



ACADEMY  
— AT THE —  
LAKES

*“Esse Quam Videri”*

MIDDLE DIVISION  
FAMILY HANDBOOK

2018-2019

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LAND O' LAKES, FLORIDA 34639  
(813) 948-7600  
[WWW.ACADEMYATTHELAKES.ORG](http://WWW.ACADEMYATTHELAKES.ORG)



ACADEMY  
— AT THE —  
LAKES

*ESSE QUAM VIDERI*

(To the tune of “Annie Lisle”)

Our strong bands shall ne'er be broken  
Formed at Academy  
Far surpassing wealth unspoken  
Friends forever we

*Esse quam videri*, that's our creed  
Deep graven on each heart  
Shall be found unwav'ring true  
When we from life shall part

Days in school will soon be passing  
Swiftly to the sea  
Let us pledge love everlasting  
For Academy

*Esse quam videri*, that's our creed  
Deep graven on each heart  
Shall be found unwav'ring true  
When we from life shall part



Dear Academy Families:

Welcome to the exciting educational journey that is the Academy at the Lakes experience. Our school offers each child and each family so many meaningful opportunities to learn and grow in an atmosphere characterized by our Core Values: Balance, Courage, Distinction, Inclusion, Integrity, and Stewardship.

Included in this handbook you will find much important information about our school's policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and feel free to consult it frequently as the year progresses.

We are so pleased to be your partners as we move into a very exciting period of our school's history while helping all of our students learn, grow, and thrive. Thank you very much for your participation and support – they are absolutely essential to our success.

Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Mark Heller  
Head of School

*This Handbook establishes Academy at the Lakes' codes and guidelines. This Handbook cannot cover every possible circumstance that a student, faculty member or the school may encounter in the course of a school year. Many decisions, policies and situations are left to the good judgment of the faculty and/or the school administration.*

# Academy at the Lakes

## *Middle Division Family Handbook*

### Wendlek Campus

PK3-4<sup>th</sup> Grades  
(813) 948-7600  
(813) 948-2943 fax

### McCormick Campus

5<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Grades  
(813) 948-7600  
(813) 949-0563 fax

[www.academyatthelakes.org](http://www.academyatthelakes.org)

Academy at the Lakes admits students of any race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law in the administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, scholarship or loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. It is the policy of Academy at the Lakes to ensure that all services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations are offered to and are accessible in a meaningful manner for qualified persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and state law.



ACADEMY  
AT THE  
LAKES

2018-2019  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Brent Smith, Vice Chair  
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George Miller  
Aliya Rathore  
Michael Riley  
Paul Tuten  
Marguerite LaPunzina Wells

Executive Staff

Mark Heller, Head of School, *Ex-officio*  
Dorie Burnham, Business Manager  
Maggie Morrison, Associate Director of Development  
Karen Sooklal, Secretary to the Board

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Trustees	3
Table of Contents	4
SECTION I: INTRODUCTION – THE ACADEMY AT THE LAKES	
Mission Statement	6
Core Values	6
Philosophy and History	7
Board of Trustees	7
Parents and the Board of Trustees	7
Parents and the Faculty and Administration	8
Parent Association	8
Accreditation and Affiliation	9
Development Office	9
Statement on Diversity	9
SECTION II: GENERAL POLICIES AND RELATED INFORMATION	
The School Day	11
Drop-Off and Dismissal	11
Attendance	14
Punctuality/Tardy Policy	16
Celebrations	16
Cell Phones and Telephone Messages	16
Class Placement	17
Closed Campus	17
Communications (including Using <i>ParentsWeb</i> )	17
Conferences	19
Counseling Services	19
Cumulative Records	19
Distribution of Materials	19
Dress Code	19
Electronic Devices	22
Emergency Procedures	22
Enrollment Agreement	25
Field Trips, Retreats, and Extended Trips	26
Food and Drink	27
House System	27
Lockers	28
Lost and Found	28
Lunch	29
Medical Information/Medications	29
Solicitors	30
Sports	30
Summer Camp	30
Summer School	30
Textbooks	31
Visitors	31

SECTION III: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION	
Academic Policy	32
Advisory Program	32
Developmental Concerns	32
Grades	33
Homework	33
Extra Help	35
Final Exams	36
Library	36
National Junior Honor Society	36
Resolving Classroom Concerns	37
SECTION IV: THE CODE OF HONOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES	
The Code of Honor	38
Bullying and Harassment	38
Sexual Harassment	39
Technology	40
Discipline Policies	40
Probation	42
Administrative Authority	42
SECTION V: WHO TO CONTACT	43
ADDENDA:	
Handbook Agreement	

# I. INTRODUCTION: THE ACADEMY AT THE LAKES

## Mission Statement

Academy at the Lakes is a learning community of shared values dedicated to the success of each individual at school, in the community, and in the world. We celebrate the love of learning and the joy in the journey.

## Core Values

- Balance** We embrace the joy in the journey, which consists of experiences that balance academics, fine arts, athletics, and co-curricular activities.
- Courage** We foster personal responsibility, empathy, and resilience.
- Distinction** We apply high standards of quality, relevance, and accountability to all we do.
- Inclusion** We are a caring and compassionate community composed of many different beliefs and traditions seeking points of unity in common experiences.
- Integrity** We believe in the power *of heads to know the good, hearts to love the good, and hands to do the good.*
- Stewardship** We care for each other and our school, serve our communities, and responsibly engage with the world – today and tomorrow.

## Philosophy and History

Academy at the Lakes is a non-denominational, coeducational, PK3—12<sup>th</sup> Grade, independent day school. The school was founded in 1992. The school's programs are designed to build a sense of responsibility and cooperation in students. Our overall goal is to provide a stimulating, nurturing school experience in which students are exposed to relevant information and experiences; are motivated to become seekers and users of information; are inspired to meet the challenges of the future; and are encouraged to become effective problem solvers.

Academy at the Lakes is committed to academic excellence. To be successful, every independent school needs and expects the cooperation of its parents, who must understand and enhance the School's mission, share its core values, and fully support its curriculum, faculty, and staff. When joined by a common set of beliefs and purposes, the independent school and its parents form a powerful team with far-reaching positive effects on children and the entire community.

Working together, parents and school professionals exert a strong influence on children to become better educated; they also help them to mature by modeling adult working relationships based upon civility, honesty and respect. In practice, the greatest impediment to effective teamwork between independent schools and parents grows out of misunderstandings about school decision-making processes. Independent schools must communicate their procedures to parents who, in turn, share the important responsibility to become informed members of the school community.

## Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees and officers of the Board serve as the corporate representatives of Academy at the Lakes, a not for profit corporation formed under the authority of the laws of Florida and the United States. The Board of Trustees is a group of volunteers acting under the authority of the corporation to govern the school's mission and provide the resources necessary for the mission to thrive. The Board employs a single employee – the Head of School – who is charged with the implementation of all facets of the school's operations. The Board operates in trust, and thereby governs the business operations of the school. The Board approves all budgets and fundraising activities. The trustees are stewards of the school's mission and work to provide the resources necessary for the mission to be actualized. Committees of the Board further serve to regulate and establish policies and to manage the school's finances and governance. All actions relating to the Board's governance of the school must be approved by a vote of the Board as specified in the corporate by-laws.

## Parents and the Board of Trustees

In most independent schools, decision-making authority at the highest level resides with a volunteer Board of Trustees whose membership often includes parents. The Board of Trustees does not intervene in the daily affairs of the school, such as curriculum development and the hiring, evaluating, and firing of faculty and staff. Instead the Board focuses on three areas critical to the success of any independent school: it selects, evaluates, and supports the Head of School; it develops broad institutional policies that guide the Head in running the school; and it is accountable for the financial well-being of

the school. In the conduct of its official business, the Board acts only as a whole; individual trustees, including the Board Chair, have no authority to act unless specifically authorized to do so by the board acting as a whole.

The Academy encourages parents who are interested in high-level decision-making to stay informed about the work of the Board of Trustees by reading school publications, talking to the Head of School, and attending appropriate meetings. Parents with concerns about the school or with decisions made by the administration or faculty are encouraged to inquire about and follow the school's review process, but they should not expect the Board of Trustees to act as an appeals board.

### Parents and the Faculty and Administration

Parents play an essential and positive role in the life of an independent school. Not only are parents advocates for their children, they also support both faculty and administration through extensive volunteer activities and events. The school formally governs the relationship between parents and the faculty and administration through the written enrollment agreement and handbooks, in which procedures are spelled out. When parents choose to enroll their children in an independent school, they agree to subscribe to its mission, follow its rules, and abide by its decisions. Most teachers and administrators would, however, agree that trust and mutual respect are the most essential underpinnings of effective working relationships with parents. The Academy encourages parents to work productively with teachers and administrators by staying informed about their child and important events in the life of the school. The school welcomes thoughtful questions and suggestions. It is incumbent upon the school to provide parents with timely and pertinent information.

Parents support a school climate of trust and respect by communicating concerns openly and constructively to the teacher or administrator closest to the problem. Efforts by parents to lobby other parents will be viewed by the school as counterproductive and non-supportive. While parents may not agree with every decision made by the school, in most cases, the parent and school will find enough common ground to continue a mutually respectful relationship. In the extreme case, however, an impasse may be so severe that the parent cannot remain a constructive member of the community. In such cases, both the parents and school should consider whether another school would be a better match for the family.

### Parent Association

The Parent Association in an independent school provides a vital and much-appreciated service to school leadership and the entire school community. The activities sponsored by the Parent Association are designed to build community spirit and advance the mission of the school. The Parent Association supports the policies and decisions of the administration. The parents neither participate in policy-making by the school nor function as a lobbying group. The finances of the Parent Association are a part of the school's audited financial statements.

The Board of Trustees, through its corporate bylaws for the Association, makes clear its procedures and role as a service organization. The bylaws clearly state the Association's mission to support the decisions and policies of the school. The administration should be

closely involved in the Association's nominating process. Cooperation and teamwork between the administration and the officers of the Parent Association are crucial to the health of the school community.

Academy at the Lakes welcomes volunteers! Volunteers are required to sign in and out at the respective Division Front Office and to wear the identification badge provided by the Administrative Assistant. Classroom volunteers must be approved ahead of time by the Division Director.

#### Accreditation and Affiliation

Academy at the Lakes is accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS), the Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The school is a full member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the Bay Area Association of Independent Schools (BAAIS).

#### Development Office

The Development Office exists to further the mission of the school by securing the necessary resources. The Office is responsible for approving and monitoring a variety of activities, fundraisers, and special events. The Office coordinates all such activities and trains volunteers in order to better meet school goals.

#### Statement on Diversity

At Academy at the Lakes, diversity is seen as a positive aspect of our lives and an essential aspect of education. The children, staff, Board members, and friends of the school recognize and respect the fact that diversity exists in the languages we speak, the colors of our skin, the traditions we observe, the structure of our families, the financial and educational resources our families possess, and the special needs we may have. We believe that our separate heritages, beliefs, and choices of expression help to define us as individuals and that our commitment to learning about one another and the larger world unites us as a community. Differences of all kinds are acknowledged and explored with enthusiasm, respect, and acceptance.

Academy at the Lakes assumes an ongoing responsibility to act as part of the larger community. In our recruitment practices for both families and staff, we strive to create a community whose members reflect the diversity inherent in the Tampa Bay area, as well as in the world. In our curriculum, such topics as race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, religion, physical attributes, sexual orientation, and economic differences are introduced and studied in ways that are developmentally appropriate. In our assemblies, special events, guest lectures, and other extra-curricular activities, we work to further our commitment to diversity.

We view the family as the primary source of traditions, celebrations, and values for children. The role of the school is to affirm that each individual has a distinct identity and to help children and others appreciate their own identity as well as those of others. We believe that the experience of an education will enable children to value themselves while preparing them to participate with pride and confidence in a rich, complex society. We

recognize that working to provide such an experience requires dedication and an ongoing commitment of time, energy, and resources.

Founded on the principle of respect, Academy at the Lakes is a place where children can listen, question, challenge, probe, and thereby make sense of their world. When children graduate from Academy, it is our hope and vision that they will carry with them a strong sense of their identity, a willingness to see the common threads that run through our lives, and a high regard for the breadth and value of differences.

## II. GENERAL POLICIES AND RELATED INFORMATION

### The School Day

#### WENDLEK CAMPUS SCHOOL HOURS

PK3-SK	8:15am-2:50pm
1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8:15am-3:05pm
Extended Care PK3-4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7:30-8:00am and 3:15-5:45pm

#### MCCORMICK CAMPUS SCHOOL HOURS

5 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8:00am-3:15pm
Extended Care 5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3:15-5:45pm

### Drop-Off and Dismissal

**DROP-OFF INFORMATION:** Supervised drop-off begins at 7:30am at the front of the school. On arriving, students should move directly to their locker areas to prepare for the school day. We strongly recommended that students arrive no later than 7:50am so as to give them time to greet each other and to organize materials for their first classes. The first class begins promptly at 8:00am. **PLEASE NOTE: *Supervision is not available earlier than 7:30am. To ensure their safety and well-being, please do not drop students off before that time.***

All students who arrive after 8:00am must check in at the Office to receive an admit slip before attending class.

**PLEASE NOTE:** For the safety of our students, the roadway between the loop and McCormick Hall is designated a **pedestrian zone between the hours of 7:30am and 4:00pm**. Access will be blocked to prevent entry. Please do not attempt to drop off or pick up students in front of McCormick Hall or the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Suite between these hours.

**DROP-OFF PROCEDURE:** Please consult the Dismissal Map on our website and carefully follow these procedures to ensure a safe and efficient morning drop-off with a minimum of traffic delays:

1. Enter the campus at the access road entrance – reached by turning onto Collier Commons at the light. **PLEASE NOTE: For the safety of our students, the campus speed limit is 5mph.**
  - a. During morning drop-off, vehicles **southbound** on Collier Parkway may turn right *at the cut-off past the school entrance* and then turn right onto the one-way path around the loop. **There can be no turns onto the loop from the school entry on Collier Parkway entrance.**
  - b. Vehicles **northbound** on Collier Parkway may **not** turn left across the southbound lane to enter at the Collier Parkway entrance.
2. Carefully follow the one-way path around the two-lane loop toward the front of the

Upper Division Building.

- a. The **right lane** is for **drop-offs and pick-ups**.
  - b. The **left lane** is a **through lane**.
3. Pull as far forward as possible, up to the white line in the road past the Upper Division.
  4. Please follow the instructions of school personnel who are supervising the drop-off.
  5. Students must exit their vehicles from the curb-side only.
  6. Carefully pull away after your child has reached the sidewalk with all of his or her materials, moving into the through lane when there is a safe opening.
  7. Please exit the campus only via the access road, **not** Collier Parkway.
  8. All children must be accompanied through the parking lot at both drop-off and dismissal. If you choose to walk your child to the front doors or to pick your child up by walking to the front of the school, please park your car.
  9. Please do not leave your car unattended in the line for any reason.
  10. **PLEASE NOTE:** We ask that you **refrain from using cell phones** while in the car line because it creates an unsafe environment for students during such a busy time.

DISMISSAL INFORMATION: At 3:15pm, students are dismissed for pick-up from the front of the Upper Division Building. Please inform the Office in writing of any regular car pools *and* of any changes to your car pool any time they occur. Students will only be released to individuals listed on the registration forms, listed on the emergency information records, or otherwise specifically identified to the school in writing or by telephone. Such individuals may be required to present a photo identification card.

By 3:30pm each day, all Middle Division students must be in a supervised school activity, in afternoon extended care, or have been picked up. Students are responsible for notifying their parents of their whereabouts when they are involved in any after-school activity. Middle Division students who have not been picked up by 3:30pm must move directly to the supervision of the afternoon extended care program, for which parents will be billed at the drop-in rate.

**PLEASE NOTE:** For the safety of our students, the roadway between the loop and McCormick Hall is designated a **pedestrian zone between the hours of 7:30am and 4:00pm**. The gate will be closed to prevent entry. Please do not attempt to drop off or pick up students in front of McCormick Hall or the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Suite between these hours.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE: Please consult the Dismissal Map on our website and carefully follow these procedures to ensure a safe and efficient afternoon dismissal with a minimum of traffic delays:

1. Please plan on arriving **between 3:15pm and 3:25pm**. (Students are not released until 3:15pm and do not reach the dismissal area for a few minutes after that.) This will ease the congestion caused by early arrivals stacking up the pick-up area.
2. Enter the campus at the access road *only* – reached by turning onto Collier Commons at the light – *not* the Collier Parkway entrance. (The Collier Parkway

entrance will be blocked off with cones.) **PLEASE NOTE: For the safety of our students, the campus speed limit is 5mph.**

3. **Please ensure that the name card issued by the school is prominently displayed on your dashboard.**
4. As you pass the bank and approach the campus, please be sure to keep to the right of the cones that separate the entrance lane and the exit lane.
5. Past the entrance on to campus, *both* of the lanes fronting Collier Parkway will be used to stack cars for pick-up.
  - a. A member of our Facilities crew will be at the entrance to guide incoming vehicles as they alternate into these two lanes.
  - b. Another member of our Facilities crew will be at the end of the straightaway to help vehicles alternate back into the single-file, rightmost pick-up lane.
  - c. We would greatly appreciate your patience and courtesy toward your fellow parents and to the members of our Facilities crew as we navigate this process.
6. Once back in the rightmost lane and past the curve, please carefully follow the one-way path around the two-lane loop toward the front of the Upper Division Building.
  - a. The **right lane** is for **drop-offs and pick-ups**.
  - b. The **left lane** is a **through lane**.
7. Pull as far forward as possible, up to the white line in the road past the Upper Division.
8. A member of the faculty or administration will then direct your child to you.
9. Should your child not have arrived at his or her dismissal waiting area in a timely manner, you may be asked to go around the loop again or may be asked to park until he or she arrives.
10. Carefully pull away after your child is safely inside your vehicle and wearing his or her seatbelt, moving into the through lane when there is a safe opening.
11. Please exit the campus only via the access road, to the right of the cones, *not* Collier Parkway. As you exit campus at this entrance/exit point, **please bear as far to the right as possible** so as to maintain two full lanes, one in each direction.
12. All children must be accompanied through the parking lot at both drop-off and dismissal. If you choose to walk your child to the front doors or pick your child up by walking to the front of the school, please park your car.
13. Please do not leave your car unattended in the line for any reason.
14. **PLEASE NOTE:** We ask that you **refrain from using cell phones** while in the car line because it creates an unsafe environment for students during such a busy time.

**Please ensure that anyone who will be dropping off or picking up your child has a copy of these procedures, including the map and name card, and is thoroughly acquainted with them before they arrive on campus.**

**Thank you for your patience and for your attention to these procedures. They will help ensure a safe and efficient drop-off and dismissal each day for our students, faculty, and staff.**

### Attendance

**ABSENCE:** Regular attendance is, of course, expected and vital to a student's academic success. The school reserves the right to designate absences as excused or unexcused. Excused absences include those for illness, doctors' appointments, medical procedures, religious holidays, significant family events (such as weddings, graduations, major illness, funerals, etc.), and any absence determined by the Division Director to be in the best interest of the student. Because missed classroom instruction cannot really ever be made up, though missed assignments must be, the Academy strongly discourages absences undertaken merely for convenience, for outside social activities, or for extended vacation time.

- Please make every effort to schedule appointments with doctors, dentists, or other such professionals before or after school hours.
- School holidays are scheduled throughout the year and are published before the beginning of the school year. Because missing school jeopardizes academic progress for the student and places an additional burden on the faculty, families are urged to plan family vacations to match the school holidays. Leaving early for or returning late from school vacations will be considered unexcused absences unless special circumstances exist. Please communicate early with the Division Director with regard to any such planned absences.

**NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL:** Whenever a student is unable to attend school, will arrive late, will leave early, or will be picked up by someone not in his or her usual car pool, please notify the school in writing or call by 8:00am. For an absence or tardy to be considered as excused, the student must bring a signed note from a parent, or the parent must e-mail the Administrative Assistant, indicating the reason for the absence or tardy. All absences and tardies are recorded as unexcused until we receive such notification.

Please notify the Division Director and your child's teachers of any planned absences – for religious observances, medical procedures, important family events, etc. – as far in advance as possible so as to enable them to make arrangements with you and your child for any work that may be missed. For any planned absences of three or more days, the student must complete an "Extended Absence Notification" form. This form is available both on our website and from the front office.

**MISSED WORK:** Students are responsible for identifying and making up all work they miss during an absence. All work that is missed because of ***unexcused absences*** is due on the day the student returns from that absence; missed quizzes or tests must also be made up on the day of return.

For ***excused absences***, students will have one day to make up missed work upon their return for each excused day of absence. (For example, a student whose excused absence lasted three days will have three days *after* their return to complete the work, turning it in

on the fourth day.) Students who miss a quiz or test during an excused absence should meet with their teacher on the day of their return to schedule a make-up.

Students who miss part of a day must hand in homework for missed classes on that day and must take any quiz or test scheduled for that day, or make arrangements to make up that assessment with the teacher before leaving campus.

**PARTICIPATION IN AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:** A student must be present for a minimum of five periods in order to participate in practices, games, or performances for any extracurricular activities on that day. Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Division Director. If a student is excused from participating in P.E. for physical/medical reasons, he or she may not participate in after-school sports practices or games.

**RETURNING AFTER ILLNESS:** Please follow the guidelines below in determining when it is *not* safe to allow a child to attend school:

- *A temperature of 99.5 degrees or higher.* Children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol, aspirin, ibuprofen, or any other drug used to depress fever.
- *Diarrhea or vomiting.* A child who has had diarrhea or vomited may not return to school for 24 hours.
- *Contagious condition.* A child with any potentially contagious condition, such as a rash, strep throat, flu or conjunctivitis, may not return to school until he or she has been examined by a doctor, has taken required prescription medications for at least 24 hours, and has been cleared by a doctor to return to school.
- *Contagious illness.* In the case of any more serious contagious illness such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus), etc., please inform the school immediately and keep your child at home until such time as his or her doctor clears the child to return to school.

In the event of an extended absence for medical reasons, and in all cases of a contagious illness, the school may require that a doctor's note be provided upon the student's return to school.

**LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY:** All students who need to leave school early must be released through and signed out in the front office by a parent/guardian. Requests for a student to leave early must be communicated by a parent/guardian to the office as far in advance as possible. Teachers will not release students directly from the classrooms. The period of time just before regular dismissal (3:00–3:15pm) is a very busy time in both the classrooms and office; kindly reserve your requests for early dismissal to extraordinary situations. Work due on a given day must be turned in before a student leaves early, even for classes that take place after the student's early departure. Please note that the same rules that to apply to work missed because of excused and unexcused absences also applies to early departures.

**EXCESSIVE ABSENCES:** Any student who is absent more than five days in one quarter may be subject to academic and/or other disciplinary consequences. After the fifth absence, ½ of a point may be deducted from the student's quarter grade in each class for each additional absence. At the discretion of the Division Director, a student may be exempted from such consequences because of excused absences resulting from extended

illness, valid religious reasons, or other reasons deemed to be in the best interest of the student. Excessive absences may ultimately result in a student not being ready for promotion to the next grade level.

#### Punctuality/Tardy Policies

In order for students to achieve to their highest potential and to develop the highly valued and valuable life-long habit of punctuality, students are expected to be on time to all classes and school activities. Students who are habitually tardy miss much, placing themselves in a position of having to catch up, disrupting the learning environment of their classmates, and placing an undue burden on their teachers.

All students who arrive after 8:00am are considered tardy to their first period class and must check in at the office to receive an admit slip before attending class. A parent or other authorized adult must be present to sign the student in.

The Administrative Assistant, working with the teachers, will keep track of all tardies. At four tardies to a class in one quarter, the Administrative Assistant will contact the parent to work out a plan of action for the student to avoid further tardies. After five tardies to a class in a quarter, students will thereafter be assigned break detention each day that they are tardy to school and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a point may be deducted from the student's quarter grade in that class for each additional tardy. Ultimately, a further accumulation of tardies may result in additional academic and/or other disciplinary consequences, such as afternoon detentions and a family conference with the Division Director.

Any student who is more than ten minutes tardy to a class may be considered to be skipping class, for which more serious consequences may result.

If a student is delayed by a member of the faculty or administration for any reason, the student is entitled to, and should request, a tardy pass from that person.

#### Celebrations

Celebrations occur to enhance classroom learning, to acknowledge achievement of curricular goals, or to highlight a special day or season. Parents should consult with faculty members or the Division Director concerning in-school celebrations, such as for birthdays. As a prerequisite, such celebrations must include an entire class or grade and may not occur if they interfere with scheduled classes or other school activities. Invitations to parties outside of school may only be distributed in school if an entire class or grade is invited.

#### Cell Phones and Telephone Messages

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders may bring cell phones to school but they are not permitted to use them until 3:15pm each day. Phones must be turned off (*not* placed on silent or vibrate) and stored in the student's locker throughout the school day.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders may bring cell phones to school but, until 3:15pm, their use is limited to school-related purposes (including as a planning/calendaring tool), at specific times, and as directed by a member of the faculty. Students may not use their cell phones between classes, during break, or during lunch; exceptions may occasionally be made but only for school-related purposes and only with the express permission of a member of the faculty.

It is our goal to guide our students in learning how to use these valuable devices in the workplace in a productive and responsible manner.

If cell phones “make an appearance” – i.e., they’re seen or heard – outside of approved times, a faculty or staff member will confiscate them and turn them in to the front office or Division Director. The student or a parent must then collect the phone at the end of the school day. Any student who repeatedly violates this policy may face an extended confiscation period or may lose the privilege of bringing a cell phone to school. Any student who uses a cell phone for an inappropriate purpose – including but not limited to using a cell phone during a quiz, test, or exam – will face more serious disciplinary measures.

Students have access to telephones at the office, should they need to reach parents during the school day. Students may use these phones before school, during break, during lunch, and after school but calls should be limited to those that cannot wait until the end of the school day. Should parents need to reach their child during the school day, they should call the office, *not* their child’s cell phone. Urgent messages will be passed on to the child immediately; messages of lesser importance will be passed on as soon as practicable.

#### Class Placement

Toward the end of the school year, the faculty and Division Director meet to discuss the class placement of students for the following school year. All placements are carefully considered and are based upon academic and social issues, as well as considerations that relate to a child as an individual. It is not the school’s policy to follow parental requests concerning class placements. A parent may be unaware of specific dynamics, developmental issues, and/or relationships that teachers observe as we strive to form the best mix of students. Parents need to have confidence that the faculty and administration will have the best interests of all students in mind when making such decisions.

#### Closed Campus

Academy operates a closed campus. Once students arrive on the campus, they are not permitted to leave unless signed out by a parent/guardian or accompanied by a faculty member. The only exceptions are for seniors who attend courses at the local universities and colleges during the school day and for seniors who have permission to participate in the off-campus lunch program. Students must sign out when they leave and sign back in when they return.

#### Communications

Please make certain that the school always has current and accurate home, cell, and business phone numbers; current and accurate e-mail addresses; as well as information on whom to contact in an emergency, should you be unavailable.

The school’s web site ([www.academyatthelakes.org](http://www.academyatthelakes.org)) is a particularly rich and useful source of school information, providing access to a regularly updated newsletter, calendar, important forms, etc. The web site also includes a *ParentsWeb* link, through which parents

have access to weekly assignment sheets for their children, grades, e-mail links to teachers, attendance records, and community service records. (See “Using *ParentsWeb*” below.)

Much communication between home and school is done by e-mail. Each Friday, the school will e-mail home the “Weekly eCalendar,” listing upcoming school events and deadlines of note. Teachers often communicate directly with parents about the progress of students in their classroom. The following types of communications will also be e-mailed home: special announcements, permission and order forms, and academic and behavioral updates. Report Cards will be e-mailed home shortly after the conclusion of each quarter.

If a parent needs to contact a teacher during the school day, he/she should call the Administrative Assistant at (813) 948-7600 to leave a message for the teacher or follow the automated directions to leave a message in the teacher’s voice mailbox. The teacher will return the call within 24 hours. E-mail is a very effective way to communicate with teachers. You can access teachers’ e-mail addresses on *ParentsWeb* under School Information. The addresses most often follow a simple formula: first initial and last name followed by “@academyatthelakes.org.” Please note, however, that there are a few exceptions to this formula.

When parents deem it more appropriate, they are welcome to meet with members of the faculty or administration. Faculty members will usually be available for scheduled appointments before and after school hours and, occasionally, during school hours. Please call and make an appointment with the faculty member to be sure that he or she will be available to meet with you. Teachers have, of course, been asked not to conference with parents between classes, while on duty, or in the car line so as not to interrupt teaching or supervisory responsibilities.

**NOTE:** For a quick reference as to whom to contact when you have specific questions, please refer to the “Who to Contact” section at the end of this Handbook.

**USING PARENTSWEB:** Through *ParentsWeb*, part of our online school management system (“*RenWeb*”), parents are able to view their child’s assignments, grades, e-mail teachers, monitor their child’s attendance and community service records, and find school directory information. To connect to *ParentsWeb*, click on the “Quicklinks” tab at the top right of the school web site – [www.academyatthelakes.org](http://www.academyatthelakes.org) – and then, from the drop-down list, click on *ParentsWeb*.” This will take you to the *RenWeb* parent login page. The parent login instructions are:

**For First-Time Users:**

District Code: AL-FL.

E-mail: type in the e-mail address you have listed with the school.

Click “Parent” or “Student.”

Click “Create New Parents Web Account.”

When you have done this, *RenWeb* will respond with a notice telling you that a password will be e-mailed to you. When you receive your password, return to *ParentsWeb* as above, then:

Enter the District Code: AL-FL.

Enter your e-mail address and your new password.

Click on the “Parent” or “Student” tab.

Click on “Log In.”

You will then have an opportunity to change your password; follow the link and instructions, if you wish to do so.

### Conferences

Academy at the Lakes’ Middle Division does not hold scheduled parent conference days. (Teachers are required to maintain open and timely communications with parents on an ongoing basis; grades are available “live” throughout each quarter; and Report Cards are e-mailed home following the completion of each quarter.) Instead, parents may choose to schedule conferences with one or more of their child’s teachers at any time during the school year simply by contacting the school. Parents are strongly encouraged to do so any time that it is in their child’s best interest to share pertinent information about their child’s progress, health, or well-being with the faculty and administration.

### Counseling Services

The mission of the Academy at the Lakes’ counseling program is to empower all students to reach their maximum potential in academic, personal, and social development. The program aims to help students develop healthy coping skills, make positive lifestyle choices, and develop skills that will enable them to make effective personal, social, and educational decisions. The counselor will consult and collaborate with faculty, staff, and families to help students establish personal goals and develop future plans. Counseling services will also include prevention and/or intervention activities to meet students’ immediate and future needs through individual or group counseling in areas including anger management, stress management, decision making, social skills, etc. The school counselor is available on a drop-in basis or by referral from student, parent, teacher or administrator. The counselor will also work proactively to achieve the program’s mission through our Advisory program and through targeted group meetings, both small and large. Confidentiality is an essential part of the trust built with students. The counselor will keep student interactions confidential, unless harm to self or others is indicated. The counselor may refer students to other school support services or outside professionals as needed.

### Cumulative Records

The school maintains cumulative educational records for each enrolled student. These records include all data that is collected concerning a student's educational progress. The records are updated at the conclusion of each school year. Parents/legal guardians may review the contents of the cumulative record by making an appointment with the Division Director. The school does request educational records and/or transcripts from a student’s former schools and will forward a student’s educational records and/or transcripts to other schools when provided with written parental authorization to do so.

### Distribution of Materials

Any student distributing unauthorized written materials on school grounds will be subject to disciplinary action.

## Dress Code

UNIFORM POLICY: Academy at the Lakes requires Middle Division students to wear a school uniform and to meet a specific Dress Code from the time of their arrival at school through the time they are picked up. This policy is designed to promote a high standard of appearance for our students, to minimize clothing competition, to develop pride in our school community, and to develop in our students the experience of dressing appropriately for work and, in the case of the Dress Uniform, dressing up for special occasions. The school requests and requires the support of parents in helping students to meet this uniform and Dress Code policy.

*Please be sure to order uniform items early enough to receive them before the beginning of the school year and thereafter as needed to maintain an adequate supply of items that fit your growing adolescent child.*

In order to prevent items from being lost, the school requires that all clothing be clearly labeled with the student's first and last names using either a permanent marker or name tag.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS: A student who does not comply with the Dress Code may not be permitted to attend classes. Parents may be called and asked to bring appropriate clothing to school. Students may be required to remain in the Division office until appropriate clothing is made available. Students who arrive in violation of the Dress Code will be given break detention for the first and second infractions. The third infraction will result in an after-school detention. Subsequent infractions may require a conference with parents and the student being held from classes until they are dressed correctly. Your assistance in ensuring that students are properly dressed for school each day is greatly appreciated.

When there is any doubt, the Dean of Student Services or Division Director will make the final determination as to the appropriateness of a student's dress or appearance. Should you have any questions about the school's uniform or Dress Code, please do not hesitate to call the Dean of Student Services or Division Director.

PURCHASING THE UNIFORM: *Lands' End* is the school's exclusive vendor for all uniform items. "Look-alike" items may not be purchased from other vendors as they will obviously then not meet the "uniformity" requirement.

To order, please call ***Lands' End*** at **(800) 469-2222** and mention your preferred school and logo number to the operator who takes your call. You may also order via the internet at **[www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school)**, using the same preferred school and logo numbers.

**Logo Number: 0255148K**

**Preferred School Number: 90007689 4**

Refer to the current Academy at the Lakes *Lands' End* Ordering Guide when selecting uniform items. Students do have a number of choices within the required uniform so as to allow them to express a degree of individuality in their dress.

DAILY UNIFORM: Please refer to the Academy at the Lakes Ordering Guide for a list of required Daily Uniform items. Students are to wear the Daily Uniform each school day unless notified otherwise.

On Fridays, unless it is a Dress Uniform day, students may wear an Academy at the Lakes “spirit shirt” instead of the uniform shirt. Spirit shirts include shirts sold through the Sports Boosters or Spirit Shop, a student’s House t-shirt, and any Academy t-shirt the school gives to students involved in school productions, activities, or sports.

**DRESS UNIFORM:** Please refer to the Academy at the Lakes Ordering Guide for a list of required Dress Uniform items. The Academy school tie is a required part of the Dress Uniform for boys and an optional item for girls. The Dress Uniform is generally worn for special events, performances, and field trips.

**OUTERWEAR:** Students are welcome to wear sweatshirts, sweaters, or jackets when needed. Sweaters and sweatshirts must be from among those listed in the school’s *Lands’ End* Ordering Guide, from the Spirit Shop, or solid white, navy, or gray without any messages, designs, or images and with a discrete logo no larger than two inches in size. They must be worn over a school uniform top. Students may wear a jacket of their choosing but must remove it when entering any building.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:** Please take note of the following additional Dress Code requirements.

- *Belts* are required for both the Daily Uniform and Dress Uniform for all shorts, pants, and skirts with belt loops. A brown or black leather belt is required with the Dress Uniform.
- *Shoes* must enclose the toes and cover the heel. Students may not wear sandals of any type or any clogs without back straps. Students must wear solid-colored, black or brown leather shoes with the Dress Uniform. “High heels” – of no more than two inches – may be worn with the Dress Uniform only – unless instructed otherwise because of the nature of the event.
- *Socks* must be worn with all Daily Uniform shoes (except for clogs). Students are welcome to choose socks of any color or design with the Daily Uniform. Socks worn with the Dress Uniform must be solid white, blue, tan, or black.
- *Undergarments* must be tucked in and out of sight at all times. Undershirts and camisoles may only be solid white, gray, or navy and may not be visible below shirt sleeves or shirt bottoms. (Students are *not* required to tuck in their Daily Uniform shirts.)
- *Hats* may be worn only during P.E. when outdoors. Members of the faculty and administration will confiscate hats worn at any other time.
- *Hair* must be neat, clean, and not distracting. Extreme colors or styles are not permitted. Boys must be clean-shaven.
- *Jewelry*, modest in type and amount, is allowed. Visible body piercings, however, other than modest earrings, may *not* be worn.
- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- All clothing must be neat, clean, and in good condition (no tears, holes, frays, etc.).
- All clothing must fit properly and with modesty. Clothing may not be too baggy, fit too tightly, or be too revealing.
- Shorts and skirts must be modest, work-appropriate in length – not shorter than

three inches from the top of the kneecap.

All determinations about the propriety of student clothing or compliance with the Dress Code will be made by the faculty and administration, with the Division Director making the final determination. Should you have any questions about the Dress Code, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

### Electronic Devices

Students are welcome to bring laptops, tablet computers, e-book readers or other such devices but only for school-related work. All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are required to bring a laptop or tablet computer to school for classroom use. For specifications, please refer to the “Laptop Requirements” communication on our website.

The use of any electronic devices while on school property, while in attendance at school-sponsored events, and in any case where doing so disturbs the educational process and/or constitutes harassing, disrespectful, or unacceptable behavior is bound by the Academy’s procedures, rules, Technology Acceptable Use Agreement, and Code of Honor. They may not be used during the school day for personal e-mail, social networking, surfing the web, or playing games without the clear and expressed permission of a supervising member of the faculty. The Academy reserves the right to inspect and/or monitor any personal electronic device brought onto school property or to a school-sponsored event. Any student who uses an electronic device for an unapproved or inappropriate purpose – *including but not limited to* making, posting, or sharing audio, photo, or video recordings of others without their prior knowledge and expressed prior permission to do so – will be subject to immediate confiscation of the device and additional, more serious disciplinary measures. Use of imaging devices – such as still cameras, video cameras, or camera phones – is strictly prohibited in school locker rooms and restrooms.

### Emergency Procedures

#### *A. Emergency Telephone Numbers, Hospital*

In the event of any emergency an administrator will dial 911 and explain the emergency. Should an event occur which requires students or staff to be hospitalized, the closest hospital to the school is Florida Hospital at 2600 Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544.

#### *B. Injuries and Health Conditions*

Students injured must have an injury report completed (Clinic Pass/Injury Report); the injury section of this document must be fully completed by the staff member present at the time of the injury. Students who fall and appear to have a possible fracture, concussion, or other serious injury should not be moved. Supervisors must seek the support of an administrator, administrative assistant or other staff member (First Aid or CPR Trained) who will evaluate the injury. In all cases, parents will be notified of the injury and asked for advice concerning further treatment. In the event that a parent is not able to be reached, the Head of School or Division Director will take the action necessary in the best interest of the student.

Children who have temperatures above 99.5 degrees F, who vomit, or appear otherwise ill, will have parents contacted for pick up. First Aid procedures will be utilized in treating illness and injury. Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

#### *C. Fire Drills/Evacuations*

Drills and evacuations are conducted routinely as a measure of preparedness in the event of a fire or severe weather.

#### *D. Communications with Parents*

In the event of an emergency, the school will communicate important information through our automated emergency alert system.

#### *E. First Aid/CPR/AED Trained Personnel*

The school will provide and require the following employees to be trained and certified in First Aid/CPR/AED by the American Red Cross:

Head, Division Directors, Administrative Assistants, Childcare Providers, Physical Education Teachers, and Athletic Coaches.

#### *F. Chain of Command*

In an emergency situation the chain of command is as follows: Head of School, Division Directors and other members of the Administrative Team, Administrative Assistants, Chairs and Team Leaders.

#### *G. Release of Students*

Students are released only to those individuals identified by parents/guardians. Each occasion of such a release requires parents to notify the school in writing, and requires the individual making such a pick up to identify themselves with a valid driver's license. Such individuals will sign students out of school.

#### *H. Severe Weather/School Closing*

During a severe weather alert the following activities will occur:

1. Administrative Assistants and the Director of Facilities will monitor the emergency broadcast system and news/weather web sites.
2. During periods of a severe weather "watch," all outdoor activities will cease and students will be supervised indoors. The school PA system will be used to inform teachers of possible further actions.
3. During periods of a severe weather "warning," all outside activities will cease and all teachers will follow the procedures laid out in the school's Emergency Procedures Guidelines document.
4. Parents will be notified of school closings due to weather or other emergencies through our Parent Alert system. The Parent Alert system will send a text message to the cell phone(s) listed in RenWeb. Messages will also be posted on our website. There are times when Hillsborough or Pasco County will close due to weather related problems in the aftermath of severe weather. Academy at the Lakes will not close at these times unless the school is unable to accommodate student attendance. The Head of School will determine whether or not school will be in session and will activate the Parent Alert system accordingly.

5. The campus must be secured during severe weather to avoid damage from strong winds. All objects capable of being carried by the force of strong wind will be secured. To prevent danger of electrical fires, all lighting and computers and other electronic devices will be disconnected. All sources of electricity will be turned off. In the event that the phone systems are incapable of use, school cell phones will be utilized to communicate with parents and community authorities.

6. In the event of a utility service interruption (electric service, water service) the Head of School will decide whether school will remain in session.

#### *I. Smoke or Fire*

In the event of smoke or fire, the alarms will sound and the facility will be evacuated. The plant managers will turn off all electricity and the administrative assistants will contact proper authorities. Facilities will remain evacuated until the problem is cleared.

Teachers must remain with students and await administrative direction concerning further action(s).

#### *J. Child Abuse Reporting*

This policy complies with Florida Statute 827.07, Abuse of Children:

Reports of Abuse Required: Any person, including but not limited to any physician, nurse, teacher, social worker or employee of a public or private facility serving children, who has reason to believe that a child has been subject to abuse shall report or cause reports to be made to the Department of Child and Family Services.

Immunity: Anyone participating in the making of a report to the Department of Child and Family Services pursuant to this act or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting from prima facie involvement, shall be presumed to be acting in good faith and in so doing shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that otherwise might be incurred or imposed.

#### *K. Criminal Activity*

It is illegal to carry a gun, gun look-a-like or any other weapon onto a school campus. Administrators will follow the guidelines as established by law in all such cases. Students found in possession of controlled substances will be subject to laws and school policies concerning such substances. Controlled substances are not permitted on a school campus.

Bomb threats require the immediate intervention of law enforcement officials. During such a threat, facilities must be evacuated immediately. The Head of School will direct activities.

#### *L. Search*

The School reserves the right to search students' desks, lockers, backpacks and other personal possessions. Only administrators may conduct such searches.

#### *M. Safety on Campus*

All visitors must report to the office to state their business. Parents, volunteers, guests, alumni, friends from other schools, and others authorized to be on campus will sign in and wear either a visitor or volunteer badge and will be escorted to the location of their service. Visiting friends must have prior permission from the Middle Division Director to be on campus and a letter from their parents acknowledging that their child is on our campus for

that day or time.

Upon leaving campus such individuals will sign out and make their exit known in the office.

Uninvited solicitors are not welcome on campus. Staff spotting of unknown and/or suspicious individuals must be reported to the office immediately. Persons with no business at the school are considered trespassers. Administrators will attempt to track such individuals to determine their reason for being on campus. If necessary, law enforcement officials will become involved.

Only authorized persons may enter classrooms. A member of the faculty or staff must escort such persons to classroom areas. Any unescorted individuals may not enter classrooms or common areas.

Signage at the school clearly directs visitors as to the procedures to be followed for visiting our campus.

#### *N. Supervision*

For their own safety and well-being, Middle Division students must be under the supervision of a faculty or staff member at all times, including break and lunch. Students may only leave campus under the direct supervision of a member of the faculty or staff, a parent, or another adult specifically authorized to do so by the parent after written notice to the school. Middle Division students may not leave campus at any time without such supervision. Avoiding or evading these supervision requirements will be considered a serious breach of discipline and will be treated accordingly.

### Enrollment Agreement

Academy at the Lakes is an independent school. All parents are required to enter into a contractual agreement with the School in order for a student to attend the Academy. The contractual agreement (Enrollment Agreement) is issued to all families upon acceptance to the school or during the reenrollment period. The contract fully outlines the financial obligation of the adult(s) responsible for the financial commitment that signing the contract represents.

The school bases expenditures for teachers and other personnel, as well as overall operations, upon contracted students. The contractual agreement is not segmented. Tuition and fees are due and payable according to the contract. Withdrawal does not relinquish responsibility for full payment of fees due. Persons financially responsible for tuition enter into the contract with the school for a full academic year and, consequently, withdrawal from the school does not eliminate financial responsibility. Students may not receive their report cards when their tuition account is not current. The Tuition Refund Plan is required of all families who pay on any installment plan. The Tuition Refund Plan allows both families and the school protection in the event of student withdrawal for a variety of reasons. Plan information is available to parents at the time of registration and during the enrollment process. The contractual agreement between a family and the school explains the tuition refund requirement. (Parents who pay the tuition in full are not required to purchase the Tuition Refund Plan; however, it is recommended.)

- Fees must be paid by the stated due date or the student(s) will not be allowed to attend classes, participate in school activities and/or receive transcripts.

- Tuition does not include the Tuition Refund Plan fees or other miscellaneous expenses that may arise. The costs of the annual Extended Trips are also not included in tuition.
- The Parent(s) accept(s) the policies, procedures, rules, regulations and academic achievement standards adopted by the school
- The Enrollment Agreement is for one academic year only. Re-enrollment for succeeding academic years should not be implied or inferred under a yearly contract.

Summer school or summer tutorial work may be required in cases where a student did not pass a course. Reenrollment decisions are usually made each January by the administration. A decision to reenroll a student and to subsequently forward a reenrollment agreement to the parents is based upon a student's academic record, effort, attitude, and behavior, and upon the willingness of the parents to accept their responsibility in the partnership of education. On occasion, reenrollment contracts are held until a time (usually April or May) when an appropriate decision about placement can be made.

Parents should also understand that the school reserves the right not to offer a reenrollment contract for a child if the parents have been uncooperative or if their actions have in any way undermined the effectiveness of our teachers. In some cases, it may be determined that it is not in the child's best interest to continue at the school. This difficult conclusion is only reached after extremely careful consideration.

In order for admitted students to be fully registered and begin attending classes, the following must be *on file*:

1. Current physical examination (Department of Child and Family Services Form)
2. Florida Certificate of Immunization (Department of Child and Family Services Form)
3. Birth certificate copy (verifies birth date)
4. Social Security Card copy (verifies number)

International students must be eligible for I-20 status from SEVIS, according to Federal law. Tuition charges for international students must be paid according to Plan I.

#### Field Trips, Retreats, and Extended Trips

The Academy's field trips, Division retreats, and extended trips serve as important extensions of the school's mission.

FIELD TRIPS: Faculty members and the administration plan a number of field trips during the course of the school year. A blanket permission form for such trips is part of the annual Enrollment Agreement. The school will make every effort to notify parents of field trips well in advance. This is not always possible when unexpected opportunities avail themselves. An activities fee will be billed in order to curtail the cost of invoicing individual field trips. The activities fee is not refundable. Members of the faculty generally chaperone all field trips. On occasion, a limited number of parents may be asked to help chaperone field trips when needed.

**MIDDLE DIVISION RETREATS:** At the end of the second or third week of school, Middle Division students attend an overnight retreat – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders on campus, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders at a nearby retreat center – chaperoned by members of the faculty and administration. The cost of these retreats is included in the activities fee. All 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are expected to attend, absent special circumstances and the prior approval of the Division Director. The dates for the retreats are published in the school calendar. Detailed information will be provided to parents at the beginning of the school year.

**EXTENDED TRIPS:** Each year, 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders go on separate extended overnight trips chaperoned by members of the faculty and administration. During these trips, school is “in session” at the various trip locations. Each trip is carefully tied to the curriculum; students will do some work in class ahead of time in preparation for the trip and will gather information during the trip to complete assignments on their return. These trips give students the experience of traveling away from home, help them build bonds with their classmates and teachers, create lifelong memories, and extend the Academy’s curriculum beyond the classroom walls.

In the fall, 8<sup>th</sup> graders attend an outdoor adventure program in the Appalachian foothills of Virginia. In the spring, 7<sup>th</sup> graders study marine biology at SeaCamp in the Florida Keys as part of the culmination of their Life Science course. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders travel together in the spring each year, alternating between a Florida history-themed trip and a Florida science-themed trip.

All 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are expected to attend these trips, absent special circumstances and the prior approval of the Division Director. The dates for these trips are published in the school calendar. Detailed information, including the cost to parents, will be provided well in advance of each trip.

### Food and Drink

**FOOD AND DRINK:** In order to maintain a clean and pest-free environment, food and drink may only be brought into school buildings, including classrooms, with the specific permission of a member of the faculty or administration. Students are, of course, responsible for cleaning up after themselves whenever and wherever they are permitted to eat and drink. Littering will subject a student to disciplinary measures.

**GUM:** Students may not chew gum on campus at any time because of the damage it can cause to school property. Any student found to be chewing gum will serve a break detention. Repeated violations may result in further disciplinary measures, including after-school detention.

**WATER:** Because of the proven health and learning benefits of staying well hydrated, students are welcome to bring plain water (*not* sports drinks or other flavored drinks) into school buildings, including classrooms. Bottles must be clear and have closeable tops. There are a number of filtered water bottle refill stations on campus.

### House System

The House system is designed to further opportunities for the development of relationships through traditions designed to encourage the development of cross-age relationships through healthy competitions and planned community gatherings. The school organizes

events such as intramural sports and academic competitions, an energy-filled House Day, and spirit days each year. In order for the goal of the development of relationships to embed itself in the efforts of the House System, students, faculty members, and families are sorted into one of four houses. Competitions and other events are all based upon House membership.

Students and faculty members are organized into one of four Houses, each with its own color:

Kestrel	Green
Nighthawk	Yellow
Osprey	Blue
Peregrine	Red

During House events, students and faculty are required to wear their House shirt. The school issues House shirts to students at the beginning of each school year.

### Lockers

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are assigned lockers with combination locks. They must use only their assigned locker and may not move to unassigned lockers. Students are expected to secure their books, materials, and other possessions inside their locked locker at all times and to keep their locker combination to themselves. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students are assigned lockers without combination locks in the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Suite. Lockers must be free of obstructions, clutter, and litter. All bags and backpacks must be placed safely inside or on top of a student's locker. (Rolling backpacks may be placed on top of lockers or carefully against a wall.)

***Students are encouraged to bring a combination lock for use in the Gym locker room during their P.E. class.*** Students must place all of their uniform and other belongings inside one of the available gym lockers during P.E. Locks and belongings must be taken with the students after each P.E. class.

Students who do not keep their textbooks, materials, and other such possessions safely in their backpacks or lockers will be given break detention for the first and second infractions. The third infraction will result in a call home and an after-school detention. Subsequent infractions may require a conference with parents and a plan of action to prevent further infractions.

Lockers are school property on loan to students. Damage to lockers will result in parents being charged for repairs. The school will require periodic locker cleanouts, including at the end of each semester. Lockers are subject to search by school administrators.

The school is not responsible for the contents of a student's locker. Because many lockers are located in exterior spaces, there is a risk of theft or damage by trespassers, especially at night, over the weekend, and during school holidays. Students should not keep valuables – including electronic devices, jewelry, or cash – in their lockers at any time. Such items are best left at home.

### Lost and Found

“Lost and Found” bins are located in various places on campus. The bins will be emptied at the end of each quarter; unidentified contents will be given to the uniform recycling program, donated to charity, or otherwise disposed of. Please make sure to label your child’s uniform and other belongings so as to facilitate their being returned. Found valuables – such as jewelry, calculators, cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc. – will be turned in to the Division office.

### Lunch

An “order out” lunch program is available each school day through Wholesome Tummies Café. Lunches must be ordered in advance online at [www.WTCafe.com](http://www.WTCafe.com). Credit cannot be given due to absence; parents are responsible for checking the online school calendar for field trips, service days, extended trip dates, or any days that lunch would not be needed for their students. Students may also, of course, choose to bring in their own lunches. Any lunch that needs to be heated in a microwave should take no longer than 30 seconds. (Students should not bring in frozen meals.) Please do not order lunches from other outside vendors as our office cannot take responsibility for accepting deliveries and because such deliveries are frequently late, causing student and classroom disruptions. Students must remain in their designated lunch location for the duration of lunch, where they are under the supervision of faculty members. Students are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and for helping to keep their lunch location clean.

### Medical Information/Medications

Parents should make the school aware of any health problem(s) that their child(ren) may have. Over-the-counter medications may be administered to students on campus only if parents have:

1. Submitted a written form authorizing such use;
2. Provided said medication – labeled with the student’s name – to the Middle Division Office; and
3. Given their permission to the administrative assistant via telephone, fax, or e-mail at the time the medication is to be administered.

Prescription medications must be brought to school by the parent or guardian in the original prescription container labeled as follows:

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Student’s Name     | e. Physician’s Name     |
| b. Name of Medication | f. Date of Prescription |
| c. Dosage Prescribed  | g. Special Instructions |
| d. Time to be given   |                         |

No more than one month’s supply should be brought to school at one time. Medication will be counted by the parent and an employee and logged on the individual “Student Medication Record.” An “Authorization to Administer Medication Form” must be completed by the parent granting the school permission to administer the medication. Forms are available online and from the office upon parental request. Students will be allowed to carry medication/equipment for life-threatening emergencies, such as inhalers

and Epi-Pens, with written permission from their physician and parent/guardian.

All students must have a completed Florida Certification of Immunization form (DH 680) with either proof of immunization or exemption for the form to be valid.

*Physicians may obtain the Florida Certification of Immunization Form from their local county health department. The following information must be recorded on form DH 680 in order for the form to be valid:*

- a. The child's complete name, date of birth, and name of parent or guardian.
- b. All vaccine dates with the month/day/year. If the child has received more than the required number of doses of a vaccine, the last space to the right of the vaccine should indicate the date of the last dose given.
- c. The child's social security number is optional.
- d. The state immunization identification number (ID#) will appear on a computer-generated DH 680 and is an identification number issued by the Florida State Health Online System (Florida SHOTS).
- e. Part A-1, A-2 or Part B must be completed with the name of the physician or clinic; physician or clinic address; signature or signature stamp of the physician, public health nurse, physician's authorized designee, or the County Health Department stamp with the date the form was signed and issued.

Key school personnel are CPR/AED/First Aid trained. Policies concerning the administration of first aid follow the guidelines of the American Red Cross program.

Students with communicable diseases may not attend school, according to the guidelines set forth by the local health department and the Centers for Disease Control.

#### Solicitors

Solicitors are permitted at the school only by the invitation of school officials.

#### Sports

Academy at the Lakes encourages all students to participate in its interscholastic sports programs. Please refer to the *Athletic Handbook* or contact the Athletic Director for detailed information.

#### Summer Camp

*Summer at the Lakes Day Camp* is the official summer camp program of the Academy at the Lakes. Our camp is conducted on the McCormick and Wendle Campuses from mid-June to early August. It follows the model of a traditional day camp. Students are grouped by age and a mix of individual activities. Enrollment for the camp begins in February of each year. More detailed information will be distributed before then. In order to be assured your chosen dates and programs, we recommend early enrollment.

#### Summer School

*Summer at the Lakes Summer School* is the official summer school program of the Academy at the Lakes. Our courses are conducted on the McCormick and Wendlele Campuses from mid-June to early August. We offer both for-credit high school classes as well as noncredit, enrichment classes for students in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Enrollment for summer school begins in February of each year. More detailed information will be distributed before then. In order to be assured your chosen dates and programs, we recommend early enrollment.

#### Textbooks

Students are responsible for the care of all textbooks and materials issued to them by the school. Textbooks are the property of the Academy and are rented by students. Should a student lose or damage a textbook, his or her parents will be billed for the replacement cost.

#### Visitors

**STUDENT VISITORS:** Students must make arrangements for visitors with the Division Director at least 24 hours before the visit. On the day of the visit, the student visitor must bring a note from his/her parents indicating that the parent is aware of the visit. The note must be presented to the administrative assistant for a pass to be issued. Visitors must sign in and out at the office and wear a Visitor's Badge while on campus. Host students are required to introduce the visitor to each teacher. All visiting students must be appropriately dressed for a day at Academy at the Lakes.

**ADULT VISITORS:** All visiting adults must sign in at the office and wear a Visitor badge, including Academy alumni.

### III. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

#### Academic Policy

A student must pass all core academic courses for the year in order to be promoted to the next grade level. In the event that a student fails a core academic class, the school may, at its discretion, require summer work, the retaking of a class, or the repeating of a grade. The Division Director coordinates all such academic matters.

Intellectual, social, emotional, and/or physical growth may be such that the child will benefit most from having another year in the current grade before moving to the next level. It is the school's policy that decisions of this nature will only be made after meeting with the family, teachers, and administrators who are professionally involved with the child.

If, after a period of time, it becomes apparent that Academy at the Lakes is not an appropriate school for a student, then the school advises the parents as early as possible and counsels them concerning other school options.

#### Advisory Program

All students are assigned to a faculty advisor. Advisory groups meet at least once a week throughout the school year. Advisors act as advocates for their advisees, lead students in exploring a variety of problem-solving, character education, study skills, and academic enhancement activities relating to the middle school years of human development.

#### Developmental Concerns

Most students adjust to the school's expectations responsibly and successfully. However, the school stands ready in several ways to help any student experiencing difficulty. The Division Director, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and School Counselor are available to aid parents or students who have adjustment concerns.

Requests for special consultant services should be made through the Division office. From time to time students who are thought to have the potential for success at the Academy may experience difficulty in making the transition to our academic program. In this case, the student may be asked to repeat a grade or undergo an educational evaluation, including special testing at the family's expense. If a learning difference is discovered, the School Counselor, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Division Director should be informed right away to help determine the best course of action.

Because essential skills such as reading, writing, and thinking are part of the curriculum, the school cannot make too many accommodations without seriously altering the program. In some cases, the Academy may not be the best match for a student and the family will have to make other school arrangements.

		<u>Grades</u>	
GRADING SCALE:	90-100	A	4.0
	80-89	B	3.0
	70-79	C	2.0
	60-69	D	1.0
	59 and below	F	0.0

ACADEMIC HONORS: 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students who achieve a 4.0 grade point average at the end of one of the first three academic quarters earn *Head of School's Honor Roll* for that quarter. Students who achieve a grade point average of 3.5-3.99 (with no "C"s) earn *Honor Roll*. Students who achieve a grade point average of 3.0-3.49 (with no "C"s) earn *Commendation*. Honors following the fourth quarter are based on a student's year-end final grades. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders undergo a major transition from the generally non-graded Lower Division academic experience into the graded Middle Division experience. Accordingly, we do not believe it to be developmentally appropriate to include 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the academic honors program because of the significant potential for undue pressure and anxiety on these students and families.

SEMESTER GRADES for each subject area are calculated as follows:

Quarter Grades:	40% each
Semester Exam:	<u>20%</u>
	100%

The Semester Grade for classes without semester exams – including all 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade classes – is calculated by averaging the two Quarter Grades.

YEARLY GRADES are calculated by averaging the two Semester Grades. (Courses taken for only one semester will receive only a Semester Grade.)

GRADES IN PERFORMING ARTS COURSES: Students taking performance arts courses (such as Chorus, Strings, Band, and Drama) must attend all rehearsals planned prior to performances and the performances unless previously excused by the instructor. In such classes, performances stand as assessments and make up a significant part of each student's grade.

### Homework

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS IN THE MIDDLE DIVISION: Homework is a regular experience for students in the Middle Division. Faculty members give assignments to supplement the ideas, concepts, skills, and content covered in class. Faculty members also assign longer term projects and papers with the goal that the student will develop the ability to budget his or her time and plan accordingly. Homework is also designed to establish a disciplined approach toward academics and study skills. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are responsible for recording their assignments in the paper planners assigned to them at the beginning of the year. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are responsible for recording their assignments in the paper planners assigned to them at the beginning of the year *or* by using an electronic planning tool, such as Microsoft Outlook. (The school will provide students access to this particular tool.) Parents can reinforce a student's use of his or her planner by reviewing it

with the student at the end of each day. Students and parents are also encouraged to regularly refer to the weekly assignments page and student grades page through the *ParentsWeb* link on the school web site: [www.academyatthelakes.org](http://www.academyatthelakes.org).

The following time frames are guidelines for the homework load at each grade level. The actual time required will vary for each individual, based on their motivation, energy level, work habits, pace, comfort with the content, etc. Working on longer term projects or preparing for tests may require some additional time. What matters most is the quality of the homework assigned and how well it meets students learning needs, not the amount of time spent on it. If a student takes an amount of time significantly longer than the suggested guideline, please contact the faculty member who assigned the work as soon as possible. Quality homework is valuable but cannot be allowed to become an overwhelming burden for a student.

*5<sup>th</sup> Grade:* 50-60 minutes daily, with a number of long-term assignments each semester. Some additional time devoted to reading.

*6<sup>th</sup> Grade:* 60-70 minutes daily, with a number of long-term assignments each semester. Some additional time devoted to reading.

*7<sup>th</sup> Grade:* 70-80 minutes daily, with a number of long-term assignments each semester. Some additional time devoted to reading.

*8<sup>th</sup> Grade:* 80-90 minutes daily, with a number of long-term assignments each semester. Some additional time devoted to reading.

**HOMEWORK AND HOLIDAYS:** Homework may be assigned over weekends but not over Thanksgiving Break, Spring Break, or major religious holidays. Families may always request an extension on homework assigned over any other religious holiday observed by that family. Please note that the time frame for some long-term projects may encompass these holidays. Long term projects or papers may not, however, be due during the first week back from the Thanksgiving Break or Spring Break and no tests may be given on the day of return from Thanksgiving Break, Spring Break, or a major religious holiday.

**LATE AND MISSING HOMEWORK:** In order to receive full credit, all homework must be completed and turned in on the date it is due. Late homework will be subject to a grade penalty. Faculty members may alter these consequences as fits particular circumstances and the best interests of individual students. Faculty members will communicate with parents whenever a student begins to develop a pattern of turning homework in late. When a student reaches three missing assignments in a class, that faculty member will contact the parents and require that the student attend after-school Extra Help until the missing work is made up.

**HOMEWORK TIPS:** It is difficult for the school to offer universal guidelines for parents about homework because what applies for one student may not be appropriate advice for another child. We can, however, offer the following broadly applicable tips:

- Be sure that your child is recording all homework assignments in his or her planner.
- Set a time for homework to be started. Some children may wish to start their work the moment they arrive home. Others may need time to unwind. Allow your child to make this decision with you. Once the starting time has been established, try to stick with it each night during the school week.
- Guide your child to work at the same place every night. If questions are frequent,

perhaps locate him or her near where you are available - at the dining room or kitchen table. Others may prefer the isolation of their own room. In any case, the work area should be away from the distractions of television or younger siblings and it should be consistent.

- Teach younger siblings to respect their brother's or sister's need to be left undisturbed at this time. They will learn from this and it will facilitate their transition into homework when it is their turn.
- Encourage your child to complete the most difficult assignments first. Don't save those math word problems for last! Fatigue will set in and the fuse will be shorter.
- Some children benefit from taking short breaks between assignments.
- Help them with the process but avoid doing the work for them. You want to guide them toward becoming independent learners.
- Try not to offer "screen time" (TV, smart phone, tablet, laptop, game systems, etc.) as a reward for completing homework (or at least attempt to avoid the connection). The lure of screen time only causes the pedal to be pressed harder to the floor! Quality of work is then, often, compromised.
- Most of all, try to be patient, understanding, and encouraging. Your reaction to your children when they are doing their homework, especially when they are having difficulty with that work, has much to do with future attitudes and habits. It need not be a battle. In fact, it can be a pleasant time for sharing and interaction.

#### Extra Help

Extra Help is available each school day from 3:15-4:00 p.m. according to the following schedule:

Mondays and Wednesdays	Math, Social Studies, and Spanish
Tuesdays and Thursdays	Language Arts and Science
Fridays	By appointment

If, however, a student needs help in a subject area that is not being offered on a given afternoon, he or she may make an appointment with that teacher for help at another time.

Students are welcome to attend these Extra Help sessions whenever they or their parents see the need to do so. Out of courtesy to the teacher and to allow him or her to best prepare for the Extra Help session, please be sure to communicate with the teacher ahead of time, by note or e-mail, that the student will attend Extra Help on a particular day and the student's specific goal for the session. Please note that Extra Help is not a substitute for After Care.

On occasion, based on academic need, teachers may require a student to attend. Out of courtesy to the teacher and students already at work, students may not arrive more than five minutes late. It is the student's responsibility to inform his or her parents the he or she will be attending Extra Help and the time at which he or she can be picked up.

If students finish their work early, they will remain with the supervising teacher until picked up or moved to After Care. (They will not be released from the Extra Help location early.) Students in Extra Help must be picked up by 4:00pm or by such other time as

arranged with the supervising teacher. Please park and pick up your child directly from the Extra Help location. At the conclusion of an Extra Help session, students who have not been picked up will be moved to After Care, for which parents will be billed at the drop-in rate.

### Final Exams

During the last week of each semester, students in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades sit for cumulative exams in each of their core classes: English, math, science, social studies, and Spanish. In order to best prepare students for these exams, faculty members conduct exam reviews during the week leading up to exams. Students must sit for their exams on the scheduled dates unless parents obtain prior approval from the Division Director. Please make such requests as early as possible and only in the event of a genuine family emergency.

### Library

Academy at the Lakes has a procedure in place for the challenge of materials in the school library. If you have a concern about materials in the library, please contact our Director of Library Services, Jay Gibson at [jgibson@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:jgibson@academyatthelakes.org).

### National Junior Honor Society

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) Chapter of the Academy at the Lakes is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in all five areas of evaluation: Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Citizenship, and Character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of NJHS and have been revised to meet our local Chapter needs.

Students are selected to be members by a five-member Faculty Council, appointed by the Division Director, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty of our school each spring. Students are eligible for membership in the second semester of 7th Grade.

**Scholarship:** a student must first have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better (on a 4.0 scale) in order to be a candidate for membership in NJHS. Those students who meet this criterion are then invited to complete a Student Activity Information Form that provides the Faculty Council information about the candidate with regard to the other four required areas of evaluation.

**Leadership:** a candidate must demonstrate leadership skills and experiences in the classroom, in school activities, or in the community.

**Service:** a candidate must demonstrate a commitment to, and record of, community service at school or in the broader community that is undertaken in a positive, enthusiastic, and voluntary manner.

**Citizenship:** a candidate must demonstrate active and positive engagement in the life of his/her school or the broader community through activities, organizations, clubs, etc.

***Character:*** a candidate must demonstrate high standards of integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness, and caring in the classroom, in school activities, and in the broader community. (The Faculty Council will consult each candidate's school disciplinary record, if any, in their deliberations.)

The Faculty Council will also solicit Middle Division faculty members for their confidential, professional input regarding each candidate's leadership, service, citizenship, and character. All of this information, including the completed Student Activity Information Forms, is carefully reviewed by the Faculty Council to determine membership. A majority vote of the Council is required for selection. The Chapter Advisor notifies candidates regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Following notification, the school will hold a formal induction ceremony to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all five criteria that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings held during the school year and participation in the chapter's service projects. Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations are welcome to contact the Chapter Advisor.

#### Resolving Classroom Concerns

When in need of help or when faced with a classroom concern, students should first and promptly communicate directly with their teacher so that they can work together to address that need or concern. Parents are then, of course, welcome to follow-up with the teacher to clarify the need, concern, and/or resolution.

## IV. THE CODE OF HONOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

### The Code of Honor

It is understood that genuine academic and personal achievements presuppose academic and personal integrity. No matter the pressure felt to achieve, the appearance of academic and personal achievements, without their realities, is a betrayal to the self and others; it is a blow to one's integrity. Major violations of the Code of Honor include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, stealing, bullying, harassment, and being disrespectful to others or their property. The truth must not be misrepresented in order to obtain special privilege or consideration. In that light, students pledge to uphold – and are held accountable to – the following Academy at the Lakes Code of Honor:

*As a member of the Academy at the Lakes community, I pledge that I will uphold the highest values of academic and personal honesty and integrity, and that I will show respect and kindness to my classmates, teachers, colleagues, and administration at all times.*

All homework, assessments, papers and projects are written under the Code of Honor.

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Participate in the school program to the best of their ability;
2. Respect others. Verbal, electronic, or physical bullying, harassment, threats, intimidation; the infliction of bodily harm; or blatant disrespect are entirely unacceptable behaviors in this community.
3. Conduct themselves both in school and out in a manner that promotes and maintains safety, integrity, and care for the school, its people, its property, and its reputation;
4. Refrain from the use of offensive language of all sorts.

### Bullying and Harassment

It is the policy of the Academy at the Lakes that all of its students have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from bullying and harassment of any kind. The Academy will not tolerate bullying or harassment; conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined below, is prohibited.

*Bullying*, which includes *cyberbullying*, means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on a student by one or more students with a power imbalance over that student. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

1. Teasing
2. Social Exclusion
3. Threat

4. Intimidation
5. Stalking
6. Physical violence
7. Theft
8. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
9. Public or private humiliation
10. Destruction of property

*Cyberbullying* means bullying by any electronic communication through the use of any electronic device, including but not limited to e-mail, Internet, instant message, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

*Harassment* means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, image, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student that:

1. Places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits;
3. Causes a student substantial emotional distress and serves no legitimate purpose; or
4. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Any student or parent with a concern about bullying or harassment should immediately bring that concern to the attention of a teacher or administrator. Any student, teacher, or member of the staff who witnesses or otherwise has knowledge of an occurrence of bullying or harassment should immediately report the matter to an administrator. There will be no negative consequences for anyone, student or otherwise, who makes a report of bullying or harassment in good faith. The school will promptly investigate any such reported occurrences of bullying or harassment. Any form of retaliation against a student for making a good faith report – or for assisting the school in its investigation of the report – will be considered a serious breach of the Code of Honor.

#### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following: verbal sexual abuse; disseminating sexually explicit or obscene material (in any form) or having such material in one's possession at school or off-campus at school sponsored activities; obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere on campus or on school property; continuing any unwanted written or oral communication of a sexual nature directed at another; spreading sexual rumors/innuendoes; obscene or sexually explicit gestures; and any physical touch or other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit nature that demeans or offends the recipient.

Allegations of sexual harassment are to be brought to a teacher or administrator without delay. The parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter will be kept confidential. If the allegations are found to have merit, severe disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including separation from the school.

### Technology

The growing use of electronic devices in all disciplines and their capacity to access the Internet has increased the possibility for electronic fraud: using such devices to misrepresent someone else's work as your own. The Academy at the Lakes does not tolerate this in any way; such offenses will be treated as plagiarism under the Code of Honor. The fact that an electronic device is involved does not influence the decision-making process. Copying information in an electronic form is no different from copying or having someone else write a science lab report or a research paper.

Furthermore, the use of e-mail, texting, social networking sites (such as Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, etc.), or phone calls to send inappropriate, offensive, or harassing messages or images – from whatever location they are sent – will be considered a serious violation of the school's Code of Honor and dealt with accordingly.

To help guide their safe and appropriate use of technology, all students will be required to review and sign the school's Technology Acceptable Use Agreement before being allowed access to any of the school's technology resources.

### Discipline Policies

When it is suspected by a faculty or staff member that a student has violated the Code of Honor, the faculty or staff member is expected to meet with the student privately and then, if necessary, report the violation to the Division Director. The Division Director may remove the student from classes while the alleged violation is investigated. If the investigation finds that the allegation has merit, then the student's parents will be notified promptly and the violation will be dealt with as a major disciplinary offense. The Division Director will follow a course of disciplinary action based upon his or her investigation.

When a student recognizes that he or she has violated the Code of Honor, wittingly or unwittingly, it is expected that the violation will be admitted to a faculty member, advisor, or administrator. In such cases, the voluntary admission may mitigate the penalty and the violation may be treated as a lesser offense. The student's parents will be promptly notified and the school disciplinary procedures for such an offense will be followed.

When a student discovers that *another student* has violated the Code of Honor, it is expected that the student will choose from the following responsible actions: (a) confront the violator and encourage him or her to admit the violation to a member of the faculty or administration; (b) not confront the violator but report the violation to a member of the faculty or administration – with or without revealing the name of the offending student. If a student does nothing upon discovering a violation, that student has condoned the violation.

In all cases where a violation of the Code of Honor is suspected, care will be taken to avoid an erroneous accusation in recognition of the damaging effect a false accusation can have on a student's reputation. All Code of Honor violations will follow due process for

disciplinary or academic offenses.

Interventions and consequences for inappropriate behavior include the following:

1. A student who behaves inappropriately will receive counseling from teachers and/or administrators.
2. Parents are expected to support the school in correcting any disciplinary issues.
3. Students whose behavior is disruptive to the educational process or threatens the well-being of others in the community may be subject to removal from the classroom or activity, in-school or after-school detention, early dismissal from school, in-school or out-of-school suspension, or separation from the school.
4. Parents may be contacted to immediately remove a student from school under certain circumstances.
5. Students assigned out-of-school suspension may not enter the campus or participate in any school-sponsored after-school activities for the duration of the suspension. All assigned work must be completed before the student returns to the classroom. The student will receive a grade of zero on all assignments and assessments completed during the course of the suspension.
6. In the case of any suspension, parents may be required to attend a conference with school administrators before a student is allowed to attend classes.
7. Students whose behavior continues to be contrary to the school's mission or Code of Honor may be placed on probation, suspended, or separated from the school.
8. Academic fraud – cheating on an assignment or assessment, plagiarism, etc. – is considered to be a grave breach of the Academy's Code of Honor, with potential long-term serious consequences for the student. Students are expected to perform on all assignments and assessments with honesty and integrity. Sharing information about exams or other assessments with other students is a form of academic fraud and will be handled accordingly. Students who commit academic fraud will earn a grade of zero on that piece of work and may be required to redo the assignment or retake the assessment. Students who commit academic fraud on more than one occasion will be subject to more serious consequences, up to and including failing a course and dismissal from the school.
9. A student who does not comply with the Dress Code may not be permitted to attend classes. Parents may be called and asked to bring appropriate clothing to school. Students may be required to remain in the Division office until appropriate clothing is made available.
10. In the event that a student damages or defaces school property or the property of others in our school community (including textbooks), the student and parents will be held responsible for all costs associated with repairs and/or replacement of said property. A student may be required to undertake repair work. In response to acts of defacement or vandalism, the Division Director may apply additional disciplinary measures – including detention, suspension, and separation.
11. Bullying and harassment are considered to be very serious breaches of the Academy's Code of Honor, with potential long-term impactful consequences for the student. Students who engage in such unacceptable behavior will be subject

to serious consequences, up to and including separation or dismissal from the school.

12. Florida law prohibits weapons or weapon look-a-likes to be brought to or possessed on any school campus. In addition to reporting all such cases to the appropriate law enforcement agency, students who bring such items to school, or possess them on campus, may face immediate suspension and possible separation.
13. Illicit drugs, as legally determined by judicial systems, tobacco products, and alcohol/alcohol containing beverages and products are not permitted on campus or on school-related outings or field trips for any reason, at any time. Student possession of any such substances on campus is considered a major offense, punishable by, under most circumstances, separation from school. Any student adjudicated or involved with the criminal or juvenile justice system in connection with the use of illicit substances, whether on or off campus, also faces possible separation from school. The use of illicit substances by students will not be tolerated by the Academy at the Lakes community.
14. A student adjudicated by or otherwise involved with the Adult or Juvenile Justice System may be separated from school. It is incumbent upon the parents and student to make the administration aware of the details of that adjudication or involvement at the time of the action or the enrollment of the student.

#### Probation

The school will make every effort to provide students with the support needed for a successful school experience. The school may, however, place students who fail to meet the school's expectations on academic and/or behavioral probation. Students placed on probation will be expected to meet certain specified conditions – that are communicated to parents – before being removed from such status. If these conditions are not met, or the underlying problems are not remedied, the student may face further consequences, including but not limited to suspension or separation.

#### Administrative Authority

The administration is the final authority regarding interpretations of all aspects of the Code of Honor – as well as of all academic and behavioral rules and policies – and the consequences assessed for violating those provisions. The Academy reserves the right to modify and/or amend the contents of this Family Handbook at any time during the school year. Though the school will endeavor to communicate any such changes to families in a timely manner, students and parents should check the Academy's website periodically to ensure that they are aware of the most current version of the school's Code of Honor, policies, and procedures.

## V. WHO TO CONTACT

- ☑ For **general school information or events**:
  - First, check the Handbook, website, *ParentsWeb*, the Weekly eCalendar, and/or specific e-mail messages.
  - Second, contact the Middle Division Administrative Assistant, Mrs. O'Donnell:
    - vodonnell@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 948-7600 x300
  
- ☑ If your question deals with a particular **class, teacher, or curriculum**:
  - First, contact that teacher:
    - E-mail address as listed in *ParentsWeb*
    - (813) 948-7600 (Please note: during the school day you may have to leave a voice mail message.)
  - Second, contact the Middle Division Director, Mr. Pitcairn for any follow-up:
    - jpitcairn@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 948-7600 x306
  
- ☑ If your question deals with **PE or athletics**:
  - For athletic schedules, consult the school website.
  - Otherwise, first contact the PE teacher or coach:
    - E-mail address as listed in *ParentsWeb*
    - (813) 948-7600 (Please note: during the school day you may have to leave a voice mail message.)
    - Contact information for coaches who are not members of the faculty will be provided at the beginning of each sport's season.
  - Second, contact our Athletic Director, Mr. Haslam, for any follow-up:
    - thaslam@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 948-7600 x331
  
- ☑ If your question deals with **billing or payments**:
  - Contact our Business Office Assistant, Mrs. Benson:
    - pbenson@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 948-7600 x217
  - Or contact our Business Manager, Mrs. Burnham:
    - dburnham@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 948-7600 x215
  
- ☑ If your question deals with **admissions**:
  - Contact our Admissions Liaison, Mrs. Gunther:
    - sgunther@academyatthelakes.org
    - (813) 909-7919 or (813) 948-7600 x931

- If your question deals with **financial support of the school**:
  - Contact our Associate Director of Development, Ms. Morrison:
    - [mmorrison@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:mmorrison@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x323
  
- If your question deals with **counseling or educational support** (IEPs, academic accommodations, or tutoring needs) for your student:
  - Contact our School Counselor, Mrs. Fulkroad:
    - [nfulkroad@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:nfulkroad@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x308
  - Or contact our School Psychologist, Ms. Rice:
    - [lrice@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:lrice@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x205
  
- If your question deals with **college counseling** for your student:
  - Contact our Director of College Counseling, Mrs. Pitcairn:
    - [dspitcairn@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:dspitcairn@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x328
  
- Lower Division:**
  - Lower Division Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Gonzalez (“Miss Twila”):
    - [tgonzalez@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:tgonzalez@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x201
  - Lower Division Director, Mrs. Heller:
    - [kheller@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:kheller@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x216
  
- Upper Division:**
  - Upper Division Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Baker:
    - [mbbaker@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:mbbaker@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x301
  - Upper Division Director, Mr. Sullivan:
    - [rdsullivan@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:rdsullivan@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x307
  
- Head of School:**
  - Assistant to the Head of School, Mrs. Sooklal:
    - [ksooklal@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:ksooklal@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x316
  - Head of School, Mr. Heller:
    - [mheller@academyatthelakes.org](mailto:mheller@academyatthelakes.org)
    - (813) 948-7600 x305



## **THE COLORS OF ACADEMY**

**Fight! Fight! Blue and White!**

The colors of Academy  
We're fighting for the White and Blue  
Oh yes, the colors of Academy  
Will spur us ever on to victory!

Oh yes, the colors of Academy  
Will keep us ever strong and true  
Blue and White, Truth and Light,  
They're the colors of Academy!

**Fight! Fight! Blue and White!**  
*(Repeat, then end with "Fight!")*

REC'D IN OFFICE: \_\_\_\_\_



**MIDDLE DIVISION FAMILY HANDBOOK AGREEMENT  
2018 - 2019**

**PARENT STATEMENT** – The signature of both parents is required unless a single parent household.

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_ (*Print Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name(s)*) have read the **2018-2019 Academy at the Lakes Middle Division Family Handbook** and understand that these are the policies of the school. By signing this form, I/we acknowledge the **Family Handbook** as binding and I/we explicitly accept its provisions as a condition of enrollment at the Academy. I/we agree to uphold and comply with all school rules and policies set out therein while my/our son/daughter is enrolled as an Academy student.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT STATEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*Print Student Name*) have read the **2018 – 2019 Middle Division Academy at the Lakes Family Handbook** and understand that these are the policies of the school. By signing this form, I acknowledge the **Family Handbook** as binding and I explicitly accept its provisions as a condition of enrollment at the Academy. I agree to uphold and comply with all school rules and policies set out therein while enrolled as an Academy student.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2331 Collier Parkway  
Land O' Lakes, Florida 34639  
(813) 948-7600  
www.academyatthelakes.org