

AACA

ALPHONSUS ACADEMY
& Center for the Arts

Parent and Student Handbook

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

Revised Aug. 2018

School

1439 W. Wellington Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60657
Phone: (773) 348-4629
Fax: (773) 348-4829
www.alphonsusacademy.org

Parish Office and Rectory

1429 W. Wellington Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60657
Phone: (773) 525-0709
Fax: (773) 525-3238
www.stalphonsuschgo.org

**Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts
2018 - 2019 Faculty and Staff**

Principal	Dr. Casimer Badynee
Assistant Principal	Tom Newman
Chief Advancement Officer	Mandy Moody
Director of Admissions	Mary Bodlak
Director of Preschool/ 3 Day AM (3 y.o.)	Beth Jele
Director of Arts Integration	Rebecca Manuel
Directory of Technology	Bill Mierisch
School Secretary	Kim Wallett
Administrative Assistant	Connie Del Toral
Advancement Manager	Caroline Jordan
Advancement Coordinator	Shari Guenther
School Counselor	Debra Larrea
School Counselor	Matt Gunsaulus
Learning Specialist	Maggie Strome
Learning Specialist	Jennifer Hayes
Learning Specialist	Whitney Anderson
Learning Specialist	Lori Deighan
High School Specialist	Cathy Brennan
8th Grade HR / MS Social Studies	Ellen Dohan
8th Grade HR / MS Mathematics	Katie Key
7th Grade HR / MS Science	Susan Merten
7th Grade HR / MS Language Arts	Michelle Demavivas
Sixth Grade	Audie Smith
Sixth Grade	Alison Arzeni
Fifth Grade	Ella Lozon
Fifth Grade	Emily Sikorski
Fourth Grade	David Kunkle
Fourth Grade	Caitlin Sperry
Third Grade	Alisa Carroll
Third Grade	Courtney Cirone
Second Grade	Jacque Burgoon
Second Grade	Susan Sedej
First Grade	Alison Marsh
First Grade	Mary Kate Rees
Kindergarten	Monica Rothbard
Kindergarten	Madeleine Simonds
Kindergarten	Erika Wenson
PreK 5 Day Full	Meghan Kopfer
PreK 5 Day Full	Marty Glass
PreK 5 Day Full	Connie Huang
PreK 5 Day AM / 4 Day PM	Renee Thomas / Madelyn Burke
Physical Education / Health	Angela Kladis
Physical Education / Health	Zachary Richter
Music/Band	Laura Gallinari
Art	Esther Pomranky
Drama	Amanda Thompson
Second Grade – Assistant	Michelle Elliott
Second Grade – Assistant	Amanda Joseph
First Grade – Assistant	Heather Kinsella
First Grade – Assistant	Erin O’Gorman
Kindergarten – Assistant	Monika Hesse

Kindergarten – Assistant
Kindergarten – Assistant
PreK – Assistant
PreK – Assistant
PreK – Assistant
PreK – Assistant
Parents & Tots/ PreK – Assistant
Art – Assistant / Playworks Coach
Media & Literacy Specialist
Digital Arts
Technology Support Specialist
Nurse
Recess Supervisor
Lunch

Susan Moran
Rebecca Gielarowski
Fran Fontanetta
Nicole Smith
Carla Nard
Olivia Tado
Shari Williams
Val Grondy
Sami Dubiel
Luke Sequeira
Jesus Dominguez
Kristin Lewicki - Maxim Healthcare
Paul Grondy
Ilda Benitez/Lupe Benitez

St. Alphonsus Parish Staff

Pastor
Pastoral Associate
Chief Advancement Officer
Business Manager
Director of Religious Education
Parish Secretary
Organist/Director of Music
Sacristan
Head Maintenance
Maintenance

Rev. Michael O'Connell
Brooks Robinson
Mandy Moody
Dorothy Spencer
Erica Cook
Nora Ramirez
Brian Bloye
Rose Gavin
Perry Castrovillari
Matt Vuckovich
Bill Wallett

A PARENTS' PRAYER

O Heavenly Father, make me a better parent. Help me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to understand all their questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting them, talking back to them and contradicting them. Make me as courteous to them as I would have them be to me. Give me the courage to confess my sins against my children and ask them forgiveness, when I know that I have done wrong.

May I not vainly hurt the feelings of my children. Forbid that I should laugh at their mistakes, or resort to shame and ridicule as punishment. Let me not tempt a child to lie and steal. So guide my hour by hour that I may demonstrate by all I say and do that honesty produces happiness.

Reduce, I pray, the meanness in me. May I cease to nag, and when I am out of sorts, help me, O Lord, to hold my tongue. Blind me to the little efforts of my children and help me to see the good things that they do. Give me a ready word for honest praise.

Help me to treat my children, as those of their own age, but let me not exact of them the judgments and conventions of adults. Allow me not to rob them of the opportunity to wait upon them, to think, to choose and to make their own decisions.

Forbid that I should even punish them for my selfish satisfaction. May I grant them all their wishes that are reasonable and have the courage always to withhold a privilege that I know will do them harm.

Make me so fair and just, so considerate and companionable to my children that they will have genuine esteem for me. Fit me to be loved and imitated by my children. O God, give me calm, poise and self-control. Amen!

AACA SCHOOL 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.

The Foundation areas:

- Highly Qualified Educators
- Social/Emotional Learning
- High School Readiness
- Technology Integration
- Financial Stability
- Campus Facilities

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. **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.
2. **PRIORITY LISTING FOR ACCEPTANCE:** The following represents priority for acceptance into AACCA: Children of families currently enrolled in AACCA are accepted provided the registration deadlines are met. (After siblings, priority is given to Parishioners, Other Catholics and Non-Catholics.)
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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 provide, and/or (c) a student exhibits behavior requiring serious disciplinary measures.
6. **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.
7. **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.

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.

Parents who object for medical reasons must provide a doctor's statement that the immunization is contraindicated.

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

ATTENDANCE

1. Daily attendance and punctuality is required during the entire regular school term.
2. A call to school from the parent by 8:30 A.M. is required if a student is absent. In this way, the school can assist with student safety.
3. Students returning to school after an absence need to bring a signed written note from the parent.
4. If possible, doctors' appointments should be made after school hours.
5. Students are allowed 2 excused absences to shadow at high schools in their 8th grade year.

BACKPACKS

Students should bring to school only what is necessary. Backpacks may be used to transfer books and supplies between home and school, but may not be worn about in the school during the school day or between classes, with the exception of middle school students who are moving from class to class with large amounts of materials.

BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

For details of the updated bullying policy, please refer to *Appendix 1* found at the end of this document.

BOOK RENTAL

Part of the registration fee covers the rental of all hardbound books. In an effort to defray the high cost of parents purchasing hardbound textbooks, AACA purchases the books and makes them available to students on a rental basis. These textbooks, therefore, remain the property of AACA. Lost or damaged textbooks are the responsibility of the individual student. Fees will be assessed before the end of the school year for any lost or damaged books.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM SCHOOL

In order to keep parents well informed about school activities, it is recommended that parents become familiar with the Parent and Student Handbook and the school calendar. In addition, reading weekly online teacher and school-wide newsletters, and attending school board meetings are helpful ways to remain informed and involved in current issues.

Weekly newsletters and other important information will be sent home via email from your child's teacher. Parents are asked to read these materials regularly. Additional notes and reminders are sent home when necessary, both from classroom teachers and from administrators. All forms are kept on our school website or teacher classroom websites as a source of current information, as well as to provide accessibility to all parents.

Basic Understanding for Effective Communication

1. Speak positively about a teacher in front of a student. It is detrimental to your child's learning to hear a parent or other adult talk negatively about a teacher. Remember that the relationship that facilitates learning is the one between student and teacher.
2. If you are angry, wait until you can see the situation objectively before initiating communication. Effective communication takes place when both parties can talk and listen.
3. It is not appropriate to call a teacher or administrator at his or her home unless they have specifically given you their home phone number.

Other Communication Guidelines

Our Parent Code of Conduct is summarized below. All parents are expected to sign and return this at the start of each school year.

The following are the proper lines of communication when expressing concerns regarding school matters:

1. Your child's teacher is the primary person a parent should speak to regarding your child's progress. Teachers can be contacted via email or phone and will return a communication within 24 hours.

2. Our learning specialists and counselor are available to meet with parents regarding behavioral or academic concerns. They, too, can be reached via email or phone.
3. For concerns that cannot be addressed by the classroom teacher or one of our support staff, you may contact the assistant principal or principal.
4. School Advisory Board members can also be approached regarding questions or policies needing clarification. School Advisory Board members can address budget, fundraising and general tuition questions.
5. All discipline concerns should be addressed with the Assistant Principal or Principal.

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The pastor of St. Alphonsus parish is responsible for ensuring that the school and personnel comply with the discrimination policy as described below. The school complies with applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including, but not limited to:

- The *Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967* (29 USC 621 et seq.)
- Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* (42 USC 2000e et seq.)
- Applicable sections of the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5]
- Relevant case law including *Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202, 102 S.Ct. 2382 (1982)
- 23 ILL. Admin. Code Part 425

DRESS CODE

1. The dress code for girls in Grades K - 4 consists of:

- A red/white/blue "V" top jumper or a drop waist jumper and a plain white or blue, collared, neatly pressed uniform shirt (short or long sleeve polo or round-collared blouse).
- *For 4th grade girls only*, the uniform red/white/blue skirt may be worn as an option to the jumper. Skirts should be worn with a plain white, collared, neatly pressed blue or white uniform shirt (short or long sleeve polo or round-collared blouse). Blouses are to be worn tucked in at the waist at all times during school hours.
- Khaki-colored twill long pants or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1st and after March 31). No khaki skirts or capris are allowed.
- A black, brown or uniform plaid belt (when wearing pants or shorts)
- A navy blue pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater
- Plain white, navy blue or black tights or capri-length leggings in navy or black (may be worn from November 1 to March 31). Girls should not wear sweatpants or jeans under uniform jumpers or skirts at any time.
- White or navy blue socks (bobbie or knee) may be worn with navy blue, dark brown or black shoes. Socks that only reach the edge of the shoe are not allowed (i.e. tennis socks) with the plaid skirts.
- Shoes (no boots) must be dress/casual shoes with heels no higher than 2 inches and with a heel and sole that do not leave scuff marks on the floor. Shoes must have a back (no clogs or flip-flops).
- Gym shoes may also be worn with the dress uniform.

2. The dress code for girls in Grades 5 to 8 consists of:

- The uniform red/white/blue skirt and a plain white, collared, neatly pressed blue or white uniform shirt (short or long sleeve polo or round-collared blouse). Blouses are to be worn tucked in at the waist at all times during school hours.
- Khaki-colored twill long pants or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1st and after March 31). No khaki skirts or capris are allowed.
- A black, brown or uniform plaid belt (when wearing pants or shorts)
- A navy blue pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater

- Plain white, navy blue or black tights or capri-length leggings in navy or black (may be worn from November 1 to March 31). Girls should not wear sweatpants or jeans under uniform jumpers or skirts at any time.
- White or navy blue socks (bobbie or knee) may be worn with navy blue, dark brown or black shoes. Socks that only reach the edge of the shoe are not allowed (i.e. tennis socks) with the plaid skirts.
- Shoes (no boots) must be dress/casual shoes with heels no higher than 2 inches and with a heel and sole that do not leave scuff marks on the floor. Shoes must have a back (no clogs or flip-flops).
- A navy blue pullover vest, sweater, or cardigan sweater
- Gym shoes may also be worn with the dress uniform.

3. **The dress code for boys for Grades K – 8 consists of:**

- A khaki-colored twill or corduroy trouser (no leg or “cargo style” pockets, no jeans) or khaki-colored shorts (shorts worn until November 1st 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 at all times during school hours in such a way that the belt can be seen.
- A black, brown or uniform plaid belt (when wearing pants or shorts)
- A navy blue pullover vest or sweater or cardigan sweater
- Navy blue, black, or white socks may be worn with navy blue, dark brown, or black dress/casual shoes.
- Gym shoes may also be worn with the dress uniform.

NOTE: For both boys and girls, clothes must fit appropriately, being neither too tight nor too large and loose.

4. **GYM UNIFORMS for both boys and girls consist of:**

- Any color gym shoes (Light-up shoes are NOT allowed)
- White, black, or navy socks without stripes (no other colors).
- AACA gym shirt and gym shorts or navy sweat pants are required for all students in Grades K - 8. Girls may not wear leggings or “yoga pants” in place of sweat pants.
- AACA or plain navy sweatshirt or fleece.
- Students without proper gym attire will not be able to participate in gym class.

5. **Boy’s hair must be no longer than the bottom of their shirt collar and must be cut or fixed so that the face is clear of all hair.**

- Parents of male students not in compliance with this requirement will receive a phone call from the Administration explaining that the child must have a haircut before returning to school.
- Bangs should not be long enough to cover the eyes.
- Mohawk cuts are not permitted.
- Hair color is to be natural, or natural looking.

6. Students are not permitted to wear heavy make-up.

7. Girls may wear small stud-type earrings or small charms on a necklace.

8. Any make-up or jewelry that is distracting to others will need to be removed.

9. Girl’s headbands should be limited to uniform-patterned/colors; scarves are not allowed.

10. Girls may wear single pastel color nail polish. No patterns, flowers or decorative art is permitted.

11. Hats are not to be worn by any student during school hours.

12. Bracelets or wristbands may be worn, but must be limited to only one on each wrist. "Silly Bands" are not permitted to be worn during school hours.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

It is rare for the school to close. However, 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 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 Emergency Closing Center website (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 to and leave 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.

During the school day, all school doors are locked. Visitors must ring the doorbell to be buzzed in at either the front or back doors. All visitors must go directly to the main office before conducting any business in the building.

MORNING ARRIVAL

Students may enter the building at 7:45 a.m. Students who arrive earlier than this time must wait outside the school or report directly to our Before School program (enter Lower Level via parking lot doors). Parents will be charged for the use of the program on that day. If students arrive after 8:00 a.m., an adult must accompany the child to the Main Office to sign in.

Please note that for the safety of all students, pets and animals are not allowed on the school campus during morning arrival or afternoon dismissal.

Ample street parking is available in the vicinity of our campus and many families live close enough to walk to campus. We encourage families to use these options. For families who must use our parking lots or Kiss 'n Go lane, please read specific policies below. Children should never be left unattended in a car. This is a safety issue and is mandated by state law.

Oakdale Parking Lot Policy

Please note, the driveway in between the school and rectory is closed during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. To drop off students using the Oakdale parking lot, parents must park in a legal space. Parents may not drop students off until the car is legally parked. Parents may not pull up to the school doors to drop off students.

Students should be directed to use the sidewalks along the perimeter of the Oakdale parking lot to enter the school.

Faculty will be on duty at the rectory driveway entrance to sign in kindergarten students.

Wellington Avenue Policy

To drop off students using the Wellington Avenue parking spaces, parents must park in a legal space. Parents may not drop students off until the car is legally parked.

Students should be directed to use the sidewalk along Wellington Avenue to enter the school.

Please note it is illegal to park on Wellington Avenue during the school day. Parents should not leave their cars in these spaces as the city will ticket vehicles left on the street.

Greenview Avenue (Kiss 'n Go) Policy

Please note, Kiss 'n Go is only offered during morning arrival. To drop off students using our Kiss 'n Go lane, parents must drive northbound on Greenview Avenue between the 7:45 - 8:00 a.m., and stop along the curbside adjacent to school. Parents should not park on the west side of Greenview while traveling southbound to exit their child(ren) from the car. This creates a safety hazard due to the narrow street.

Parents are to remain in their car *at all times*. Students should be ready to exit the car as soon as the driver pulls up to the AACA faculty member at the curbside. Faculty will help the student exit the car. Students in first through eighth grade may leave the car as soon as a faculty opens the car door. Faculty will escort younger students up to the school door. For safety, students should only leave the car using the curbside doors.

All students who are dropped off at Kiss 'n Go must enter the school through the Greenview doors. Students will be met by an AACA faculty member at the Greenview door who will either escort or send students directly to their classroom.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Our teachers' highest priority during dismissal time is to ensure all students safely connect with the adult(s) who will to pick them up. As such, teachers will not be available to converse until all students have been picked up. Teachers may have responsibilities after school and may only be available to converse after dismissal if previous arrangements have been made. Please request a conference time via email should you need to meet with a teacher to discuss any matters.

Please also note these key elements of our dismissal policy:

In order to maximize instructional time and maintain an orderly school environment and safe dismissal, no student may be checked out of the office between 2:45 and 3:00 p.m. unless it is an emergency.

Parents are not to enter the school building for student dismissal after 2:45 p.m. All students will exit the school building for dismissal.

It is of utmost importance that you do not pick up your child without physically connecting with your child's teacher.

If there is a change to a child's dismissal routine, parents must communicate the change in writing via email to the child's teacher and Kim Wallett (kwallett@aaca.school).

If you do not receive a direct reply to your email before two hours prior to your child's dismissal time, you must call the main office at 773-348-4629 to ensure the request has been received.

Teachers will not dismiss any child to any adult or group unless the child's parent/guardian has provided advanced, written permission. All adults must be prepared to show photo identification if requested by an AACA faculty member at dismissal.

All students must dismiss with their class. Students will not be dismissed to siblings' classrooms nor will a sibling be allowed to pick up students from other classrooms, as this unsafely increases the child-to-teacher ratio.

Students who are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays and by 1:55 p.m. on Wednesdays will be escorted to the After Care Program. Parents will be charged for the use of the program on that day.

To view dismissal times and locations by grade, please see the chart listed below.

Dismissal Times and Locations by Grade

Grade	Time	Wednesday Time	Location
Preschool	2:50 p.m.	1:35 p.m.	Greenview Avenue & Wellington Avenue
Kindergarten	2:55 p.m.	1:40 p.m.	Rectory Driveway
1st Grade	2:55 p.m.	1:40 p.m.	Sports Court
2nd Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Sports Court
3rd Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Sports Court
4th Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Wellington Avenue
5th Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Wellington Avenue
6th Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Wellington Avenue
7th Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Wellington Avenue
8th Grade	3:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.	Wellington Avenue

Preschool and Kindergarten Dismissal Procedure

To pick up your child from preschool or kindergarten:

- arrive to appropriate door according to the chart above
- sign out child with teacher; child cannot leave prior to being signed out

First - Third Grade Dismissal Procedure

Please note, for children in first grade, dismissal is at 2:55 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Dismissal is at 1:40 p.m. on Wednesday. Second and third grade students dismiss at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and at 1:45 p.m. on Wednesday.

To pick up your child from first, second or third grade:

- Wait outside the sport court fence in the Oakdale parking lot until your child identifies you with their teacher
- Remind your child to always say goodbye or high-5 their teacher prior to leaving
- If you enter the sport court from any direction, do not take your child until your child's teacher has said goodbye or given a high-5. **This is critical to ensuring the safety of all children as the teacher must know who has picked up each student.**

Fourth - Eighth Grade Dismissal Procedure

Please note, if you wish to have your fourth - eighth grade student meet you in any location other than the designated Wellington Avenue dismissal area, you must communicate this in writing to your child's teacher.

To pick up your child from fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth grade:

- arrive at Wellington Avenue school entrance
- teachers will be on site to monitor student dismissal; however, parents should determine a pick up location in front of the Wellington Avenue entrance with their child(ren)

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

1. STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TEST (*ACT Aspire*) is given to students in grades 3 through 7 annually in the spring throughout their elementary school education. This is coordinated by the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education. These tests measure language, mathematics, science, and social studies skills.
2. 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. AACCA report cards are standards-based and reflect progress students are making toward mastery of grade level state and national standards.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be offered a minimum of two times a year and are a valuable teaching tool when related to the class curriculum. A parent or guardian must sign and return a field trip permission slip requesting AACCA to take a student on a field trip; no student may go on a field trip without the written permission of the parent or guardian.

FIREARMS AND DRUGS

In the event of knowledge of a firearm or drugs, the principal will:

- Immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of firearm incidents at the school;
- Immediately notify the parents or guardians of students in possession of firearms on school grounds, which include the real property comprising any school, on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school, or in any conveyance owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or a school related activity within 48 hours of becoming aware of the incident; and
- Notify the municipal police department or the office of the county sheriff of verified incidents involving drugs occurring in a school, on the real property comprising any school, on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school, or in any conveyance owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or a school related activity within 48 hours of becoming aware of the incident; and
- Notify the IL State Police of such incidents through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

GUARDIANSHIP

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

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS – STATE OF ILLINOIS & SCHOOL

All children shall 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 principal shall exclude the child 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 enrolling for the first time in any public, private or parochial schools;
- Prior to enrolling in kindergarten in in any public, private or parochial schools;
- 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;
- Upon entering sixth and ninth grades.

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

- Prior to enrolling in pre-school: (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.

SICK CHILD POLICY

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

- A fever of 100° 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. We will not exclude for nits/eggs in hair but student does need to check in with nurse's office each day until clear of lice.

The school must be notified when your child is out sick. Please call the attendance line to leave a message (773-348-4629).

*Notify the nurse **IMMEDIATELY** if your child has any contagious diseases such as 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.*

YOUR CHILD CANNOT RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL HE/SHE:

- Has a normal temperature without medication for 24 hours
- Does not experience vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours
- Is on antibiotics for 24 hours and temperature has returned to normal for strep throat
- Is on antibiotics for 24 hours for pink eye or impetigo
- Has a note from his/her doctor stating that your child's rash is not contagious
- Has cleared his/her nasal discharge or doctor sends a note to school stating that your child can return to school and is not contagious
- Cough does not interfere with school functioning and your child is able to cover their mouth and nose when coughing

ADDITIONAL NOTES

A school Medication Authorization Form, completed by both the physician and the parent, is necessary for prescribed or over-the-counter medication to be given during school hours. Medication given during school hours should be limited to what is absolutely essential for a child to remain in school. **All health forms are available in the Nurse's office or on the website if needed.**

Your child can be excused from PE class for two days with a parent note. To be excused for a longer period of time, a note from your doctor is required. If a child is being excused from PE due to injury or illness, they may not actively participate in recess during this time.

HOMEWORK

Homework is viewed as practice and reinforcement of the curriculum. Homework will be given in 1st – 8th grades as needed. Homework Club is for students in need of a quiet place to complete work after school. Homework Club for grades 4 – 8 is available Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00pm – 4:00pm. Homework Club for grades 2 – 3 may be offered later in the school year. Parent permission for Homework Club attendance is reserved and paid for at the start of the school year.

ILLNESS OR INJURY AT SCHOOL

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.

The school must be notified of any changes of phone numbers, addresses, or persons authorized to supervise the student in the absence of parents.

Parents may excuse students from gym class or outdoor recess for two consecutive days. After that time, a doctor's note is needed.

MEDICATION

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.

MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOL

For details of the updated mental health protocol, please refer to *Appendix 2* found at the end of this document.

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 (within 24 hours) if the necessary phone number is left.

Regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first quarter and third quarter. Teachers set up their appointment schedules. If parents are not able to attend at the scheduled time, they are asked to call the teacher to arrange another appointment.

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.

PARKING PERMITS

AACA shares parking with St. Alphonsus Parish. The parking lot has a Pay & Display program. All school families will be issued 2 parking permits to affix to the left side of the rear window of their vehicles. Parents should pick up their parking permits in the front office of the school. These parking permits will allow use of the parking lot, at no charge, when attending day and evening events at both the school and parish.

PEANUT-/TREE NUT-FREE SCHOOL

Due to the prevalence of numerous allergies, the goal at AACA 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, and also were NOT PRODUCED in facilities that process nuts. Please check ingredients lists carefully and look on the label for phrases like these:

- "may contain nuts"
- "produced or shared on equipment with nuts or peanuts"
- "produced in a facility that also processes or 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. Weekly worship with the community on Saturday or Sunday evening is part of the curriculum for every Catholic student.

Formal prayers such as the "Our Father", "Hail Mary", "Act of Contrition, and "Glory Be to the Father" should be among the prayers that students know. In addition to these, students have opportunities for informal and spontaneous prayer.

Each morning at 8:00 a.m., a member of the Student Council will read a prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and brief announcements. At the conclusion of each school day, students may engage in a prayer in their classrooms.

PROBLEM - SOLVING PROCEDURES

Step 1. For Grades 3 – 8; The student should discuss the problem with the teacher, preferably one-on-one. Grades PreK – 2; The student should be encouraged to approach the teacher. If the student wants parental help, focus on allowing the student to do as much of the talking and problem-solving as possible. Ask for correct information first and let the student lead the problem-solving process.

Step 2. If the problem goes unsolved, the parent should send the teacher a note explaining the problem. The teacher should respond in writing or by telephone within 24 hours.

Step 3. If the problem persists, schedule an appointment with the teacher. It is important to include the student. Remember that the relationship that facilitates learning is the one between the student and the teacher.

Step 4. If the problem persists, schedule an appointment with the teacher and an administrator. Including the child at this level may or may not be in the child's best interest.

AACA abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, AACA will provide the non-custodial parent access to academic records and other school-related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that there is no information to be given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

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.

- Follow the signals and commands of recess supervisors
- Walk and run safely
- Stay within boundaries
- Play each activity in the specified zone (*see Appendix B for Playground Map of zones*)
- Help other students
- Line up when you hear the whistle/signal to end recess

RECESS – OUTDOOR WEATHER WATCH/CONDITIONS

The benefits of outdoor play every day for all children are important to support successful learning. When the weather turns cold or inclement, the decision to hold recess outside is made carefully, with several factors considered. School administration uses guidelines from established meteorological sources (such as the National Weather Service), as well as previous experience, in determining when to allow students to play outside.

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. When the temperature is near the threshold and recess is held outside, students may be given the option to play inside if additional supervision is available.

Winter Recess Rules

- Follow all signals and commands of recess supervisors

- Students must be appropriately dressed for the weather and conditions – hats, gloves/mittens, boots, winter jackets, snow pants (age-appropriate) are required
- Keep snow/ice on the ground; however, you may build snow structures
- Stay off the ice unless permission is given

The safety of students is always the primary factor in determining if conditions are adequate for outside recess. The following website is one resource that we use to help inform our decision to take students outside.

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recommended weather watch chart (*developed by Iowa Dept. Public Health*): http://www.isbe.net/pdf/school_health/wind-heat-chart.pdf

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.

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. 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.

SCHEDULE

The usual daily schedule is as follows:

7:45 a.m.	School doors open, students may enter the building and classrooms
7:55	Bell rings; all students should be in their classroom
8:00	Tardy bell rings
11:00-11:40	Grades K-1 Recess/Lunch
11:40-12:20	Grades 5-8 Recess/Lunch

12:20-1:00 Grades 2-4 Recess/Lunch
3:00 p.m. Dismissal bell rings; teachers take students out of building.
*Wednesday dismissal is 1:45pm

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The AACA School Board is comprised of a body of parish and school representatives, up to twelve in number, who, with the pastor and principal, serve as the policy-making body for the school. 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. AACA will assist local government authorities by reporting possession of illegal substances and/or objects.

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 and healthful 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 by lower grade students 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

Sexual harassment by one employee of another, by an employee of a student, by a student of an employee, or by one student of another is unacceptable conduct. Employees or students who engage in any type of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include suspension and/or dismissal.

Retaliation in any form against an employee or student who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited and will itself be cause for appropriate disciplinary action. Any employee or student who knowingly makes false charges against an employee or a student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse, or embarrass that individual will be subject to the sanctions for misconduct set forth above.

SNACK FOOD & SPECIAL OCCASION FOOD

DAILY SNACK

AACA is committed, across all grade levels, to teaching students about healthy and nutritious eating habits. Because of this commitment, we request that, in addition to all snack foods brought to school being peanut and tree-nut free, that snacks are also healthy and nutritious.

For K-3 students, please refer to the snack list that has been shared by your child's teacher. We appreciate your attention to this list and adhering to these suggestions for snacks throughout the year.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

We ask that birthday treats be limited to fruit popsicles or 'ice' cups. These treats are greatly enjoyed by all students and avoids possible issues with student allergies. Students are responsible to bring spoons as needed for their treats.

CLASSROOM HOLIDAY PARTIES

Food for classroom parties should follow a similar healthy menu, but special treats, in a limited quantity, 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.

A sample menu for a classroom party is as follows:

- 1 juice or water drink option
- 1 sweet, nut-free treat (popsicle, cupcake, cake, or type of candy)
- 1-2 Cheese and cracker servings
- Unlimited servings of fruit
- Unlimited servings of vegetables
- Hummus or other dip for vegetables

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

As a Catholic educational community, we believe in the discipline that respects the dignity of the individual and promotes Christian values, concern for others, and the acceptance of responsibility for one's actions. As members of the Alphonsus Academy community, students are expected to display a positive attitude towards their education and behave in a manner that enhances the learning process.

Discipline is based on three basic rules: Respect Self, Respect Others, and Respect Property.

We are committed to providing students a high-quality educational experience that provides challenging, well-prepared instructional opportunities in a safe environment for all students. In order to provide this, the following responsibilities are required of the students:

- To contribute to the good of the school and community through acts of service
- To be respectful, honest and courteous to everyone in the community
- To arrive on time for all classes and school activities, appropriately prepared
- To accept responsibility for one's own education by:
 - Putting forth best efforts everyday, seeking help from teachers when needed, participating in class
- To respect school property and the personal property of other students and teachers
- To obey all school and classroom rules regarding safety
- To refrain from profanity or other vulgar language
- To follow the dress code
- To use technology responsibly to enhance learning
- To include other students in activities, both in the lunchroom and on the playground

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.

STUDENTS WITH ACADEMIC CHALLENGES

AACA has Learning Specialists, known as the Student Support Team (SST), who work with teachers to help them support students with learning issues, and the relationship between teaching styles and learning styles. The SST works with teachers to: differentiate their classroom instruction, in an effort to reach all students; provide support for students by observing, informally assessing their needs and designing a support plan to be implemented in school; provide support for parents through collaboration between school and home, discussing plans for helping each student reach their potential. If a student is underachieving, the school may request outside remediation for additional academic support, and/or request for a formal diagnostic evaluation from an outside clinician. For a child who is gifted, AACA will collaborate to identify additional resources that provide enrichment opportunities and experiences.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

If a child appears to be under-stimulated academically, or is underachieving academically, (that is, having difficulty acquiring new grade level skills, or, having difficulty mastering skills necessary to achieve grade level standards of the AACA program of study), classroom teachers will consult with the school's Learning Specialists for further inquiry. The Student Support Team will gather data regarding the student, which may include classroom observations, internal team meetings, interaction with the student, and/or a conference with the parents, before making any recommendations. Thereafter, school representatives will meet with the parents to discuss those recommendations, and to discuss what supportive roles both AACA and Home may provide.

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 Learning Specialist. 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 of 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.

CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

In order for a request for accommodations to be considered, a copy of the student's written formal clinical evaluation, together with test score summary sheets and recommendations, must be submitted to school through the Principal. Assessments must meet a specific standard of clinical criteria. Upon request, AACA may provide names of qualified licensed and certified clinicians. If parents wish to use their own resources, please be certain to inform AACA in advance, so that you are provided with an evaluation protocol (description of testing to be included), to be shared with your evaluator prior to testing, so your evaluator can plan a comprehensive assessment. Clinical assessments submitted without the inclusion of specific testing instruments, that is, specific assessment of cognitive ability (both verbal and non-verbal), processing measures and achievement measures, may result in the necessity for additional specific testing before a request for accommodations can be considered. Assessment for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) must include the appropriate neuro-psychological measures, as well as rating scales. Evaluators' recommendations for accommodations or interventions should include a rationale based upon the diagnosis and the specific data contained within the assessment.

REQUESTS FOR FORMAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A STUDENT WITH A CLINICALLY DIAGNOSED DISABILITY

Requests for accommodations must be based upon a current educational and psychological evaluation (current within three years). Parents must be willing to submit the student's evaluation to School, where it will be kept on file as long as the student is enrolled. All evaluations remain confidential and are maintained

by the Learning Specialist. They are not placed in the student's cumulative record file. Accommodation requests should be made directly to the School Principal. School will review the student's history, current evaluation, current school experience, and conduct a staffing to include the parents, as well as the student's outside clinician if the parents wish to extend that invitation. Information presented at the staffing will provide the basis for consideration of any requests made by the parents. Subsequent to the staffing, School will make a determination regarding reasonable and appropriate accommodations and the administrative and academic team (Principal, Learning Specialist and School Counselor) will plan the implementation of those accommodations as well as any additional classroom strategies that may support the student. The educational plan may also include the school's request for supportive measures to be undertaken by the parents, such as interventions through an outside remediation specialist or other clinician.

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 21st century learning opportunities that build the skills necessary to succeed in the world today and the in the future. Students and parents must read and agree to the *AACA Technology Responsible Use Policy* 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.

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, or other electronic communication devices during the hours that school is in session (8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), without proper consent from school administration (principal or assistant principal).

CYBER BULLYING

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 cyber bullying, are unacceptable.

Cyber bullying 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:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with 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.

The term "bullying" and "cyber bullying" 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, AACAs teach applicable lessons to all K-8 students. Another aspect of this certification is to provide parent outreach. The following links offer resources to families relating to this topic.

- [Common Sense Media](#)
- [Family Media Agreement](#)

TORNADO DRILLS

Two tornado drills are held each year; typically one in the first half of the year and one in the second half of the year.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

ENTERING

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

AACA, in both admissions and access to program, 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 AACAs 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 AACAs. 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.

INTERNAL TRANSFER BETWEEN COURSES

In certain situations, it may be possible for parents to request a change in course selection for a student. Presently, this pertains to the Music/Arts electives for 4-8th grade students – Choir, Band, Digital Arts. Parents must request a course change in writing to the principal, stating their reasons for the request. Any such requests will be taken into consideration based upon the capacity in each individual class, student need, and when a request was received. The administration will manage class rosters to maintain a positive learning environment for all students and teachers.

The school cannot guarantee that a request for transfer will be approved. For requests not (immediately) approved, the student will be placed on a 'wait list' until such time as space becomes available in the desired course. During this time the student will remain in their current course. The administration will inform the parents of this situation in written response.

Due to the nature of the Digital Arts course, in particular, there is a reasonable limit to enrollment based upon classroom materials as well as the format and design of instruction. Placing more students in this course than is feasible leads to issues that lessen the learning experience for all students.

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) day of each incident through the School Incident Report System (SIRS).

VISITOR PASSES

For the sake of our children’s safety, those entering the school should check in with the secretary to sign in and receive a visitor’s pass, which must be worn and visible when inside the school building.

VISITING YOUR CHILD’S CLASSROOM

On occasion, a parent may desire to observe in their child’s classroom. Parents are asked to make arrangements with the classroom teacher 24 hours before the visit takes place. We request that parents do not visit their child’s classroom for any reason unannounced during the school day.

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.

AACA Service Hours & Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Months with Volunteer Opportunities Available	Event	Possible Hours	Contact Person
August	Academy Day	2-3 hours	Mothers & Fathers Club
September	Oktoberfest	Various	Oktoberfest Chairperson
September	Book Fairs	Various	Committee Chair
September to June	Kindness Club volunteer	Various	KC Coordinator (Val Grondy)
September to June	Classroom volunteers	(Throughout year) Depends on function	Classroom Teachers & Classroom Coordinator

September to June	Class Trip Chaperones	3-4 hours Depends on function	Classroom Teachers & Classroom Coordinator
September to February	Art & Soul Preparation/Committee Work	Various hours	Committee Chair
August to October	Rocket Run	4-5 hours	Committee Chair
October	Halloween Party	5 hours	Mothers' Club
November	Basketball Concessions	30 hours	Mothers' Club
December	Secret Santa Shopping	7 hours	Mothers' Club Rep
December	Basketball Concessions	30 hours	Mothers' Club
January	School Book Fair	25 hours	The School
January	Basketball Concessions	30 hours	Mothers' Club
February	Art & Soul Evening Event & Clean up	40 hours	Event Chair
February	Basketball concessions	30 hours	Mothers' Club
March	Basketball concessions	30 hours	Mothers' Club
May	Ice Cream Social	3 hours	Mothers' Club

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.

APPENDIX 1

BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As Catholic school educators, we respect the dignity of each person created in the image of God. From this reverence for the individual, we are committed to shaping Catholic school communities of faith and kindness, communities in which all students are welcomed and in which bullying or harassment is not tolerated.

Bullying acts may be:

Physical which includes, but is not limited to, punching, poking, stalking, destruction of property, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, spitting, pinching, excessive tickling, theft, destruction of property;

Verbal which includes, but is not limited to, name-calling, teasing, taunting, gossip, and threats whether in person, through any form of electronic communication or social media, the Internet or written communication;

Emotional which includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, rating/ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation, manipulation of friendships, isolating, ostracizing and peer pressure;

Sexual which includes, but is not limited to, many of the emotional acts or conduct described above (in person or through electronic communication or social media) as well as exhibitionism, voyeurism, sexual propositioning, gestures, sexting, sexual harassment and abuse involving actual physical contact or sexual assault.

In cases in which the severity of the incident may imply a criminal act, the matter should be turned over to the local police department immediately and the parents/guardians of the students involved will be notified. This includes any threats or sexual images conveyed through electronic communication (e.g. Internet, phone, text or social media.)

No student shall be subjected to bullying during any school-sponsored education program or activity, while in school, on school property, on school buses or school vehicles, at school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or sanctioned events and activities, nor through the transmission of information from school, home, or public computer network, or other similar electronic school, home, or public equipment.

All allegations and incidents of bullying are taken seriously; the complainant (student, parent, guardian, teacher, staff, bystander, relative or other) should report the bullying incident to a teacher, staff person, or principal. The complainant may also request the *Bullying/Harassment School Incident Reporting Form A* from the school office, which should be completed within one day of the incident and returned to the principal. A copy of the report should be kept by the complainant. School personnel who witness or receive a bullying complaint are required to complete Form A within a day and give the form directly to the principal, keeping a copy for her/his personal records.

STEPS FOR SCHOOL RESPONSE AND CONSEQUENCES TO BULLYING/HARASSMENT

INTERVENTION:

The inappropriate/unacceptable conduct should be stopped immediately.

INVESTIGATION:

The complaint will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. In cases in which the severity of the incident may imply a criminal act, the matter will be turned over to the local police department and the parents/guardians will be notified.

DETERMINATION:

Parents/Guardians will be informed of the findings ('Allegation Substantiated' OR 'Allegation Unsubstantiated') when the investigation is complete.

RESPONSE:

Disciplinary or restorative action for bullying/harassment and/or violation of the School Code of Conduct may be taken which is not limited to an action plan, probation, suspension, and/or expulsion from the school at the discretion of the principal or designee.

Bullying/Harassment School Incident Reporting (Form A) follows on next pages.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT SCHOOL INCIDENT REPORTING (FORM A)
(electronic form not accepted)

This form is used to report a possible incident of bullying or harassment. The staff person who observes the conduct or receives the complaint should complete this form. A copy of this form should be given directly to the principal upon completion by the appropriate staff person.

School _____ Date of Report _____

Name of Student with Bullying Behavior _____ M F

Grade ____ Room ____

Name of Student being bullied: _____ M F

Grade ____ Room ____

Person Reporting: _____ Position _____

This incident was: witnessed by the teacher or school staff person and/or reported by

LOCATION OF INCIDENT:

Classroom Bathroom Lunchroom Gym Hallway Playground Recess Other: _____

Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged bullying student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Witness/Witnesses:

APPENDIX 2

MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOL & THERAPEUTIC BEHAVIORAL AGREEMENT

AACA takes all indications of self-harm, suicidal thoughts and other significant mental health concerns seriously. When we have concerns about your child's emotional well-being we will ask for your child to 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 will schedule a Re-Entry Meeting.
 - This meeting will occur at 7:10am on the school day your child will return to classes and 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 would occur at 7:10am on a school day shortly following the Re-Entry Meeting and 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.

Please know your child's safety, along with their overall continued health and wellness, is more important than their return to our school environment. While we want your child to return as soon as possible, we cannot allow them to return to school unless all of the expectations outlined above have been followed. Please do not hesitate to contact the school counselor with any questions or concerns.

Therapeutic Behavioral Agreement follows on next page.

**ALPHONSUS ACADEMY AND CENTER FOR THE ARTS
THERAPEUTIC BEHAVIORAL AGREEMENT**

Based on concern that Alphonsus Academy has had about my child’s well-being, I agree to the following:

1. I will ensure that my child attend and participate in psychiatric and psychological treatment to help manage his/her emotional state and behaviors. I understand that this means that I have agreed to be actively involved in all aspects of recommended treatment.

This includes, but is not limited to, attending individual, group, or family therapy, experimenting with new behaviors and new ways of doing things, taking medications as prescribed, and implementing my child’s crisis plan, if necessary.

I also understand that, to a large degree, progress depends on the amount of energy and effort my child makes. If treatment is not working, I will discuss this with my child’s clinician.

2. My child will meet with the school counselor, Mrs. Larrea, on a weekly basis.
3. I will sign a confidential release form permitting communication between Alphonsus Academy and my child’s clinician. The purpose of this release will be to facilitate collaboration and consultation.
4. I will have my child’s clinician communicate verbally or in writing to the school counselor, Mrs. Larrea, if or when he/she recommends altering or terminating treatment.

Parent/Guardian (s): _____ **Date:** _____

School Counselor: _____ **Date:** _____

Student: _____ **Date:** _____