

TAGOS Leadership Academy

Tailoring Academics to Guide Our Students

Policy Handbook 2008-2009

Address:

**TAGOS Leadership Academy
Arrow Park
1350 N. Parker Drive
Janesville, WI 53545**

Staff :

**Al Lindau, Dean of Students
Jon Woloshin, Advisor
Val Maxon, Educational Assistance
Nic Manogue, Advisor**

PHONE: 608-290-0468

Purpose --- Worthwhile Work --- Making A Difference
Q. Studer

Mission Statement: The TAGOS Leadership Academy instills Purpose, Worthwhile Work and educational programming to Make A Difference to meet the needs of students who are not achieving their fullest potential.

Vision Statement: The TAGOS Leadership Academy provides students the opportunities to learn and grow in a project-based, supportive, and safe environment where individuality, community, and 21st Century Skills are instilled for life-long success. The TAGOS Leadership Academy aims at educating the “whole child” so that they may meet their fullest potential and become successful thinkers, learners, and leaders.

Table of Contents

TAGOS Leadership Academy – Enrollment Procedures.....	4
Overview.....	5
Student-Driven, Project-Based Learning.....	5
Structure.....	5
Credits/Academic Progress/Student Options.....	6
Status and Privilege.....	7
School Management and Governance.....	8
TAGOS Advisory Council (TAC).....	8
Parental Involvement.....	9
Procedures	
Daily Schedule.....	10
School Calendar.....	11-12
Attendance.....	13
Student Transfers.....	13
Phone Policy.....	13
Electronic Devices.....	13
Sign-out Procedures.....	14
Health Services.....	14
Lunch/Food in the Building.....	15
Library Procedures.....	16
Interscholastic/Intramural Offerings.....	16
Routine Building	
Procedures/Parking.....	16
Crisis Plan	17
Parking.....	17
Technology Use Policy and Agreement.....	17
Conflict Resolution.....	18
Service Learning Project.....	18
Student Conduct/Discipline	
Student Code of Conduct.....	18
Students Under an Expulsion Order.....	19
Clothing Standards.....	19
School Fees.....	19
Appendix A: Code of Conduct	
Appendix B: Clothing Standard	
Appendix C: Community Travel Release	
Appendix E: Site Visitation Form (revised)	

Enrollment Procedures:

- 1) Complete Application and submit it to TAGOS Leadership Academy
- 2) Schedule a Visit
- 3) Complete Application Project assigned by an advisor

Once the above items are met, you will be placed into your grade-level lottery. Lottery draws are completed at the end of each semester as space is available.

TAGOS Leadership Academy

Overview

Student-Driven, Project-Based Learning

Student-driven, project-based learning does not resemble our traditional comprehensive school structure. Instead of classrooms, curriculums, and direct instruction with a ratio of 30 students to 1 teacher, individual and/or groups of students choose, plan, research, and complete academic and hands on projects that lead to real life learning. Whenever possible, students take their learning into the “real world” consulting community experts as a part of their research. Students learn Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, time management skills, planning and organizational skills, communication and team building skills, and problem solving skills.

Guiding Principles

Community is the Learning Place

Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs) will guide each student

Reading is the Cornerstone to Life-long Success

Community Service is Vital to Being a Community Member

School/Business Partnerships Promote Real-life Learning

Advanced Internships Guide Post-Secondary Decision Making

Students Learn Best when Learning is Meaningful

Student Engagement in Business/Entrepreneurial Adventures Creates Strong Leaders

There is Tremendous Value in Creating a Learning Culture

There must be PURPOSE to student work.

Students must see that their work is WORTHWHILE.

Students must see that their work is MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

*Purpose, Worthwhile Work, and Making A Difference are concepts from Quint Studer of the Studer Group.

Structure

TAGOS Leadership Academy is a student-driven, project-based education for students in grades 7-12. TAGOS is located in a business center and is set up similar to a corporate office center. Students work at their own work stations, similar to a low-rise office cubicle. TAGOS is rich in culture and technology. Students have their own computers and personalize their work stations. Students at TAGOS are assigned to an advisor with a low student:teacher ratio.

TAGOS offers a learning model that is based on student interests and Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. TAGOS projects are managed by Project Foundry, an online project-based management system. This system assists students with the entire project process from start to finish, provides an electronic portfolio, grade reports, transcripts, and more.

Reading and math remediation programs are provided to students who are not achieving at grade level in these areas. Student who are achieving at these areas will participate in an individualized self-paced accelerated math program and will have individually designed communication arts seminars to include literature study, reading, communication skills, presentation skills, and writing skills. Foreign language offerings include Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Latin and Arabic and will be incorporated into the communication arts block for interested students.

Projects will take multiple formats at the TAGOS Leadership Academy however, they will all have similar requirements. Students are expected to complete 8 projects per year. Projects can last several days to several weeks and students must document the number of hours of work time for each project. One hundred hours of project work equals one credit earned. A student project begins with a Project Proposal, managed by Project Foundry. After proposal acceptance, students complete the project by following the steps outlined in the Project Checklist located in Project Foundry. Students collaborate with advisors to seek assistance in problem areas and in incorporating Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. Upon project completion, students will submit and present their finished work to the proposal team for evaluation and credit. Students are required to evaluate the project in terms of Purpose, Worthwhile Work, and Making a Difference as a project reflection.

Individual Projects center around student interests and passions. Individual projects typically relate to an area of interest and topics that are most pertinent to a student's possible career path. Beginning in the 2008-2009 school years a senior project is required for graduation from the TAGOS Leadership Academy. Seniors will be required to design a comprehensive 150 hour senior project and formally present their work to the learning community and invited guests.

Group Projects can take multiple forms. Students with similar interests may propose a group project. Group projects will require the same process that an individual project would in regards to proposal, documentation of time spent, etc...

Reading and Math Programs provide instruction in those subjects at a level matched with the student's abilities. Reading and Math remediation will be provided to those students in need of additional reading and math focus. Students must read and journal 45 minutes each day (12:00 pm – 12:45 pm) Reading time is sacred at TAGOS and this reading time is mandatory for all students. Students must document reading time and journal what has been read.

Service Learning Projects are required each year. Students will follow the project process while completing 50 hours of service to worthwhile community organizations. Students will research the background and history of the organization. The student will then meet with his or her advisor to complete a service needs assessment and plan their year-long involvement. The service learning project is designed to create an entire school culture where students learn about community, take part in public efforts and develop leadership skills.

Credits/Academic Progress

Students are expected to earn 4 project credits per year, 1 English/communication arts credit per year, and 1 math credit per year. Project credits will be aligned to Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in the areas of English (4 credits), Math (3 credits), social studies (3 credits), Science (2 credits), and Health (.5 credits). Students must successfully complete 22.5 credits in order to graduate from the TAGOS Leadership Academy. Student transcripts will be provided through Project Foundry and the School District of Janesville.

Students not making adequate academic progress may be subject to the following policies:

- 1) Meeting with their advisor/proposal team to develop a progress plan
- 2) Parent/student/staff conference to develop an improvement plan
- 3) Possible transfer back to traditional or other educational environment at semester

Academic Progress will be reported to parents/guardians at the end of each 6 week block. Grades are based on Pass (P), Fail (F). Credits earned will be reported at the end of each semester.

Status and Privilege

- A. All students at TAGOS Leadership Academy have basic rights and privileges (work station and computer, access to technology, adequate freedom of movement during work times, etc)
- B. Students who are "on-track", both in current and cumulative academic standing will be eligible for certain privileges as designed by the learning community.
- C. Unique privileges may be applied for and will only be afforded to students demonstrating outstanding leadership at TAGOS.

School Management and Governance

The governance of TAGOS Leadership Academy employs a multi-tiered approach

School District of Janesville's Board of Education

TAGOS is an instrumentality of the School District of Janesville

TAGOS Governance Board

Meets regularly to review progress, policy, finances, etc.

Dean of Students

Conducts administrative duties to operate TAGOS Leadership Academy

TAGOS Advisory Council (TAC)

Consisting of all current school staff, student and parent representatives, meets monthly.

TAGOS Advisory Council (TAC)

Composition

2 TAGOS Advisors

2 TAGOS students (one from each advisory)

2 Parents

2 Community Members

All TAGOS parents and students are welcome to attend and participate in discussions. Only the 8 council members may vote on issues making a decision or needing to go to the TAGOS governance board.

Meetings

The TAC meeting will be held every other month on the first Tuesday of the month (October through June) from 5:30 – 7:00pm at the TAGOS Leadership Academy. Anyone wishing to place an item on the TAC agenda must forward that request to Val Maxon @ vmaxon@janesville.k12.wi.us 290-0468 no later than 10 days prior to the meeting. Agendas will be emailed to the governance board and parents one week prior to the meeting.

Agendas will follow a similar format to include:

- A) Public Input Time
- B) Committee Reports
- C) Discussion of Agenda Items

The following committees represent the TAGOS Leadership Academy

Fundraising and Foundations
Facilities
Special Events and Fifth Block Options
Public Relations

Parental Involvement

Parent involvement begins with the development of the child's Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) along with the student and advisor. Parents will provide further support through school involvement, organization of community events and participation at the TAGOS Leadership Academy. Additional opportunities will include conferences, event nights, special presentations, and opportunities to attend Fifth Block Activities.

There are many opportunities for parental involvement at TAGOS. Depending upon talents, schedule, and availability, s/he may desire to participate in one or more of the following ways:

Participation in student-advisor-parent consultations

Learn the Project Process so that you may assist your child and volunteer to assist students at school

Provide input and feedback to advisors

Share with the community the exciting concept of TAGOS Leadership Academy

Attend TAGOS Event Nights

Participate in car pools to and from school

Chaperone TAGOS events

Offer yourself as a resource to TAGOS students in the area of your expertise

Share knowledge of community resources with TAGOS staff and students

Assist TAGOS students and teachers on site- There are many things you could assist with

Provide administrative assistance from school or home eg. Mailings, word processing, phone calls, etc.

Organize community events

Be on an active TAGOS committee

Service on the TAGOS Advisory Council (TAC)

Attend Governance Board Meetings

Support your child's interests and efforts!

Yearly Schedule

Daily Schedule

Attendance

Attendance is the **SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT** aspect of your success at the TAGOS Leadership Academy.

If you must be absent, **a parent must call the school educational assistant by 8:30 am** to report the absences and the reason for the absence. **The phone number is 290-0468**

TAGOS Leadership Academy adheres to the School District of Janesville attendance guidelines. For details about excused or unexcused absences, tardiness, and truancy see the district policy.

Attendance concerns will be handled on a case-by-case basis utilizing the student's personalized learning plan (PLP). Failure to attend school regularly may result in your dismissal from TAGOS.

Student Transfers

Students in the lottery pool can at any time during the year be accepted to attend TAGOS as space becomes available.

Students wishing to transfer to a different school within the Janesville School District may do so at the close of the semester.

Phone Policy

Cell phones will be permitted at TAGOS Leadership Academy. Ringers must be off at all times. Making and receiving calls, text messaging and the like will be permitted before and after school and during the lunch hour. Students will sometimes need to make appointment calls as part of their research, therefore other cell phone use will be handled on a case-by-case basis as requested by the student.

The job demands on TAGOS advisors and staff require a balance with their private lives. Please use discretion regarding calls to advisors during their personal time.

Electronic Devices

Students at TAGOS will be allowed to use head phones and I pods or other mp3 technology. Volume must be maintained at a level as to not distract or bother others.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Students who have a medical or dental appointment during the school day must have written and signed parental permission specifying the date and time and when the student must be excused from the building. The student must present written permission to their advisor and the educational assistant prior to leaving school. Students will also need to follow sign-out procedures, in and out.

Excused Absences

Excused absences such as family trips require a written request from a parent.

Field Trips

Parents will be asked to sign a year-long permission for student travel. Special field trips outside of the school district will require additional permission from parents/guardians.

Sign out Procedures

Medical/Dental Appointments: Present written parental permission to advisor and educational assistant. Sign out giving date, time, and reason for absence. Sign in time you returned to TAGOS.

Service Learning and Out of School Learning/Research

Students who have arranged service learning or an out of school activity related to their projects must receive advisor and parent approval beforehand. A Site Visitation Form must be completed, signed, and submitted to their advisor. If approved, students must follow sign out procedures.

Health Services

Parents/guardians are required to complete a health condition/emergency information form and return it to the TAGOS office by the end of the first week of school.

To prevent the spread of communicable disease, staff must be informed of all students who have contracted a communicable disease including the following: chicken pox, pinkeye (conjunctivitis), measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, ringworm, head lice, scabies, strep throat, etc. Contact the school regarding readmission guidelines for each particular disease.

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, first aid or other necessary care will be given immediately. School personnel will not assume responsibility for any medical treatment beyond first aid. Prescription drugs and/or medication, including aspirin and Tylenol, will be given once the proper paperwork has been completed by parent and physician. If your child becomes ill at school, every attempt will be made to send your child home. Should your child have an injury of a serious nature parents will be called immediately; if parents cannot be contacted, a doctor will be called or the student will be transported to the nearest clinic or hospital for examination.

Students with identified mental health or counseling needs, either by parent identification or POSIT Screening (Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers) at TAGOS will be given the opportunity to participate in a variety of individual or group sessions at no cost. Students identified for this service will be required to participate in a district provided health check and an assessment provided through Crossroads Counseling Center, at no cost. All services provided to students and families will be provided on site at TAGOS by Crossroads certified staff. These services will be provided during Block Five.

For guidelines regarding administration of medication to students, refer to the School District of Janesville Policy Manual.

Health Insurance

The School District of Janesville does not provide health or accidental insurance for injuries incurred by students at school. Parents are encouraged to review their present health and accident insurance policy to determine if coverage is adequate. The school district makes accident insurance available if you are interested and do not receive information on this insurance please contact the school at the beginning of the school year.

Food/Lunch

During lunchtime only students who have **Senior Credit Status at TAGOS** may leave the TAGOS Leadership Academy campus.

Lunch options for students are as follows:

- 1) Students may pack a lunch and/or have in school storage of easily prepared items. Students will have access to kitchen facilities in order to prepare meals. We ask that parents support our efforts to limit consumption of unreasonable limits of sugars and caffeine.

- 2) Students may participate in scheduled TAGOS Learning Academy Community meals. Students and advisors will work collaboratively to prepare community meals on a scheduled basis
- 3) School District Food Service

Students are asked to use common sense when consuming food and beverages. Food is to be eaten only in assigned areas. Beverages in the advisory areas must be in a closed container to limit damage to technology

Public Library Procedures

Each TAGOS student must have his/her own current and clear (free of fines) Hedberg Public Library card. Sharing of cards can be disastrous and is not permitted. Students must have specific sources identified and advisor/parent approval before going to the Hedberg Public Library to check out materials.

Interscholastic / Intramural Offerings

Students are allowed to participate in traditional school co-curricular/extracurricular activities if approved by the advisor and associated organization.

As per the WIAA, students in the TAGOS Leadership Academy **will not be able to participate in athletics**. The TAGO Leadership Academy is a separate/independent high school with no affiliation to the WIAA.

The TAGOS Leadership Academy is not a traditional school and does not provide the typical athletic and extracurricular offering on site. However, the founders and advisors of TAGOS support educating the whole child and believe that there are many alternative ways to meet one's educational goals. TAGOS sponsored clubs and performance arts activities will be scheduled during the year. Other alternatives may include private lessons, community teams/leagues, YMCA programs, etc. Students must consult with their advisor to determine needs and wants in extracurricular areas.

Parents and students at TAGOS are encouraged to facilitate the organization of extracurricular opportunities at TAGOS as enough interest exists.

Enrollment Options for High School Students

High school students attending the TAGOS Leadership Academy may choose to enroll in up to two courses at their traditional high school. It is suggested that if a student takes course work at their high school that they schedule two classes together (back-to-back) to limit time spent in travel. First hour classes are discouraged because community and advisory times are scheduled the first hour of every day.

Routine Building Procedures

The TAGOS Leadership Academy has in place a non-crisis security plan/practice for daily use as follows:

- 1) During the instructional day, all exterior doors remain locked except the main entrance.
- 2) Staff members are responsible for limiting access to building zones not authorized for use outside of normal school hours. Staff members will be responsible to assure that all exterior doors remain locked and operational.
- 3) All advisors and school/community groups utilizing building space after school hours and on weekends are responsible for securing doors, limiting access, and assuring that the building is clear and locked prior to exiting the building.

Crisis Plan

A Crisis Plan is on file at TAGOS and the district office. Staff will brief students on all components of the plan. If a crisis should occur, advisors will contact parents as soon as feasibly possible. If students are evacuated from the building, they will meet with advisors in their assigned areas and attendance will be taken. All students will be expected to stay with the group for safety and security reasons.

Parking

Students who drive to school will be assigned a student area for parking. Students may not transport other students without prior written parent permission from both parents/guardians.

Technology Use Policy

Access to technology is a privilege and demands responsibility. All students will be expected to comply with technology use rules established by the School District of Janesville.

Technology use at TAGOS is to be used solely for educational purposes. All electronic communications are not private, but subject to review and monitoring by staff. Computers may be searched and programs deleted if they are not supporting education and learning, including personal computers. NO software can be installed until it has been approved by school district technology staff. Games and music for entertainment are NOT to be used, installed, or played.

Students must notify staff immediately if they encounter materials that are offensive or violate appropriate use.

Levels of computer access:

Students not in compliance with the above guidelines may have restrictions placed upon them. These restrictions may range from limited computer access to no computer access and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving

With open dialogue and communication, a positive approach to problem solving, and the proper focus, the need for a formal conflict resolution policy will rarely be necessary at TAGOS. Conflict resolution at TAGOS will use the Capturing Kids Hearts process and students will abide by the agreed upon social contract developed by the student body. Conflicts between parents, students, and/or advisors require a face-to-face meeting with all involved parties. Meeting to resolve conflict will use the social contract policies set forth by the student body.

Student Code of Conduct

In a project-based model, serious disciplinary problems are rare. Students in this model or often times more focused, parents are better informed and involved and the tone of the school demands cooperation. All discipline will be first handled between student and advisor. Unresolved and unrestored disciplinary issues will require Dean of Students and parent participation. Severe individual situations will be dealt with according to school board policy and state statutes.

In addition to school consequences, students who violate the law while on school property or at school sponsored events may be cited according to local police authority.

(Refer to appendix A for more complete information)

Students Under an Expulsion Order

Students who are expelled may only attend TAGOS Leadership Academy or other options per their individual circumstances. Expelled students are prohibited from being on any district property or attending district sponsored events except those held on site at

the Arrow Park Campus. Expelled students wishing to be on traditional school settings will require a request to the superintendent initiated by the Dean of Students.

Clothing Standards

(See appendix B for detailed information)

Restorative Justice

Because students do make mistakes, staff at TAGOS will provide resources to assist the student in restoring whatever wrong has been done. Students participating in the restorative justice process are consequence by the restorative process, ie by righting the wrong and mending the relationship students take responsibility for their actions and take on accountability which provides learning from the event. Once the issue has been restored there is no need for further consequences. Students refusing to use the restorative process will be subject to traditional consequences such as suspensions and detentions. Parents will be notified when students receive traditional consequences and on a case-by-case basis when using restorative practices.

School Fees

School fees are assessed at \$26.50 per student per school year. Student who are also attending their High Schools are to register with that high school and pay fees to them directly. Fees for dual enrolled students are \$29.00. School fees are due during the first week of each school year. Checks must be made to School District of Janesville.

District Lunch program is \$2.15 per day for middle school students and \$2.25 per day for high school students