. Prom is for grades 9-12 only. The dances are for Polaris students. Guest passes may be arranged no later than the Monday prior to a dance through the office. All guests must be pre-approved, accompanied by a Polaris student, and present a valid photo ID. There is an approved Dance Policy available on the [Polaris website](#) with further details.

Grades and Reporting

ASD's grade reporting system, Q, is a three-prong grading and reporting system for students, teachers, and parents/guardians. Each group has their own access to this tool. If you need login information, please see the front office staff.

Secondary student grading and reporting is done through the ASD Q system that parents/guardians have access to in real time. Secondary instructors regularly update progress.

Secondary students at Polaris receive traditional grades (A-F) and are graded on a semester basis. The grades assigned at the end of the first and second semesters will be the final grades for those classes and will be posted to student transcripts. First and third quarter grades serve as progress reports, although those grades do count toward interscholastic activity eligibility. Progress reports are provided to students who are failing or in jeopardy of failing. Parents/guardians are encouraged to check with teachers (by phone or e-mail) to review their students' progress. Any concerns over grades should be initially dealt with by the teacher, student and the student's parent/guardian. If a concern cannot be resolved at that level, it should be addressed by the secondary chairperson.

Lockers

Lockers are provided as a privilege to students and they are responsible for maintenance as well as contents. The school assumes no responsibility for items in the lockers. Locker assignments will be made by safety/security staff. The following guidelines apply to all students:

- Use only the locker assigned to you.
- Do not write anything permanent to the surface of the locker.
- Do not leave valuables in the locker.
- Do not leave open or unwrapped food or beverages in the locker as it may attract pests.
- Be aware that lockers are subject to random searches at any time.

Lounges

Secondary students have the privilege to eat outside of the lunch room in designated lounges. With this privilege comes certain responsibilities. Students are responsible for maintaining a safe, clean lounge area. Be respectful - any inconsiderate, dangerous, or disruptive behavior may result in disciplinary consequences. Be responsible - be sure to use the trash receptacles and recycling bins and wipe down your area when finished eating. As 6th grade

students are transitioning into our secondary program, during 1st semester they must eat in the lunchroom.

Operational Group

Operational Group is the secondary student government at Polaris. Students are represented by elected Operational Group Board Members. Students can run for positions in both the spring and fall. Each Advisory sends at least one student representative to regular meetings throughout the year. Meeting minutes are distributed via the Remind App and are also available on the website.

Post-Secondary Planning

Post-secondary education and career counseling is available through our school counselor. Additional resources can also be found on the Polaris website. Students are further encouraged to enroll in the *Find Your Future* Intensive their Junior year. During this intensive, students will extensively research potential colleges, post-secondary opportunities, scholarships, and complete a Senior Scholarship portfolio.

Registration

Secondary students register for courses in their Advisory. Students work collaboratively with their parents/guardians, advisor, teachers, school counselor and administration to plan a course of study that meets credit and graduation requirements while considering individual interests, personal pursuits, and post-secondary plans.

Schedule

Polaris offers a Rotating Block Schedule. The schedule maximizes the use of resources and provides variety, choice, and flexibility for students. Course blocks span 90 minutes and rotate every other day. Advisory and Middle School Learning Workshop meet daily. This Rotating Block Schedule allows for:

- Variety and choice for the whole school year

- Maximizing time given during the school day with extended blocks
- Courses to be taught for either a semester or full year
- Students to focus on four courses per day
- Flexibility to explore opportunities for enrichment and student-initiated projects

achieve their goals, be successful in a variety of settings, and get along with their parents/guardians.

1st/2nd Period	8:15 – 9:45 AM
3rd/4th Period	9:50 – 11:20 AM
Lunch	11:20 – 12:00 PM
5th/6th Period	12:00 – 1:30 PM
Advisory (Daily)	1:35 – 2:05 PM
7th Period (Middle School Only: Daily)	2:10 – 3:00 PM

A shortened schedule will be utilized on our bi-weekly PLC days:

Class One (1st or 2nd Period)	8:15 - 9:20 AM
Class Two (3rd or 4th Period)	9:25 - 10:25 AM
Class Three (5th or 6th Period)	10:30 - 11:30 AM

Sixth Grade Intensive

This long-standing Polaris tradition was created to help tweens prepare for the transition into the Secondary program with confidence. 6th Grade Intensive is offered every fall during Secondary Intensives and is mandatory for all 6th-grade students. Aside from pre-registering for classes and learning about the Polaris Secondary program, students also study, discuss and apply principles that will help new teens handle the tough issues and big decisions they face. This study is presented in an entertaining style that will guide teens to improve self-image, build friendships, resist peer pressure,