

# AACA

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**ALPHONSUS ACADEMY**  
& Center for the Arts

## **Family Handbook**

*Revised January 2024*

*AACA adopts and adheres to all Archdiocese of Chicago policies wholly  
as detailed on the following website: [www.ocs.archchicago.org](http://www.ocs.archchicago.org)*

### **School**

1439 W. Wellington Ave.  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
Phone: (773) 892-1397

<http://www.alphonsusacademy.org>

### **Parish Office and Rectory**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts Parent-Students handbook was created as a guide and source of information concerning policies, protocols, operations, and expectations at AACA. Local policy statements are the responsibility of school administration with advice from the School Advisory Board and Pastor. Some policies stated within the handbook are adopted from the Archdiocesan Policy Book.

Expectations, procedures, and operations statements are made by the administration and faculty to implement the school policies. The administration, in consultation with faculty and parents, formulated these rules and procedures.

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school administration will attempt to keep school families informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes might be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances. In all cases, the school administration/pastor reserves the right to make final decisions in how the following policies and procedures will be enforced.

Any questions regarding school policy should be directed to the school principal, assistant principal, or Director of Student Services.

## **MISSION & VISION**

### **MISSION**

We inspire and develop the whole child in an enriching environment combining academic excellence, an arts-integrated curriculum, and a supportive Catholic family.

### **VISION 2023**

To be the home for families who value:

- Continued academic excellence with a commitment to student-centered and personalized learning.
- Consistent integration of the arts into all aspects of the curriculum to deepen learning.
- Growth in Catholic faith formation with an increased emphasis on community and service.
- Culture of stewardship that strengthens our school, parish, and neighborhood.
- Diverse opportunities to explore extra-curricular interests in academics, arts, and athletics.
- Instilling in students empathy towards and responsibility for others

The Foundation areas:

- Highly Qualified Educators
- Social/Emotional Learning
- High School Readiness
- Technology Integration

- Financial Stability
- Campus Facilities

Vision 2028 will be introduced this year.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION:** AACCA is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a Corporation Sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. AACCA admits students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students. AACCA does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS** include providing (a) an official copy of the student's birth certificate, (b) a Baptismal certificate (if applicable), and c) a non-refundable registration fee.

**TRANSFER STUDENTS**, in addition to the Registration Requirements above, must also provide (d) a record of compliance with local and State of Illinois health requirements and (e) notification records from the school previously attended and any evaluator reports regarding students' academic or cognitive functioning. All transfer students are subject to a 60-day probationary term. Should irreconcilable issues occur before this time frame is complete, enrollment at AACCA is subject to cancellation.

**CONDITIONAL ADMISSION** may occur if (a) unmet financial obligations to another school exist, (b) a student may need special education accommodations, which AACCA may not be able to provide, and/or (c) a student exhibits behavior requiring serious disciplinary measures.

**AGE REQUIREMENTS** are those of Illinois State law which states that a Kindergarten student must be five years old and a First Grade student must be six years old on or before September 1 of the current year in order to be eligible for admission.

**HEALTH REQUIREMENTS** are also set by Illinois State law. Physical examinations are required upon a student's entrance into Kindergarten, First Grade, and Sixth Grade. Forms sent home with students must be returned on the first day of school.

- A. If the student has attended Preschool or Kindergarten elsewhere, parents should request that health records be forwarded. When students transfer to AACCA, health records are requested. If these records fulfill State requirements, another physical is not required. When the records are not available or do not meet the State requirements, a physical will be requested.
- B. Parents who object for medical reasons must provide a doctor's statement that the immunization is contraindicated.

- C. Any student not in compliance with the law will be excluded from school by October 15 of the current year.

If you have any questions regarding the admissions or application process, please contact the Director of Admissions, Madeleine Durkin.

### **ASBESTOS**

The building contains asbestos and the asbestos plan and report is available for viewing in the main office.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Daily attendance and punctuality is required during the entire regular school term. Students will be given a pink tardy slip and will be marked tardy by their classroom teacher in our attendance system, if they arrive after 8:00 am. After ten tardies, a meeting with a teacher or administrator is required. Grades K-4, students must be in the building by 8 am. In an effort to best prepare students for high school, students in grades 5th-8th must be in their classroom by 8 am.

Families must email the teacher and our school secretary, Kim Wallelt, at [kwallett@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:kwallett@alphonsusacademy.org) if their child is going to be absent.

After 5 unexcused absences in a trimester, a meeting with a teacher or administrator is required. For the safety and security of our students, an email to school from the parent by 8:30 am. is required if a student is absent. If possible, doctors' appointments should be made after school hours. Students are allowed two excused absences to shadow at high schools in their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.

### **BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY**

Our goal at AACA is that students feel safe when they are at school. One way that we do that is through our social emotional curriculum that addresses skills students need in order to have healthy relationships with themselves, classmates, and teachers. Preschool through 4th grade incorporates Caring School Communities into their morning meetings and our LMS and UMS students participate in weekly seminars using the Lion's Quest social emotional curriculum. School wide initiatives, led by our Student Council, also address bully prevention practices.

In the unfortunate instance where a bullying or harassment event occurs, AACA has a strict policy when it comes to bullying and any form of harassment.

Bullying is defined as:

- Unwanted, aggressive behavior or language, including communications and pictures made in writing or electronically, directed at a student or students. There is a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is targeted and repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. It is behavior that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
  - Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the themselves or their property;
  - Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student or students' physical or mental health;
  - Substantially interfering with the student or students' academic performance; or
  - Substantially interfering with the student or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Forms of bullying include: ***Instances of bullying given are just examples, not an exhaustive list.***

- Verbal Bullying- Saying or writing mean things to another person with intent to hurt or perceived in that way - Including but not limited to: Teasing, Name-calling, Inappropriate sexual comments, Taunting, Threatening to cause harm
- Social/Relational Bullying- Involves hurting someone's relationships or reputation- Including but not limited to: Leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, embarrassing someone in public
- Physical Bullying - Hurting or touching a person's body or possessions - Including but not limited to: Hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude hand gestures.
- Cyberbullying - bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets or anywhere where people can view, participate in, or share content. It includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. Some instances of cyberbully can cross the line into unlawful behavior.

\*If cyberbullying interferes with the instructional day in any way, even if the bullying occurred outside of school or outside school hours, AACA reserves the right to provide appropriate consequences.

When a bullying instance has been reported or observed, the teacher who witnessed the behavior and administration will immediately investigate. The investigation includes isolating all students involved (victim, student showing bullying behavior, bystanders, etc) and speaking to them one on one to hear what happened. After talking with students any other necessary information will be collected. Teacher and administration will determine if it is bullying. Parents will be communicated with as soon as the investigation is over.

The following set steps and consequences will occur if it is determine to be a bullying instance:

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Victim</b>	<b>Community</b>
<b>Bully-like Behavior (Part of Classroom Behavior Plan)</b>	<u>Consequences</u> - Behavioral Lesson - Immediate Referral + classroom consequence - Parent Phone Call  <u>Restoration</u> -Optional apology letter to victim	<u>Support</u> - Conversation with teacher/administration - Optional Time with Counselors  Parent Communication	N/A
<b>First Instance</b>	<u>Consequences</u> - Behavioral Lesson - Loss of Privilege + Adult Supervision where bullying occurred - Parent Phone Call  <u>Restoration</u> -Optional apology letter to victim	<u>Support</u> - Conversation with teacher/administration - Optional Time with Counselors  Parent Communication	Options included by are not limited to:  - Class Meetings - Targeted SEL lessons by counselors - Small group sessions - Parent Town Hall
<b>Second Instance</b>	<u>Consequences</u> - In School Suspension - Behavioral Lesson w/family homework - Loss of Privilege + Adult Supervision where bullying occurred - Parent Meeting  <u>Restoration</u> -Dependent on Situation	<u>Support</u> - Conversation with teacher/administration - Mandatory Time with Counselors  Parent Communication	*Response is dependent on the impact on classroom or grade level.
<b>Third Instance</b>	<u>Consequences</u> - Out of School Suspension - Behavioral Contract - Loss of Privilege + Adult Supervision where bullying occurred - Parent Meeting - Potential Out of School Counseling  <u>Restoration</u> -Dependent on Situation	<u>Support</u> - Conversation with teacher/administration - Mandatory Time with Counselors - Outside Services + Family resources  Parent Communication	

\*If the length of time between instances is greater than 4 months, the team will meet to discuss next steps.

\*Incidents of physical violence or sexual harassment or sexual suggestion will move to immediate in school suspension

**Retaliation Policy:** If bullying behavior occurs and is communicated to a teacher or trusted adult, any retaliation by a student toward the student(s) that communicated the behavior or the victim of the behavior, will also be considered bullying and will be treated as such.

### **Reporting Bullying Behavior**

#### Students

- Tell a teacher
- Tell any trusted adult
- Put a note in boxes outside counselors/administration offices
- Send an email to a teacher, trusted adult, counselor, administration

#### Parent

- Email homeroom teacher and/or teacher supervising where the event occurred
- Copy Administration
  - Gerit McAllister (Principal) - [gmcallister@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:gmcallister@alphonsusacademy.org)
  - Angela Kladis (Assistant Principal) - [akladis@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:akladis@alphonsusacademy.org)
  - Maggie Strome (Director of Student Services) - [mstrome@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:mstrome@alphonsusacademy.org)

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM SCHOOL**

Administration newsletter and emails are sent out weekly. Classroom teachers will update their Canvas sites or Google sites at least once a week.

School Messenger: School Messenger is an automated text/call/email communication system that allows for AACA to provide updates, alerts, and important information in a timely manner.

#### School website

- Calendar
- Forms
- Faculty and Family directory
- Link to Magnus and Mastery Connect

Social Media: Look to our social media pages for information about upcoming events and fun happenings throughout the school. \*Any important information will never solely be shared via social media. It will also be communicated in an email from administration, faculty/staff, or school board.

School board meetings occur the first Monday of every month at 7 pm, unless otherwise noted. All are welcome to attend.



Reminders about communication:

- If you have questions involving classroom incidents/grades/homework, please reach out to teachers first.
- Please only use teacher/administration personal phone lines when asked by that teacher/staff member. Please do not call teachers/staff after 5pm.
- Please give staff members 24 hours to respond to an email/call during the week and 72 over the weekend. Please do not expect an email from a staff member after 5pm. If there is an emergency, call the school or email administration.
- Teachers/staff members are expected to communicate with families about any urgent incident that occurs in school in a timely manner via email, phone call, or request for a meeting.

### **COVID PROTOCOL**

There are currently no protocols for Covid. Should that change, families will be notified in a timely manner.

### **DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AND MATERIALS**

If any property or material including but not limited to computers, iPads, text books, novels, furniture, etc. is damaged or destroyed by a student, intentionally or when not following school expectations, the family is responsible for paying for that material to be fixed or replaced (cost determined by school) or replacing that material themselves. The replacement must be the same item (make and model) that was broken.

### **DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Our school is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Alphonsus Academy admits students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students.

Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national or ethnic origin, age, military discharge, marital status, mental or physical disability unrelated to the ability to perform the duties of the position, religion or sexual orientation in administration of educational policies, admission policies, hiring of staff, loan programs, athletic programs, or other school administered programs.

School administration works in conjunction with the school Instructional Leadership Team, The School Board, and Father Bauer to ensure the nondiscrimination policy is followed. If there is concern that it is not being followed, the concerned community member should reach out to administration. If administration is the one believed responsible for the discrimination, the concerned community member can contact Father Bauer, School Board President, Erin Kerr, or school Regional Director, Lorelei Bobroff.

## **EIGHTH GRADE MATH PLACEMENT**

In 8th grade, students are placed in math class based on readiness for two different curricula—algebra and accelerated algebra. This placement process, which we do not take lightly, utilizes many data points. These specific criteria have been developed over time at AACA in conjunction with local area high schools, using student longitudinal data in 7th, 8th, and 9th grade. For these reasons, **placements in algebra and accelerated algebra are final**. AACA has worked with high schools to see that students placed in either math class are successful beyond 8th grade. These criteria dictate how many students are in each math section each year.

**Primary criteria** - *Students earning a 3.8 EOY grade in 7th Math at the end of the year are placed in Accelerated Algebra (pending no red flags on national and progress monitoring assessments).*

Those students who earn As and do not qualify under the primary criteria are considered using the criteria below.

1. *Total trimester average of 3.75 - found by averaging final trimester point average of T1, T2, and EOY.*
2. *MAP Scores - MAP scores in upper quartile (75% national norm) or above with emphasis on Operational and Algebraic Thinking domains to demonstrate that students show strong understanding of grade level algebraic content (7th grade) or above.*
3. *iReady - Spring (late April) iReady scores that indicate an end of 7th grade or above readiness in math for all domains.*
4. *AACA Report Card 8th Grade standards assessed in 7th grade - There are several 8th grade standards our curriculum teaches and assesses in 7th grade in order to prepare students for high school. Mastery of these is considered.*

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of an emergency closing, an official announcement will be made through SchoolMessenger via phone call, text, and email using the parent contact information listed in the School Directory. Parents/Guardians should be sure to maintain accurate contact information with the school in order to receive e-communications. Whenever possible, emergency announcements will also be posted to the school website and social media pages, as well as listed on the Chicago-area Emergency Closing Center website ([www.emergencyclosingcenter.com](http://www.emergencyclosingcenter.com)).

## **ENTERING AND LEAVING THE SCHOOL BUILDING**

Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable learning environment. The information provided here highlights policies and procedures that will allow us to provide maximum safety for students as they arrive and dismiss from school daily.

We recognize the importance of the school and community working together and request that you read this information carefully and follow the policies and procedures outlined.

- **All exits/entrances are to be kept locked at all times.** This includes the playground entrance. Staff should keep their keycard with them, around their neck at all times.
- **Visitors, including parents and former students, will only be allowed to enter through the Wellington Entrance.** Parents will not be able to enter through the parking lot entrance.
- When entering the building, all visitors (parents included), should ring the bell. Office staff will use a two point check. First visual (camera), second audio (intercom), to determine who the visitor is and why they are there. If they are a known or scheduled visitor for a valid reason, they will be admitted. They will sign in, using our Raptor Technology, which scans a state issued ID or driver's license, and receive a visitor's pass which they must wear the duration of their stay. If they are an unknown visitor not there for a valid reason, they will not be admitted. If they try to enter against school protocol, authorities will be called.
- Once in the building, all visitors are required to sign in and wear a visitor pass the duration of their visit.
- If a parent intends on visiting a classroom to read, volunteer, etc., ensure that the teacher is aware of time, date, and reason for visit.

### **MORNING ARRIVAL**

Students can begin arriving at 7:45 am. **There will not be supervision before 7:45 am.** The school day begins at 8 am. Students are tardy if they arrive after 8 am.

- **Preschool:** Enters through the front entrance on Wellington. Families should use the diagonal spots. After you drop your child at the door, please move your car to allow for others to drop off. If your preschooler has older siblings, they may be dropped off with older siblings in a drop off lane should you wish.
- **Kindergarten:** Drop off in the main lot off of Oakdale. Enter through doors by the rectory.
- **1st-8th:** Can be dropped off in the main lot off of Oakdale or on Greenview and enter through either of those doors. PS and kinder can walk in doors on Greenview or the Parking lot if with older siblings.

The Main lot will have two drop off lanes. When entering the lot, please enter the lane with the least amount of cars. The lanes will be clearly marked. Students should exit their vehicles. If you are in the lane closest to the school, students should go directly to their entrance. If you are

in the lane furthest from the school, multiple staff members will be there waiting to cross each child across the first lane to their entrance. Please reiterate to your children to not cross without an adult. In an effort to keep our drop off running smoothly, please do not get out of your car to walk your child to a school entrance. You may exit to help your children out of the car, but then please continue through the lane.

**If you are walking students or biking up, please use the entrance on Oakdale to the lot closest to Greenview, not the entrance closest to Southport.** There are dividers present to help you safely enter the lot away from exiting vehicles. Please follow this route past the cars to the school entrances.

If you arrive at Greenview Ave., please do not park your car. This is also a drive up lane. School staff will be available to assist students getting out of cars. **Please do not exit your car.**

Students who arrive after 8AM are considered tardy and should use the Wellington entrance.

The first day of school, parents are allowed to walk preschoolers to their classrooms. For the security of our building and the safety of our students, all other parents should drop their children in the lot or at the door. No other parents will be allowed in the building at drop off, unless they have a pre-scheduled appointment or business elsewhere in the school

#### **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL**

Preschool: Ludwig and Makkawy dismiss at 2:50 pm through the Wellington doors.  
Huang dismisses at 3:00 pm through the Wellington doors.  
Arzeni and Thomas dismiss at 11:00 am through the Wellington doors.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade: Dismiss at 2:50 pm on the sport court  
2nd through 4th Grade: Dismiss at 3:00 pm on the sport court  
5th through 8th Grade: Dismiss at 3:00 pm on Greenview Ave

Every Wednesday, we have early dismissal to allow for teacher professional development. Dismissal on Wednesday is as follows:

Preschool: Ludwig and Makkawy dismiss at 1:45pm through the Wellington doors.  
Huang dismisses at 1:35pm through the Wellington doors.  
Arzeni and Thomas dismiss at 11:00am through the Wellington doors.

Kindergarten and 1st Grade: Dismiss at 1:35pm on the sport court  
2nd-4th: Dismiss at 1:45pm on the sport court.  
5th-8th: Dismiss at 1:45pm on Greenview

**Parents do not need to pick up their children in multiple locations.** Oldest siblings can walk to the location of the youngest sibling and be picked up there.

Kindergarten through 4th Grade: We will have two pickup lanes in the lot. When you arrive, pull into one of the lanes. A staff member will communicate that you are present and another staff member will walk the students to your car.

Greenview is also a pick up lane. When you arrive, 5th-8th graders will walk to the car. Teachers will supervise dismissal but will not walk children to their car. Please do not park and exit your car in the pick up lane.

Please be respectful of our neighbors. Do not block alleys, garages, or driveways. Cars may be towed.

Please make sure you are on time to pick up your children. At 3:10pm, students will be walked into the office to call home. At 3:15pm, if a parent has not arrived, students will be brought to aftercare. Parents will be charged according to aftercare policy.

### **EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS**

STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TEST (*iReady*) Students in grades K-8 take the iReady assessment three times per year. The iReady assessment is an adaptive assessment that pinpoints students' instructional levels in math and reading and is used to inform instruction and support individual students' needs. Information about the iReady assessment will be distributed prior to testing each year. Test scores are sent home with students once all students have completed the assessment.

STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARDS are issued at the end of each grading period and indicate student progress in academic and social areas. Parents are asked to discuss the report card carefully with their student. Questions should be referred to the student's teacher. AACA report cards are standards-based and reflect progress students are making toward mastery of grade level state and national standards.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips offer a valuable student experience related to the class curriculum. A parent or guardian must sign a digital field trip permission slip allowing AACA to take a student on a field trip; no student may go on a field trip without the digital written permission of the parent or guardian. Some field trips may request a parent or guardian to volunteer to supervise.

### **FIREARMS AND DRUGS**

In the event of knowledge of firearm, the principal and/or assistant principal and/or direction of culture will:

- Immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of firearm incidents at the school;

- (If a student is in possession of a firearm) Immediately notify the student's parents or guardians
- Immediately follow school safety procedures
- Notify the IL State Police of such incidents through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

In the event that there is a verified incident(s) involving drugs occurring on school grounds, the principal and/or assistant principal and/or direction of culture will:

- Immediately notify the local law enforcement agency
- Immediately follow school safety procedures
- Notify the IL State Police of such incidents through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

\*For the purposes of drug incidents, school grounds are defined as real property comprising the school and parish, any conveyance owned, leased, or contracted by the school or parish to transport students to or from school or a school related activity, or on a public way within 1,000 feet of the school.

### **GUARDIANSHIP**

A student shall be released to either parent unless the school has a copy of a court order giving one parent exclusive custody.

### **GUM**

Chewing gum is not allowed unless otherwise specified.

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS – STATE OF ILLINOIS & SCHOOL**

All children must present proof of having had a health, dental and eye examination, and received such immunizations against preventable communicable diseases as required by the Department of Public Health as noted in the Joint Commission on Administrative Code Title 77: Public Health, Chapter I: Department of Public Health, Part 665: Child Health Examination Code.

**If a child is not in compliance with the health and immunizations requirements by October 15, the child will be excluded from school until the child presents proof of having had the health examination and presents proof of having received required immunizations.**

All children in Illinois shall have a **dental examination** as follows:

- Prior to entering kindergarten, second, and sixth grades of any public or parochial school.

All children in Illinois shall have an **eye examination** as follows:

- Prior to entering kindergarten of any public or parochial school.
  - This requirement does not apply to children enrolling in preschool.
- Note: eye exams MUST be performed by a registered ophthalmologist or optometrist.

All children in Illinois shall have a **health examination** as follows:

- Immediately prior to or upon entrance into any public, private, or parochial pre-school, or when transferring from outside of the State of Illinois;
- Prior to entering kindergarten and 6th; Yearly for athletics from 4th-8th.

All children in Illinois shall have **proof of required immunizations** as follows:

- Prior to enrolling in preschool: (4) DTaP, (3) Polio, (4) Hib, (3) Hep B, (1) MMR, (1) Varicella, (4) Pneumococcal
- Prior to entering Kindergarten: (5) DTaP, (4) Polio, (4) Hib, (3) Hep B, (2) MMR, (2) Varicella, (4) Pneumococcal
- Upon entering sixth grade: (1) TDaP, (2) Varicella, (1) Meningitis
- Prior to entrance to any public, private or parochial school (requirements depend on grade level of student)

Note: Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts ONLY accepts medical exemptions for required immunizations. This exemption must be signed off by a physician.

For questions regarding medical forms, please contact the school nurse Cody Dupree at [cdupree@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdupree@alphonsusacademy.org).

Information must be filled out on Mangus for each student by October 15th.

### **SICK CHILD POLICY**

YOU MUST KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF HE/SHE IS EXPERIENCING:

- A fever of 100.4 F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- White patches on the tonsils
- Difficulty swallowing or talking
- Rash
- Red or irritated eye or eyes, which may be pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Nasal discharge, especially if very thick or greenish in color
- Persistent cough/extreme congestion
- Live lice infestation – Must be treated immediately upon discovery.

If you have any questions regarding whether or not your child should stay home when ill, please contact the school nurse.

The school must be notified when your child is out sick. Please call the attendance line to leave a message (773-892-1397).

Notify the nurse **IMMEDIATELY** if your child has any contagious diseases such as Covid-19, chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, pink eye, impetigo, mono, lice, ringworm, scabies, hand foot mouth disease etc. A letter will be sent home to the families of students in that specific class. Personal student information is kept confidential.

**YOUR CHILD CANNOT RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL HE/SHE:**

- Has no fever without medication for 24 hours and has been cleared by a doctor and/or our school nurse.

If a student becomes seriously ill or injured, the parent or guardian is called. If a parent is not available, the persons listed on the student's emergency card are then contacted. Students will only be released to parents or guardians as listed on the emergency card. In addition, the parent or guardian must sign the student out of the school. In severe cases, the school will also call emergency services.

**If a student is absent from school, they cannot attend any extracurriculars, aftercare, or athletics that day.**

**Exclusion from Physical Education Classes/Recess due to injury:** Parents should send a doctor's note to the nurse and teacher.

**Concussion Policy:** The Office of Catholic Schools requires all Archdiocesan operated elementary and secondary schools that offer interscholastic athletic activities or interscholastic athletics under the direction of a coach, athletic director or band leader to develop and implement protocols to manage student concussions and head injuries in accordance with the Illinois Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act.

**MEDICATION POLICY**

According to State Law, it is only permissible for school personnel to dispense medication under the following conditions:

1. Written permission is required from the parent or guardian of a student requesting that the school cooperate with the directions of the current prescription. All medications will be kept with the school nurse in a secured cabinet.
2. All medication must be brought to the Nurse's office in a **pharmacy-labeled container**, or original over-the-counter container. A physician's order must accompany any over-the-counter medication such as aspirin, Tylenol or cough medications. Medications that come in the form of an ointment must be applied by the parent.



3. For your child and the safety of all students, all medication must be brought to and kept in the school nurse's office. Students are responsible to report to the nurse's office at the proper time to take their medication.
4. The school grants permission of self-administration and self-carry of asthma medication and/or epinephrine auto-injectors.
5. The school grants permission of administration of undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors or opioid antagonists.
  - a. Nurse or administration will report to ISBE within 3 days of administering an undesignated epinephrine auto-injector.
  - b. When used, the school will immediately activate our emergency protocol and notify the student's parent, guardian, and/or emergency contact.
  - c. Within 24 hours, the school will notify the prescribing physician.
6. The school and school personnel incur no liability for injuries occurring when administering asthma medication, an epinephrine auto-injector, or an opioid antagonist. The school only has undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors. The school does not have undesignated asthma inhalers or opioid antagonists.

**Asthma Inhalers:** Students who suffer from asthma are required to have an asthma care plan on file. Please contact the school nurse to complete the asthma care plan. Parents/guardians need to provide the school a copy of their child's prescription in order to keep their inhalers with them in school and during school related events.

**Diabetes:** The State of Illinois enacted the Care of Students with Diabetes Act in December 2010 (the "Care Act"). Under the Care Act, a student cannot be denied access to any school or any school related activities on the basis that the student has diabetes. This law applies to Catholic schools as well as public schools. The Care Act does the following:

- allows parents/guardians to request assistance with their child's diabetes management from "delegated care aide" during the school day and at school-related activities,
- allows capable students to manage their own diabetes care during the school day and at school functions, and
- mandates certain minimum training requirements for all school employees in schools that have a student with diabetes. If your child has/has developed diabetes, please contact the school nurse for further information and guidance.

**Administration of Medical Cannabis:**

Students are not able to use or possess cannabis in our school except in accordance with the law and school policy. If a parent/guardian of a student who demonstrates his/her son or daughter is a "registered qualifying patient" and has an individual who is a "registered designated caregiver" both of whom hold medical cannabis registry identification cards, then the parent/guardian or designated caregiver must be permitted to administer a medical cannabis product to the student (no-smoking, non-vaping form) at school.

A parent or guardian or other individual may not administer a medical cannabis product in a manner that, in the opinion of the school, would create a disruption to the school's educational environment or would cause exposure of the product to other students.

### **MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOL**

AACA takes all indications of self-harm, suicidal thoughts and other significant mental health concerns seriously and follows the Crisis response policies of the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Catholic Schools. When we have concerns about your child's emotional well-being we may require that your child receive a mental health assessment from a licensed mental health professional (licensed clinical professional counselor, licensed clinical social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist) prior to the continuation of academics and co-curricular activities at AACA. Below are the steps parents should follow to determine the most appropriate level of support for your child and to coordinate a smooth re-entry back to AACA:

1. Arrange for your child to be assessed by a licensed mental health professional as soon as possible. We can help provide referrals to clinicians, agencies, hospitals and services who may be able to assess your child.
2. Follow the recommendations provided by the clinician, which may include but is not limited to: outpatient therapy, partial or inpatient hospitalization and/or medication management.
3. Sign a consent for release of information and arrange for the clinician to share the recommended treatment plan with the school counselor to coordinate your child's re-entry back to school.
  - Student/family confidentiality is adhered to as dictated by the Ethical Code of the American School Counselor Association
  - All documentation should be faxed or emailed to the attention of the school counselor
4. If the assessment and recommended treatment plan results in an immediate return to AACA, please see #6 below.
5. If the assessment results in a recommended extended absence from AACA, please contact the school counselor to communicate the preliminary treatment plan as outlined by the clinician. The school counselor, working with the academic liaison in AACA's Student Support Team (SST), will communicate with any treatment facility and our faculty to collaborate on the therapeutic and academic needs for your child. The school counselor will coordinate the provision of necessary information for your child's return to learn in a sensitive and confidential manner.
6. Re-entry back to AACA academics and co-curricular activities requires the following written statements from the evaluating clinician, which can be shared via fax or email to the school counselor:
  - Evaluation Date and Outcome/Diagnosis

- Safety Statement: the student is not at risk of self-harm or of harming others and it is appropriate for the student to return to AACA.
  - Therapeutic recommendations, treatment plan, discharge summary and a plan for the transition back to the school environment
7. Upon receipt of documentation, the school counselor/administration will schedule a Re-Entry Meeting.
- This meeting will include the student, parent or guardian, principal and the school counselor. Please know other stakeholders may attend this meeting if needed.
  - The purpose of this meeting is to review the recommendations from the assessment and treatment plan in an effort to determine the most effective support system for your child's continued care both inside and outside of AACA. Based on concern AACA has about your child's continued personal well-being, our *Therapeutic Behavioral Agreement* must be reviewed, agreed to and signed during this meeting.
  - Once all aspects of the Re-Entry Meeting are accomplished and meet expectations, your child is authorized to return to classes and co-curricular activities.
8. Following the Re-Entry Meeting, the school counselor will schedule a meeting to review the Academic Recovery Plan which identifies the school work that needs to be made up.
- This meeting should include the student, parent or guardian, the school counselor, teachers and all other appropriate faculty or staff members as needed.
  - The purpose of this meeting is to allow the student and their parents/guardians an opportunity to share details and provide an update about the cognitive, physical, social, emotional and academic challenges associated with the extended absence. In addition, all stakeholders should review and discuss the official Academic Recovery Plan as the student has been allowed to return to learn.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

AACA welcomes parents and offers opportunities for formal and informal parent-teacher conferences. If teachers are not available when a parent calls, teachers will return a call to the parent.

Regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and second trimester. Teachers set up their appointment schedules, providing parents the selection of a preferred day/time. If parents are not able to attend at the scheduled time, they are asked to call the teacher to arrange another appointment. We ask that all families attend the first conference. The second conference is optional, but a teacher might recommend it.

Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher if a problem, misunderstanding, or concern occurs. Parents should attempt to resolve issues with the student's teacher first. Most concerns can be effectively addressed in this manner. Parents are asked to call the school to make an appointment with the teacher for either a telephone conference or an in-school meeting, as opposed to arriving without an appointment. If the teacher has been contacted and no resolution is achieved, parents may then make an appointment with the principal to review the issue and resolve the concern.

### **PEANUT/TREE NUT AWARE SCHOOL**

Due to the prevalence of numerous allergies, the goal at AACCA is to maintain a nut free environment. It is critical to review labels to ensure that products brought into the school do not contain nuts. Please check ingredients lists carefully and look at the label. If bringing in a treat for the whole class, please make sure the treat does not contain nuts and is not made in a facility that handles nuts.

We cannot stress enough the importance of label reading every time you purchase and pack. All snacks that contain peanuts and/or tree nuts, and their derivatives, are unsafe for students and staff with allergies. Any such snacks will not be permitted to be consumed by a student while at school.

### **PRAYER AND LITURGY**

Since Christian values and living are our priority, the habit of daily prayer is fostered in the classroom. A routine of prayer before class in the morning and again before dismissal is followed. Grace before meals is said before going to the lunchroom.

Students in Gr. 1-8 will attend the parish 8:30 a.m. Mass weekly on Fridays. Parents are welcome to join us for mass on those days. Starting in January, kindergarten students will also attend Mass with the whole school.

### **PRESCHOOL AGE REQUIREMENTS**

Age requirements are those of Illinois State law which states that a Kindergarten student must be five years old and a First Grade student must be six years old on or before September 1 of the current year in order to be eligible for admission.

Students who seek entry into our program who are 5 on or before September 1 will be directed to submit a kindergarten application. Students entering our preschool program who turn 3 on or before September 1st will be a first year preschool student and students who turn 4 on or before September 1st will be considered a second year preschool student (even if they are new to AACCA).

## **RECESS EXPECTATIONS**

### **RECESS THEMES**

- Play SAFELY
- Play FAIRLY
- Play TOGETHER
- Play FOR FUN

### **CORE VALUES**

As in the classroom, all students are expected to follow our set of core values during recess.  
(adapted from [Playworks](#))

- RESPECT: Do unto others as you would have done to you.
- INCLUSION: All students are able to play together, and students are encouraged to include their peers.
- HEALTHY PLAY: Engage in physically, emotionally, and socially positive behavior.
- HEALTHY COMMUNITY: A group of students to which you feel a positive connection and share similar goals for play.

### **RECESS RULES**

The following playground rules will ensure that all students are able to support the recess Core Values. Please refer to the rules posted outside, near the play structures, for more detailed equipment instructions.

- Follow the signals and commands of recess supervisors
- Walk and run safely
- Stay within boundaries
- Play each activity in the specified zone
- Help other students
- Line up when you hear the whistle/signal to end recess

### **RECESS – OUTDOOR WEATHER WATCH/CONDITIONS**

Our target temperature threshold for outdoor recess is 20°F (without wind-chill). However, we may go slightly above or below that temperature depending on other weather circumstances. The decision to take students outside for recess that day will be made each morning based upon current conditions at school. Students are required to have coats, gloves/mittens, and hats during outdoor recess in the winter season. If the temperature is 50 degrees or below, students must have a coat on to go outside. Sweaters/sweatshirts alone will not be permitted.

## **REPORT CARDS**

AACA creates standards based report cards for tracking and reporting student progress. The standards come from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Utilizing multiple assessments throughout the learning process, teachers gather student data to determine where to take the

learning and how well students have achieved the learning. Ratings (1-4) of each assessed standard are assigned by the teacher primarily using the evidence of student understanding. Teachers strive to best represent what a child truly learns – mastery – as well as providing an understanding of a child’s emerging and developing knowledge of the standards.

Report cards for all trimesters will include one narrative portion on the addendum sheet. This narrative will include teachers’ observations and goals concerning student progress with behavior and executive functioning over the course of the year. In content areas and specials, the report card will show a rating for each standard assessed during that grading period. Other methods of communication about student progress, both academic and behavioral, may include conferences, meetings, emails, weekly newsletters, and informal conversations.

### **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

The State of Illinois, by law, requires school personnel to inform the Department of Children and Family Services (D.C.F.S.) of any allegation or suspicion of child abuse or neglect. All of our staff are trained mandated reporters.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY AND SAFETY DRILLS**

Throughout the school year we will practice several types of safety drills so that teachers and students are prepared in the event of an emergency. At the beginning of the school year, practice drills will provide opportunities to become familiar with necessary procedures. Each classroom teacher will lead their students in the process so that quiet and order are maintained during all safety drills. Evacuation (Fire) drills will be held monthly, typically with the assistance of (and at the discretion of) the Chicago Fire Department. Shelter-in-place (Tornado) and Lockdown drills will be held several times during the year. In addition, we will also practice soft lockdown drills which we will refer to as secure and learn. At times, local emergency responders may assist the school in the execution of safety drills. Any volunteers or visitors will be instructed to follow the same procedures. The building will be evacuated according to the posted plan. All families will be informed prior to any Lock Down Drill taking place.

### **SCHEDULE**

Schedules differ by grade level and will be provided by teachers the first week of school.

### **SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD**

The AACA School Board is comprised of a body of parish and school representatives. The School Board also serves as a representative constituency offering advice and support in the administration and management of the school.

The School Board shares in the teaching mission of the Church. Its primary concern is keeping the vision of creating and maintaining an educational community where Christian culture and knowledge, enlightened and energized by faith, is shared among teachers, students, and parents in a spirit of Christian love, hope, and freedom.

The School Board's purpose is to develop, define, and implement the policies which govern the operation of the school, subject to the limitations of Parish and Archdiocesan regulations. It has the authority, together with the Pastor, to hire the Principal of the school. It reviews and advises in the Principal's preparation of the School Budget and sets the Tuition Rates with the Pastor and Principal. Fundraising projects to support the school's operations are a major activity of the Board, along with promoting community interest and involvement in the educational program of the school. Publicity and Public Relations are another key and ongoing task of the School Board, particularly in the recruitment of new students and in stimulating important community recognition and support. Ordinarily, the School Board meets once a month, usually the first Monday of the month. Parents are very welcome and are encouraged to attend and take an active part in promoting and supporting AACA.

### **SCHOOL DIRECTORY and DISTRIBUTION LISTS**

As members of an educational and parish community, it is common practice to issue a directory of students and parents, with email addresses, residence addresses, and phone numbers. The purpose of such a directory is to build community and to foster relationships among our school families.

The online school directory is password-protected and only accessible to faculty and to parents with children currently enrolled at AACA. Those who receive this directory are to see to it that the information is used responsibly, and only for appropriate school- and community-related purposes. Users are prohibited from using the directory for business- and/or political-related purposes.

Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts aims to be compliant with the CAN-SPAM act, a law that sets the rules for organization email. As such, AACA does not provide contact information to third-party businesses, including family-owned businesses or school sponsors, for marketing purposes.

Suspected or known violations of this policy should be reported to the school's Chief Advancement Officer or Principal. Alleged violations will be evaluated by the appropriate AACA staff members. Parents in violation of the school's directory policy may have their directory access revoked.

Parents who wish to opt-out of having contact information included in the School Directory must provide a written or emailed request to the school's Advancement Team. Doing so will not remove your contact information from internal school communication mediums.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

AACA, acting in loco parentis, retains the right to search for and seize illegal substances (such as drugs) or objects (such as weapons) when there is a reasonable belief that such material is in the possession of a student.

Students found in possession of such material will be subject to disciplinary procedures which may include suspension and/or expulsion. In order to provide students and employees with a safe environment, the school reserves the right, at its discretion, to conduct inspections of school property and the property of students and visitors on the school premises. Included within this policy is the right to inspect the following: lockers, knapsacks, briefcases, bags, gym bags, vehicles on the school premises, clothing (with appropriate safeguards for the individual's personal privacy) and desks.

## **SENDING MONEY TO SCHOOL**

Students should only bring to school any money needed for school that day. All students are responsible for their own money.

Money sent to school should be in a sealed envelope that is clearly labeled with the student's name, teacher's name, amount of money, and what the money is for. In short, money or valuables should never be left in desks. AACA cannot be and is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Please see the Archdiocese statement on sexual harassment.

## **SPECIAL OCCASION FOOD**

### **Birthday Treats**

Students may bring birthday treats into school. Treats must be provided for every student in the classroom and may not contain or be made in a factory that contains nuts or tree nuts and may not contain dairy or gluten. Good options so that every child can participate in the celebration are popsicles or Italian ices (provide spoons).

### **Classroom Holiday Parties**

Special treats may be allowed to celebrate special holidays. Classroom teachers and Classroom Coordinators will consult about the menu for class parties to ensure that the majority of foods served are both healthy and nutritious. Treats must be provided for every student in the classroom and may not contain or be made in a factory that contains nuts or tree nuts.

### **Classroom Snack**



Teachers will reach out individually to their classrooms/grade levels if snack is permitted in the grade level.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

At AACA teachers use Responsive Classroom and Positive Discipline in combination with Social Emotional Learning to create and maintain a positive environment of learning and growth. Our school-wide expectations are general and work to encompass all of the classroom expectations. Each year, classrooms build out their own expectations in collaboration with students as part of Responsive Classroom and address each school wide expectation. School wide expectations are:

- Show Respect
- Show Responsibility
- Show Safety
- Show Your Faith

In some instances, in order to best support our students, other interventions and accommodations need to be put in place. At AACA we are committed to responding to undesired behaviors in an efficient, effective, and supportive manner. The following tiered system is our response plan for when these behaviors arise. Through all steps of this process, we are dedicated to providing assistance to students to aid them in reaching their goals and being successful in the classroom.

In the event that a student should receive a consequence, that consequence is determined by the AACA Consequence Rubric. This rubric was developed by the staff and meant to provide for students a clear expectation of what will happen if they break the rules. At each stage of the rubric, there is room for intervention and student/teacher conversation to ensure that the student is supported so that the behavior does not continue.

	<b>Intervention Description</b>	<b>Communication</b>	<b>Movement to Next Tier</b>
<b>Tier 1</b>	Undesired behavior is responded to immediately as outlined by the teacher's classroom management system.  When student behavior does not respond to the classroom system, then the student receives a consequence per the Rubric.	Parents will be communicated by the classroom teacher after each referral.	If students continue to struggle under the classroom management system, then they move to Tier 2 and a Student Behavior Support Plan is created.
<b>Tier 2</b>	For students in Tier 2, a Student Behavior Support Plan is implemented. This plan is designed to target the <i>why</i> of the	Parents will receive communication about the success of the Student	If at the end of the monitoring period, the student is still struggling with behavior, then a

	<p>behavior. Interventions could include, but are not limited to, trackers, check-in/check-out systems, social skills groups, etc. Interventions are implemented and monitored for a period of 2-4 weeks.</p> <p>Throughout the 2-4 week period, there may be modifications made to the plan if the student is not being successful.</p>	Behavior Support Plan by either the classroom teacher or the Director of Student Services.	student will move to Tier 3 and a Behavior Agreement will be created.
<b>Tier 3</b>	Students in Tier 3 who are on a Behavior Agreement will continue to receive targeted interventions at school to address the behaviors. In addition, parents will be required to support behavior development outside of school. This may include seeking outside services.	Parents will receive communication about the success of the Student Behavior Support Plan by either the classroom teacher or the Director of Student Services and in some instances the Principal.	If a student continues to struggle in Tier 3 then next steps will require a parent meeting with administration. At this time a student may be required to have an evaluation. Additionally, a student's future at AACA may be discussed.

Additional Notes regarding this plan:

1. This plan is not interchangeable with the bullying plan.
2. At any point during the process, AACA can request that parents seek outside therapies and support for their student.
3. Students with IEPs, 504s, or Private Evaluations may have a different action plan based on goals outlined for them in their evaluation.
4. There are some behaviors that are considered immediate suspension or expulsion, based on severity. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Physical violence or threat of physical violence
  - b. Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school events
  - c. Sexual harassment or sexual assault
  - d. Possession of alcohol on school property or at school events
  - e. Possession of weapons on school property or at school events
  - f. Using technology or social media in a severely inappropriate way, including threats involving weapons or violence toward themselves or others, drug or alcohol usage, or instances or threats of breaking the law.

Our students are representatives of AACA whether in the building or not in the building. If a student acts in a way that is not aligned to our AACA expectations and standards when outside of school or on social media and it reflects poorly on the school, AACA reserves the right to provide appropriate consequences including suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

We hold our students to the highest level of academic excellence. This includes making sure that the work a student does is their work, and their work alone. Academic Dishonesty at AACA includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying another student's test or quiz
- Providing test or quiz for another student
- Reusing the same assignment for a different class
- Using someone else's work as their own
- Sharing information about an assessment
- Using unapproved resources/materials which include books, notes, technology, etc.
- Using any type of Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT when completing an assignment.

In the event that a student does show academic dishonesty we will follow the following procedures:

First Instance	The teacher will meet with the student to discuss the incident and what expectations are. Parents will be contacted about the dishonesty. Students will retake assessment/redo the assignment <b>that day</b> . The maximum score they will be able to get is a 3.
Second Instance	The student will meet with the Director of Student Services to discuss the incident and determine if the student needs any support with academics or executive functioning. Parents will be contacted about the second incident of dishonesty. The student will retake the assessment/redo the assignment <b>that day</b> . The maximum score they will be able to get is a 3. Additionally, the student will have close teacher supervision during any upcoming assessments for a two week period.
Third Instance	Parents will be contacted about the third instance and a parent meeting will occur. The student will not be allowed to retake the assessment/redo the assignment and will receive a 1. Additionally, the student will take any upcoming assessments in a separate space for a two week period.

\*Repeated incidents after the third instance may result in an in-school suspension.

AACA administration will make the final determination as to whether or not the student has engaged in academic dishonesty.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents have the right to inspect their child's permanent records, which includes report cards, health records, accident reports and attendance records. Parents may call the school office to make an appointment for this purpose.

### **Requests of Teachers to Complete Forms From Outside Clinicians**

Outside clinicians frequently ask for data to be provided by a classroom teacher. All forms submitted to school must be submitted directly to the Director of Student Services. If you wish

to deliver these forms to the school office, please place them in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential to the Learning Specialist." Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope, addressed to the outside clinician. Forms will not be returned to parents. Clinical forms will be mailed directly to the outside clinician. Teachers will be asked to try and complete forms within a period of one week.

In order for school to be able to provide confidential information to an outside source, parents will be asked to sign a "release" in order for school and the outside clinician to be able to share information about your student. The releases are available in the school office.

### **Recommendations**

AACA is supportive of both the academic and the personal needs of all our students and their families. Likewise, AACA expects families to be responsive to reasonable requests made to families, to provide the additional support a student may need outside of school, or to obtain a clinical assessment to determine the reason for underachievement. AACA has a history of collaborating with outside clinicians and parents to understand the special needs of students and find strategies to help students have a successful educational experience.

In all cases, all of our students are held to the same academic standards for both academic performance and assessment. Although AACA does not have an alternative curriculum for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, we do provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations when requested, if those accommodations do not infringe upon the essential aspects of the AACA program of study. All students are expected to participate fully in the school program.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

At AACA we believe in supporting and developing the whole child. This means that we provide support for the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral growth of students. AACA has a Student Support Team that consists of a Director of Student Services, three learning specialists, two counselors and a full time nurse to meet the needs of our students.

### **Learning Specialists**

AACA learning specialists provide academic intervention to students who are not meeting grade level expectations in both reading and/or math. They support students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

Our learning specialists are committed to providing interventions to students that are researched-based and targeted to the individual needs of the student. Academic intervention can be provided in the classroom setting, small group pull out, or one-on-one sessions. The type and frequency of support is determined by the learning specialist and classroom teachers. Our learning specialists meet regularly with the classroom teachers to review student data and monitor all student progress.

Students at AACA take the iReady Benchmark Assessment three times a year (beginning, middle, end) to monitor their overall growth within a school year. Students who perform below grade level on these assessments are flagged for being “at risk”. The learning specialists and classroom teachers will work together to determine what additional support that student may need. This support may mean working with a learning specialist but can also happen within the class period by the classroom teacher.

Some students at AACA may have an evaluation (private, IEP, 504) that provides students with accommodations for testing. Our learning specialists provide these accommodations for students. More information regarding evaluations and accommodations can be found in the Evaluations & Accommodations section of the handbook.

### **Counselors**

The role of the school counselor at AACA is to promote the development of every individual student in the academic, social-emotional, and post-secondary planning domains as well as promote a positive school environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

Our counselors provide services in areas such as responsive/crisis services, individual counseling, peer mediation/conflict resolution, small group counseling, and classroom lessons on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). In addition, our counselors provide families with resources and/or education on counseling-related topics as well as connect and collaborate with external professionals.

School counselors use Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC) which approaches the counseling process through a focus on the individual’s strengths in 4-8 sessions and emphasizes problem solving. If the needs of an individual exceed the capabilities or scope of the school counseling role, the school counselor may recommend outside therapy

In order to build trust with the child, the school counselor will keep information confidential with some possible exceptions. In some significant cases, the counselor will have a duty to share information with parents/guardians, the child’s teachers, and/or the administration. In certain instances, the school counselor is required by law to share information with parents/guardians or other adult authorities.

- Child is a danger to themselves or others
- Child is endangered by others
- Required by law

### **Behavior Management**

All classrooms follow their own classroom management system that is aligned with Responsive Classroom best practices. When a student’s behavior does not improve under the classroom management system, then a consequence will be given based on the AACA Consequence Rubric for that grade level. All rubrics can be found on the school website. For students with repeated

behavior concerns, the Director of Student Services will meet with the parents and teachers to create a Student Behavior Support Plan to support the behavioral needs of the student.

### **Evaluations & Accommodations**

If a student is not making progress, AACA learning specialists, counselors, and teachers may request that a student get a psycho-educational evaluation to determine if there are any learning disabilities and/or medical diagnoses (eg ADHD, anxiety) that might be impacting student growth. AACA has a list of recommended evaluators that they will provide to parents.

Once a student receives an evaluation, they will be assigned a Case Manager who will work with the classroom teacher to implement any classroom or testing accommodations. We strive to meet all needs outlined in an evaluation but are not required to fulfill all accommodations suggested. However, we do guarantee the following classroom accommodations: preferential seating, use of fidget or focusing/sensory tool, breaks outside of class when needed; and testing accommodations: testing in a small group setting and extended time. Any additional accommodation that the school will provide will be agreed upon during a meeting with the parent, learning specialist, and classroom teacher.

Some evaluations also describe suggested academic interventions. Similarly to accommodations, the learning specialist, parent, and classroom teacher will meet to determine what level of support will be provided given the needs of the student.

If parents obtain an evaluation outside of school request, that evaluation must be submitted to the Director of Student Services (Maggie Strome, [mstrome@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:mstrome@alphonsusacademy.org)) for review before accommodations and academic support are given. If an evaluation requires a teacher to fill out a survey or questionnaire, please submit all paperwork to the Director of Student Services who will make sure teachers receive the documents and then will send the documentation back to the evaluators.

### **Outside Providers**

If a student requires a service that AACA does not provide, such as speech therapy or occupational therapy, then that provider may come to school to deliver services. Outside providers should reach out to Connie Del Toral ([cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org)) to fill out the required paperwork. The provider and classroom teacher will work together to determine the best time for the support to occur.

### **Communication with Therapists**

Often therapists, and other outside providers, will collaborate with teachers and learning specialists to best support the student. This collaboration is encouraged but requires a Parent Release of Information form to be filled out. The form gives permission for the school to talk to the therapist about the student. This form can be provided to the parent by any member of the Student Support Team (counselors, learning specialists, Director of Student Services).

## **SUPPLIES**

Basic supplies and materials are provided by the school. Our school does not use any toxic art supplies in instruction.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts provides technology resources to all of its students. The goal in providing these resources is to equip the students with 21<sup>st</sup> century learning opportunities that build the skills necessary to succeed in the world today and in the future. Students and parents must read, agree, and sign the [AACA Technology Acceptable Use Agreement](#) (Appendix A) before students are able to engage in the use of technology. By utilizing technology within the school, students and parents agree to the expectations articulated in this document. Students will have access to a device in school, but it will not be sent home unless otherwise specified.

Proper behavior, as it relates to the use of computers and other electronic devices, is no different than proper behavior in all other aspects of school life. All users are expected to use the computers, computer networks, and other technology in a responsible, ethical, and polite manner. Failure to do so may result in the loss of technology privileges, as well as other behavioral consequences detailed in the previous section.

**Cell Phones** - Students are not permitted to use cell phones, smart phones, smart watches or other electronic communication devices during the hours that school is in session (7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), or when in the school building or on school campus, without proper consent from school administration (principal or assistant principal) or staff. In 5th through 8th grade students will turn in their cell phones and any other technology devices to their homeroom teacher in a designated area of the classroom upon arrival in their homeroom. If a student is found using a cell phone or other electronic communication device without consent, it will be confiscated and will have to be picked up by the student from the principal or assistant principal at the end of the day. If this becomes a recurring problem, the student and parent must meet with administration and the teacher.

**Investigative Cooperation on a Student's Personal Account** - Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts will never require students to provide a username or password to their personal/private account and social media accounts. However, should there be sufficient evidence that a student's personal social networking account violates the school's disciplinary policy, and it is brought to the attention of a trusted adult as stated in our technology acceptable use policy, AACA may require the student to share content in an investigation. Sufficient evidence is defined as physical evidence such as screenshots or multiple verbal similar accounts of the situation.

Investigation Procedure:

1. An accusation is presented by a student or an adult to the administration.

2. The administration determines if the accusation violates the disciplinary policy.
3. Parents(s)/Student(s) are contacted.
4. Internal Audit, conducted by the IT team, of the in-school network, devices, etc. The IT team and administration will conduct the investigation.
5. If necessary/warranted, the student will be asked to share content from their private social media.
6. Any consequences will be determined by the administration. In the case of cyberbullying, please see the bullying policy.

### **CYBERBULLYING**

Neither the technology of Alphonsus Academy nor the broader Internet (whether accessed at school or away from school, either during the school day or outside of school hours) should be used for the purposes of harassment. All forms of harassment in cyberspace, often called cyberbullying, are unacceptable.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs) which has the effect of:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of AACA, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline. Administrative response will follow the steps outlined in our bullying policy.

The term “bullying” and “cyberbullying” shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student’s right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

### **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP**

All Archdiocese of Chicago elementary schools are encouraged to have certification in digital citizenship education. Within our curricula, AACA teaches applicable lessons to all K-8 students.



## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

**Entering** - School-based assessments or recommendations from other schools, such as IEP's or non-standard assessments, are not valid at AACA. Those recommendations are not based upon AACA's program of study. Accordingly, transfer students may be required to provide new or supplemental testing.

AACA will request certified copies of transfer students records within 14 days of the students enrolling in AACA.

AACA, in both admissions and access to programs, considers students on the basis of individual merit and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or other factors irrelevant to participation in the programs of the School.

**Exiting** - Parents planning to transfer students to another school are asked to notify AACA in advance so that records, reports, and accounts may be processed. A transfer slip is then issued to the parent on the day the student leaves AACA. In order for records to be sent directly to the student's new school, a written authorization for release of records must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the student. The Buckley Amendment grants non-custodial parents the right of access to student records. AACA will send unofficial records to students transferring within ten days of the request. AACA reserves the right to refuse to send official records due to unpaid tuition or fees.

## **UNIFORM**

	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls (K-3rd Grade)</b>	<b>Girls (4th-8th Grade)</b>
<b>Uniform</b>	<p>-A khaki-colored twill or corduroy trouser (no leg or "cargo style" pockets, no jeans) or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1<sup>st</sup> and after March 31) and a white or navy knit polo uniform shirt (short or long sleeve). Shirts are to be worn tucked in at the waist. Length of shorts should be no more than 3 inches from the knee.</p> <p>-A navy blue, red, or white pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater may be worn.</p> <p>-white, black, or navy socks</p>	<p>-Red/white/blue "V" top jumper or a drop waist jumper. Length of jumper should be no more than 3 inches above the knee.</p> <p>-Plain white or blue, collared shirt (short or long sleeve polo or round-collared blouse).</p> <p>- Khaki-colored twill long pants or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1<sup>st</sup> and after March 31). No khaki skirts or capris are allowed. Shorts must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.</p>	<p>-Red/white/blue uniform skirt. Length of the skirt should be no more than 3 inches above the knee.</p> <p>-Plain white or blue, collared shirt (short or long sleeve polo or round-collared blouse). Shirt must be tucked into the skirt.</p> <p>- Khaki-colored twill long pants or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1<sup>st</sup> and after March 31). No khaki skirts or capris are allowed. Shorts must be no more than three inches above the knee.</p>

		-A navy blue, white, or red pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater if desired. No black sweaters or pullovers.  -Plain white, navy blue tights or leggings in navy. Girls should not wear sweatpants or jeans under uniform jumpers or skirts at any time.  -Shoes must have a back and no heel over one inch (no clogs or flip-flops).  -white, black, or navy socks  <b>*3rd Grade girls can wear jumpers or skirts.</b>	-A plain navy blue, white, or red pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater if desired. No black sweaters or pullovers.  -Plain white, navy blue tights or leggings in navy. Girls should not wear sweatpants or jeans under uniform jumpers or skirts at any time.  -Shoes must have a back and no heel over one inch (no clogs or flip-flops).  -white, black, or navy socks
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AACA does not prohibit hairstyles that are historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists.

### **VIOLENCE AGAINST SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Written complaints of battery committed against school personnel will be immediately reported to local law enforcement officials by the administrator. The administrator shall also notify the IL State Police within three (3) days of each incident through the School Incident Report System (SIRS).

### **VOLUNTEERING AT AACA**

Volunteers are vital to the success of many of the programs at AACA. Individuals volunteering in a classroom, athletic program or areas where direct contact with students for three or more hours requires volunteers to comply with policy and procedures for volunteering. Volunteers are required to complete a file, which includes:

- **7703 Archdiocesan Application for Employment or Volunteer Service**; the application must be completed before the time of volunteering; references must be verified;
- Criminal Background Check – **eAppsDB – online application**
- DCFS **CANTS** form (Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System) submitted to principal
- Code of Conduct read, signed and dated
- Safe Environment Training: Virtus/ Protecting God's Children and Youth

Compliance with Archdiocese of Chicago and Office of Catholic Schools requirements for the Protection of God's Children and *Youth* must be completed before service begins.

Please visit the website for more information on volunteer opportunities at [www.alphonsusacademy.org](http://www.alphonsusacademy.org).

Volunteer Requirements: Each family is required to perform 20 hours of service within the parish (school or church) community. Families with student-athletes are required to volunteer an additional 8 hours within the athletics program. A fee of \$25 per hour will be charged for any unserved hours at the end of the year as per the tuition policy.

If you'd like to volunteer, you must complete the following requirements per the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office for the Protection of Children and Youth.

1. CBC: Criminal background check run through Virtus online as part of the Virtus registration process. Rechecked every three years through Virtus. You will be prompted to complete/update this when you log in to your Virtus account.
  - If your volunteer account was suspended, Connie Del Toral will assist you with re-activating and updating your volunteer account ([cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org)).
  - New users, please set up your account at Virtus online, selecting "Chicago" as your Archdiocese and "Alphonsus Academy" as your site.
2. CANTS 689: Yearly check of the central registry of Department of Children and Family Services. Return paper form to [cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org).
3. PGC: Virtus's Protecting God's Children training session. Register and attend within 15 days of beginning volunteering. KPA: Virtus's Keeping the Promise Alive three-year online recertification. You will be prompted to complete/update this when you log in to your Virtus account. *Please note, through the end of August, this training will be available ONLINE. After that it will return to in-person sessions.*
4. MRT: Mandated Reporter Training from State of IL training website.
5. Recertified every three years, including re-signing the Acknowledgment Form (CANTS 22). Return your certificate and form to [cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org).
5. ASB: Archdiocesan Standards of Behavior for Church Personnel Working with Minors and Vulnerable Adults (formerly Code of Conduct). Read and signed and re-acknowledged yearly through Virtus. You will be prompted to complete this when you log in to your Virtus account.

Contact Administrative Assistant, Connie Del Toral, [cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org](mailto:cdeltoral@alphonsusacademy.org) with questions.

#### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTEER COACHES

- Training must be completed within 60 days of beginning work
- Recertification is required every five years

- Coaches must complete IESA Concussion Certification every two years.

Our Athletic Director will provide information to coaches.

**NOTICE:**

This handbook consists of guidelines that provide a framework for the school's day-to-day operation. The administration reserves the right to vary these policies so specific problems are treated on an individual basis. The policies are subject to amendment or discontinuation as the need arises. The school will attempt to keep parents informed of all the changes as soon as is practical.

AACA agrees to comply with any other applicable state or federal law or regulatory requirement in addition to what is present in this handbook.

## Appendix A

# Technology Acceptable Use Agreement Grades 3-8

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Throughout the course of this school year, your child will be utilizing various technology tools to enhance his/her learning experience in the classroom. The following is a technology agreement that covers specific terms of technology use to be followed at all times. Please read this over with your child, then sign and return the last page to your child's teacher.

Gerit McAllister  
Principal

Angela Kladis  
Assistant Principal

Maggie Strome  
Director of Student Services

## Purpose Statement

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This school year, your child will have access to the following technology equipment:

### *Chromebook*

- Access to Google Drive, Docs, Slides and other Google Apps
- Access to the Internet
- Access to interact with faculty/staff
- Access to all classwork at school

The use of these technology tools allows teachers to expand instructional methods and enhance instructional delivery, enrich student performance, and increase student engagement. Internet access is available to all students and teachers, offering a wide variety of educational opportunities. Our school is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and has installed technology protection measures for all computers in the school district, including computers in media centers/specials that block and/or filter content.

Students will be educated throughout the school year on appropriate online behaviors, including how to properly access materials and how to interact with others accordingly.

As a school community, we invite families to consider the role the media plays in your family. Portions of this agreement encourage students to maintain open communication with parents and to begin identifying limits for their own screen time usage. We encourage families to use this document periodically throughout the year to reinforce expectations in your own homes. As a school, we recognize that our young students will make mistakes and we encourage students

to be honest and open about these stumbles. We hope that your family will see the missteps our youngsters may make as opportunities, not disappointments.

## Student Technology Agreement Terms

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*As a student at Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts, I promise to use technology tools correctly and responsibly. I agree to follow these rules:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, will:

... take care.

I will use all technology tools in a responsible and careful manner.

I will leave the computer at school unless I have been given permission by a teacher and/or technology department.

... be honest

I will use technology tools and the Internet at school for teacher approved schoolwork only.

I promise to obey the copyright laws and not take credit for someone else's work.

... stay safe.

I will not give out personal information about me or others on the Internet.

I will only share my passwords with my teacher, or parents; I will not use another student's password to access his/her account for any reason.

I will not download, view, send, or display inappropriate pictures or messages.

I will tell an adult if I see or read something that is inappropriate, dangerous, or makes me feel uncomfortable.

... think first.

I will use technology tools to interact with others appropriately.

I will not use technology tools to tease, harass, frighten, or bully anyone; I will be an upstander and report any inappropriate incidents to a trusted adult

I will make sure that what I share is something I don't mind showing my parents.

I understand that everything I do online can be traced back to me and can never be fully erased.

## Consequences

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Should a student be found to have violated these terms or to have utilized technology improperly in any way, consequences may be applied. As with our typical discipline procedures, all

infractions will be handled individually and the application of consequences will be determined by the teacher and/or school principal. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- conversations with teacher/administration
- conferences with parents
- loss of computer privileges
- reimbursement to the school for materials lost/damaged

**Students:** I have read this agreement and understand all of the school rules and consequences related to using computers and Internet at Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts. I also understand that my family has expectations for using technology at home. I will do my best to be a good digital citizen. I understand that my work on the computer is not private and that use of the computer and Internet at Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts is a privilege, not a right.

**Student Name (Print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:** I have read and discussed this Technology Acceptable Use Agreement with my child. I give permission for my child to use technology tools at Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts, and I understand that it is a privilege for my child to utilize them. I agree that my child will do his/her best to follow the rules and will abide by the consequences if any rules are broken. I will do my best to help my child become a good digital citizen.

**Parent/Guardian Name (Print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## **Inclement Weather Policies**

Our goal is to have students in school every day possible. When making any inclement weather decisions, we prioritize the safety of students/families and faculty, especially knowing that some members of our community live far from campus, rely on public transportation, and/or have unique needs that require our consideration. In an effort to be as transparent as possible, we wanted to share our process and protocols for when there is forecasted inclement weather.

Each winter poses issues given changes in weather, freezing temperatures, and the limitations of an older school building.

When inclement weather strikes (heavy snowfall, extreme cold/ice), school administrators will observe the following procedures to determine changes to the school calendar including closures, early departures, or late arrivals:

1. Consult a variety of forecasts to determine likelihood of inclement weather.
2. Collaborate with other schools within our Archdiocesan Vicariate 2A including St. Clement, St. Benedict, St. Andrew, St. Josaphat, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Immaculate Conception-St. Joseph, Old St. Mary's, and others in our vicinity. While each school operates independently according to its own specific needs (some schools have bussing, others have more commuters, etc.), we discuss best practices and strategies.
3. Seek input from parish leadership.
4. Visit campus to verify safety and temperature check classrooms.
5. Consider decisions made by Chicago Public Schools and other private schools in the city, including high schools.
6. Communicate with families using emergency communication methods including email, text messages, and social media.

Should it be deemed safe to have school:

1. Tardies will not be counted for the first hour of school.
2. Students may come in a modified dress code, including out of uniform items, to ensure the warmth and comfort of our students.
3. There will be modified arrival and dismissal procedures to ensure the safety and warmth of our teachers and students.
4. All students will have indoor recess.



As a reminder, our temperature threshold for outdoor recess is 20 degrees Fahrenheit (without wind chill). However, we may err slightly above or below that temperature depending on other weather circumstances. The decision to have outdoor recess will be made each morning based upon current conditions. If the temperature is 50 degrees or below, students must have a coat on to go outside. Sweaters/sweatshirts alone will not be permitted. Students **must** wear coats, gloves/mittens, and hats during the winter season.

Should it be deemed unsafe to have school:

1. Students are not expected to complete virtual learning unless specifically specified in the school closure communication.
2. Please anticipate that the following school day will be in session and operating under normal procedures unless otherwise communicated by school administration.

*Last updated Thursday, January 18, 2024*