



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

Upper Division Family Handbook

Wendlele Campus

PK3-4th Grade
(813) 948-7600
(813) 948-2943 fax

McCormick Campus

5th -12th Grades
(813) 948-7600
(813) 949-0563 fax

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.



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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

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| 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 <i>of heads to know the good, hearts to love the good, and hands to do the good.</i> |
| Stewardship | We care for each other and our school, serve our communities, and responsibly engage with the world - today and tomorrow. |

The Statement of Core Values is our institutional belief statement. Our core values are the basis for our mission.

Philosophy and History

Academy at the Lakes is a non-denominational, coeducational, PK3—12th 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 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.

Volunteering is a wonderful way for parents to become involved with the educational process. Volunteers are required to sign in and out and to wear an identification badge. Classroom volunteers must be approved through the office and the teachers involved.

Accreditation and Affiliation

Academy at the Lakes is accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS), and Cognia/AdvancEd/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.

GENERAL POLICIES AND RELATED INFORMATION

WENDLEK CAMPUS SCHOOL HOURS

PK3-SK	8:00am-3:00pm
1 st -4 th Grade	8:00am-3:15pm
Extended Care	3:15pm-6:00pm

MCCORMICK CAMPUS SCHOOL HOURS

5 th -12 th Grade	8:00am-3:15pm
Extended Care, Grades 5 th -8 th	3:30pm-6:00pm

Drop-Off and Dismissal Procedures

DROP-OFF INFORMATION: Supervised drop-off begins at 7:40am at the front of the school. On arriving, students should move directly on to their locker areas to prepare for the school day. It is strongly recommended that students arrive no later than 7:50am so as to give them sufficient time to greet each other and organize materials for their first classes. The first class begins promptly at 8:00am.

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 7:40am and 3:45pm**. A barrier will be in place to prevent entry to this roadway. Please do not attempt to drop off or pick up students in front of McCormick Hall or the 5th/6th Grade Suite between these hours.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURE: 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 Preakness Blvd at the light – *not* the Collier Parkway entrance. **For the safety of our students, the campus speed limit is 10 miles per hour.**
 - a. During morning drop-off, vehicles *southbound* on Collier Parkway may turn right at the cut-out south of the school and then turn right onto the one-way path around the loop. (There can be *no turns* onto the loop from the Collier Parkway entrance.)
 - b. Vehicles *northbound* on Collier Parkway *may not* turn left across the southbound lane to enter at the Collier Parkway entrance. They must turn left at the light at Preakness Blvd.
2. Carefully follow the one-way path around the two-lane entrance 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 Building.
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 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.

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.

STUDENT PARKING: Student drivers must use a hang tag to park on campus. To obtain a tag, students must complete the Permission To Drive to School Form online and provide a copy of their driver's license and current auto insurance card to Ms. Bernardino. Upper Division Students must park in the front lot in front of the Upper Division Building and Gymnasium.

DISMISSAL INFORMATION: At 3:15pm, students are dismissed for pick-up from the front of the Upper Division Building. Please inform the school 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 cards, or otherwise specifically identified to the school in writing or by telephone. Such individuals may be required to present a photo identification card.

Middle Division students are released for Dismissal directly from their last period classrooms as their names are called when their parents arrive in the McCormick Campus Loop. To help spread out pick-ups and to minimize congestion, **dismissal is staggered by Division:**

Middle Division Students may be picked up **3:20-3:30pm**.

Upper Division Students may be picked up **3:30-3:45pm**.

We ask families with students in more than one Division pick up during the 3:20-3:30pm window, but they may choose either of these times.

Students are responsible for notifying their parents of their whereabouts when they are involved in any after-school activity. Club activities and Extra-Help are generally over by 4:00pm, and athletic practices generally begin at 4:00pm.

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 7:40am and 3:45pm**. A barrier will be in place between these hours to prevent entry to this roadway. Please do not attempt to drop off or pick up students in front of McCormick Hall or the 5th/6th 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 **3:20-3:30pm for Middle Division students** or **3:30-3:45pm for Upper Division students**. 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 10mph.**
3. **Please ensure that the name card issued by the school is prominently displayed on your dashboard.**
4. As you pass the businesses approaching the school grounds, please be sure to keep to the right of the cones that separate the entrance lane and the exit lane. For the safety of students and out of respect for our neighbors, **please do not park at one of these businesses and ask your child to walk to you.**
5. Past the entrance on to campus, *both* of the lanes fronting Collier Parkway will be used to stack cars for pick-up.
 1. A member of our Facilities crew will be at the entrance to guide incoming vehicles as they alternate into these two lanes.
 2. 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.
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.
 1. The **right lane** is for **drop-offs and pick-ups.**
 2. 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.

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 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. 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 an absence unless special circumstances exist. Parents must communicate with the Division Director and submit the Extended Absence Notification Form at least two weeks prior to any absences longer than 3 days. **The Extended Absence Notification Form** is available online on our website under Forms and in the office. Depending upon the individual circumstances, the Division Director will decide whether the proposed absence is excused or not.

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 carpool, please notify the school in writing or call by 8:00am.

MISSED WORK: **The student is responsible** for identifying and making up all work he/she missed during an absence. **All work** (homework, quizzes, tests, projects, etc.) that was assigned prior to the absence(s) and was due during the absence(s) is **due on the day the student returns** from that absence *unless* it contains new material given during the absence(s).

- A student who misses part of a day must hand in assignments and/or take any quiz or test scheduled for that day or make arrangements to make up that assessment with the instructor after arriving or before leaving campus. A student who fails to do so may receive a zero for the missed assessment.
- A student who misses one or more day(s) will have one day to make up missed work upon his/her return for each day of absence. (For example, a student whose absence lasted three days will have three days *after* returning to complete the work that was assigned during the absence, turning it in on the fourth day.) A student who misses assessments assigned and given during an absence should meet with the instructor on the day of his/her return to schedule make-up work.

Students are always encouraged to be proactive about their studies and to communicate with their teachers during their absences.

PARTICIPATION IN AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES: In order to participate in practices, games, or performances for any activities on that day, a student must be present by the beginning of the second block.

Punctuality

TARDY POLICIES: In order for students to achieve to their highest potential and to develop the 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, placing an undue burden on their teachers, and disrupting the learning environment of their classmates.

All students who arrive to school after 8:00am are considered tardy to their first period class and must check in at the main office to receive an admit slip before attending class. With three tardies, students will lose cell phone privileges for a week. They will be required to turn in their cell phones to the main office at the beginning of the school day. Further tardies will result in escalated penalty and may result in academic and/or other disciplinary consequences. Those consequences may include but not be limited to loss of senior privileges, lunch/after school detention, and/or in-school suspension. 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.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY: All students who leave school early must be released through and signed out in the office. Teachers will not release students directly from the classrooms. For students who drive themselves, parents must notify the office in writing, by phone, or by email of any early release plans. It should also be noted that the same rules that apply to excused or unexcused absences apply to early release.

Please note that the period of time just before regular dismissal (3:00–3:15pm) is a very busy time in both the classrooms and offices. Kindly reserve your requests for early dismissal to extraordinary situations.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES: Although some absences are unavoidable, regular attendance is important to academic success. Should the number of absences reach a point where the student's ability to maintain the pace in the classroom, there may be grade repercussions. As a general rule, the school will consider nine absences per semester to be excessive. At the discretion of the Division Director, a student may be exempted from such consequences because of extended illness, valid religious reason or for other reasons deemed to be in the best interest of the student.

Sickness Policy

PRIOR TO ARRIVING AT SCHOOL: Please check your child daily for these symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.0 or greater
- Sore throat
- Vomiting, Diarrhea, Abdominal Pain
- New loss of taste or smell
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline).
- New onset of severe headache

If your child has any one of these symptoms, please keep them home and contact your student's Division Administrative Assistant and Michelle Prade, School RN at mprade@academyatthelakes.org for further guidance.

STUDENTS WHO ARE SICK AT HOME: Students who stay home because of illness for three or more consecutive days must be seen by a physician and must present a return-to-school note with a diagnosis from that physician upon return to school.

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 100 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 vomiting 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 chickenpox, 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.

WHILE AT SCHOOL

Children who have temperatures above 100.0 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.

If a student who is present at school is sent to the Nurse with two or more COVID symptoms (see list below), the student will immediately be sent home. Parents then have three options to choose from for the student to be able to return to On-Campus learning:

1. Have the student see her/his physician, and present a return-to-school note with diagnosis from that physician
2. Stay home for 3 days
3. Have COVID PCR test done

COVID SYMPTOMS:

- Fever or Chills
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Nausea, Vomiting, and/or Diarrhea
- New loss of smell and taste
- Congestion or runny nose
- Muscle or body aches

PENDING COVID TESTS: If a student has a pending COVID test*, please have the student remain at home until the COVID test results are known. Please email Michelle Prade, RN with any information regarding a student and a pending COVID test at mprade@academyatthelakes.org.

In the event of an extended absence (three or more days) 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.

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 exception is seniors who have permission to leave campus during lunch and fourth block. Students must sign out when they leave and sign back in when they return. Students may not go to the parking lot for any reason unless given permission by an administrator.

Communications and Conferences

Please make certain that we have current and accurate home, cell, and business phone numbers, current and accurate email addresses, as well as information on whom to contact in an emergency, should you be unavailable.

The secured parent section of the school's web site (www.academyatthelakes.org) is a particularly rich and useful source of school information, providing access to a regularly updated newsletter, calendar, important forms, etc. To access this section, please click on "**Parents**" in the upper right-hand corner and enter the password AATL. The website also includes a *Facts Family Portal* link, through which parents have access to weekly assignment sheets for their children, grades, email links to teachers, attendance records and community service records. (See "Using *Facts Family Portal*" below.)

Much communication between home and school is done by email. Teachers often communicate directly with parents about the progress of students in their classroom. These types of communication will also be emailed home:

- Weekly eCalendar
- Remind
- Quarterly Report Cards

If a parent needs to contact a teacher during the school day, he/she should call the administrative assistant at 948-7600 to leave a message for the teacher or follow the directions on the voicemail to leave a message in the teacher's voice mailbox. The teacher will return the call within 24 hours. Email is a very effective way to communicate with teachers. Email addresses are listed in the online school directory through *Facts Family Portal* and links to teachers' emails are accessible on *Facts Family Portal* under School Information. Please refer to the Whom to Contact section at the end of this handbook.

When parents deem it more appropriate, they may call or 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 he or she will be able to meet with you. Teachers have been instructed not to conference with parents between classes, while on morning or afternoon duty or in the car line.

Parents may 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. Quarterly Report Cards will be emailed home each quarter.

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

Using *FACTS FAMILY PORTAL*

USING FACTS SIS Family Portal: Through the portal to our online school management system (FACTS), parents are able to view their child's assignments, grades, email teachers, monitor their child's attendance and community service records, and find school directory information. To connect to the Family Portal, go to www.factsmgt.com. Click on "Parent Login." From the drop-down list, select "FACTS Family Portal". This will take you to the parent/student login page. Alternatively, click on the Facts Family Portal Link in the Parent Portal of the school website. The 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,” as appropriate.

Click “Create New Web Family Portal Account.”

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

Enter the District Code: AL-FL.

Enter your e-mail address and your 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.

Community Service

Upper Division students at Academy at the Lakes must complete a service requirement in order to graduate. This program differs from the middle division program in that students are expected to schedule their own service opportunities outside of school. It also becomes the responsibility of the students to fill out a community service hours form, have it signed by a representative of the organization served, and turn it into the Upper Division Office. In addition, Key Club, National Honor Society and the administration organize a variety of service opportunities throughout the year for which students may sign up.

The goal of the Upper Division Service Program is to develop a spirit of citizenship, leadership, and service in our graduates, as well as an understanding of their ability to make a difference in the community. By the time they graduate, Academy at the Lakes students will have a broad range of experience in different situations and with diverse groups of people. In addition to learning about the world around them, they will understand better what interests they have. While building a habit of service to the community, they will learn to “know the good, love the good, and do the good.”

NUMBER OF HOURS REQUIRED: Each student must complete 150 documented hours of service by the end of the spring semester of his/her senior year in order to receive an Academy diploma. Students entering the Academy after their freshman year will have their hours prorated as follows: new sophomores will need to complete 120 hours in three years, new juniors will need to complete 80 hours in two years and new seniors will need to complete 40 hours in one year. As delineated below, students are required to complete 100 of the 150 hours with organizations outside of Academy at the Lakes. In order to help students budget their hours, we strongly recommend yearly minimums of 40 hours. Many students will complete many more than the required hours. Please submit hours beyond the minimum so we can acknowledge student excellence in this area.

*The 2/3 policy for outside hours will be waived for the Class of 2023 due to COVID restrictions their freshmen and sophomore years.

GUIDELINES: Volunteering with any non-profit organization is acceptable. If you are uncertain about an activity, get approval from the Upper Division Director before you do it. Forms to record hours are available on the school website under Forms and Links and should be turned in to Ms. Bernardino.

Cumulative Records

The school maintains cumulative educational records for each enrolled student. 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 Upper 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 or images on school grounds will be subject to disciplinary action.

Dress Code

Upper Division students have an opportunity to make choices about their apparel within a set of guidelines. Parents who actively participate in partnership with Academy at the Lakes to create an atmosphere of appropriate dress and demeanor give students the support they need to develop good judgment. Appropriate dress creates a safe environment that promotes academic success. The Upper Division Director and Dean of Students will make the final determination as to the propriety of a student's dress or appearance.

Dress Code Guidelines

Clothing

- Other than college shirts and sweatshirts, clothing should be free of conspicuous logos, brand names, graphic designs. Rude, vulgar, and profane speech is not acceptable.
- Clothing should be neat, clean, and free of wrinkles, frays, tears, and holes.
- Clothing should cover undergarments, shoulders, midriffs, backs, and private body parts.
- Shorts and pants must have two of the following: belt loops, zipper, pockets. They may not be made of mesh or sweatpants material and must be free of conspicuous logos.
- Tights and leggings should be worn with tops that reach mid-thigh.
- Denim blue jeans are only allowed on "Jean Days."
- School spirit shirts and other Academy shirts are encouraged.

- Hair, including facial hair, should be neatly groomed and clean.

Footwear

- All footwear must be secured around the heel with a back or strap; no flip flops or slides.
- Feet must be appropriately covered and protected in Physical Education, Science, and Art classes.
- Excessively high-heeled shoes are not appropriate for school.

Accessories

- Hats may not be worn during the school day except during PE class. Hoods may not be worn up.
- Tattoos must be covered and not visible.
- Piercings other than earrings may not be worn.

Business Attire Days (Professional Workplace Style)

Several days during the year are designated as “Business Attire Days.” On these days, the students are required to dress in clothing appropriate for a professional workplace:

Dress slacks with a belt and a collared, buttoned shirt (ties are optional) or a dress, skirt, or dress slacks and a blouse or sweater. No sweatshirts.

Dress shoes with non-white socks or dress sandals, pumps, or flats. Athletic shoes are not allowed.

Emergency Procedures

A. Injuries and Health Conditions

In the event of a minor injury or illness on campus, the School Nurse will notify the parents or guardian through *FACTS*. In the event of a more serious injury or illness, a school employee will dial 911, explain the nature of the emergency, then promptly contact a parent or guardian. A school employee will remain with the student until a parent or guardian is able to get to the medical facility where the student is being treated. If the school is not able to reach a parent or guardian, the School Nurse will take the action necessary in the best interest of the student.

B. Emergency Drills

Drills and evacuations are conducted routinely as a measure of preparedness in the event of a fire, severe weather, or other potential threats to community safety.

C. Communications with Parents

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

D. First Aid/CPR/AED Trained Personnel

The school requires designated employees to be trained and certified in First Aid/CPR/AED by the American Red Cross.

E. 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.

F. 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 the pick up to identify themselves with a valid driver's license. Such individuals will sign students out of school.

G. Severe Weather/School Closing

During a severe weather alert the following activities will occur:

1. Administrative Assistants and the Controller will monitor the emergency broadcast system and news/weather web sites.
2. 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.
3. Parents will be notified of school closings due to weather or other emergencies through our Parent Alert. The Parent Alert will send a text message to the cell phone(s) listed in FACTS. 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 accordingly.
4. 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.
5. In the event of a utility service interruption (electric service, water service) the Head of School will decide whether school will remain in session.

H. 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 or neglect 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. Please note that the law requires our teachers and personnel to report when they have reason to believe a child has been subject to abuse or neglect.

I. 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 illicit substances and/or their paraphernalia will be subject to applicable laws and school policies concerning such items. The relevant school policies are detailed in the “Code of Honor and Discipline Policies” section of this handbook.

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.

J. Search

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

K. 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 a visitor or volunteer badge and will be escorted to the location of their service. Visiting friends must have prior permission from the Upper 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.

L. Supervision

For their own safety and well-being, students must be under the supervision of a faculty or staff

member at all times during school hours and while taking part in after-school activities. 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. Students may not walk off campus at any time during the school day without such supervision. Avoiding or evading these supervision requirements will be considered a serious breach of discipline and will be treated accordingly.

Continuous 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 (Continuous Enrollment Agreement) is issued to all families upon acceptance to the school. The contract and annual Enrollment Agreement Supplement fully outline the financial obligation of the adult(s) responsible for the financial commitment which signing the contract represents.

The school bases expenditures for teachers and other personnel, as well as overall operations, upon contracted students. 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 in more than one installment, and the fee will be collected by the school. The Tuition Refund Plan provides 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 Refund Plan requirement. Parents who pay the tuition in full are not required to participate in the 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 Fee, and other miscellaneous expenses which 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.

Summer school or summer tutorial work may be required in cases where a student did not pass a course. Re-enrollment decisions are usually made each January by the administration. A decision to offer continued re-enrollment to a student 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, re-enrollment decisions 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 re-enrollment to 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. School Entry Health Exam (Florida Department of Health Form 3040)
2. Florida Certificate of Immunization (Florida Department of Health Form 680)
3. Birth certificate copy (verifies birth date)

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, Upper Division retreat 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 for such trips is part of the annual Enrollment Agreement Supplement. The school will make every effort to notify parents of field trips well in advance. This is not always possible when unexpected opportunities arise. Members of the faculty generally chaperone all field trips.

UPPER DIVISION RETREAT: Sometime during the first weeks of school, 9th-12th graders attend an overnight retreat at a retreat center, chaperoned by members of the faculty. All 9th-12th grade students are highly encouraged to attend. The dates for the retreat are published in the school calendar. Detailed information will be provided to parents at the beginning of the school year.

EXTENDED TRIPS: 9th-12th graders go on an extended overnight trip chaperoned by members of the faculty and administration. All 9th-12th grade students are encouraged to attend these trips. The dates for these trips are published in the school calendar. Detailed information, including the cost to parents, will be provided to parents well in advance of each trip.

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 the school year. House shirts should not be altered in any way - marked up, cut and/or ripped. If students wear altered shirts, they will be required to replace their shirts prior to participating in school events.

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. All bags and backpacks must be placed safely inside or on top of students' lockers.

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 students' lockers. Because some lockers are located in exterior spaces, there is a risk of theft and damage by trespassers, especially at night, over the weekend, and during school holidays. Students should not keep valuables, including cash, in their lockers at any time. Such items are best left at home.

Students in P.E. classes are encouraged to bring a combination lock for use in the gym locker room during their P.E. class. Locks and belongings must be taken with the students after each P.E. class. Upper Division athletes will be assigned a locker for use during their sport season.

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. Found valuables – such as jewelry, calculators, cell phones, etc. – will be turned in to the Division office.

Lunch

An “order out” lunch program is available each school day and must be ordered in advance. (Details of the program are shared with families separately.) Students may choose to bring in their own lunches. Students must remain in the Upper Division designated lunch areas 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.

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

DRINK: Because of the proven health and learning benefits of staying well hydrated, students are welcome to bring beverages to class. Bottles must have closeable tops. Students, of course, are responsible for cleaning up after themselves whenever and wherever they are permitted to drink.

Medical Information/Medications

Parents should make the school aware of any health problem(s), including medical conditions or allergies, that their child(ren) may have by entering the information in *FACTS Family Portal*. Over-the-counter medications may be administered to students on campus only if parents have:

1. Submitted the “Authorization to Dispense Medication” form through Formstack.
2. Provided said medication – labeled with the student’s name – to the School Nurse or Ms. Bernardino.

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

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Student’s Name | d. Physician’s Name |
| b. Name of Medication | e. Date of Prescription |
| c. Dosage Prescribed | f. Special Instruction |

Medication will be counted by the School Nurse and recorded on the “Authorization to Dispense Medication” form.

Students will be allowed to carry medication/equipment for life-threatening emergencies, such as inhalers and Epi-Pens, with the completed required form on file with the nurse.

All students must have a completed Florida Certification of Immunization form (DH 680), or equivalent, with either proof of immunization or exemption on file.

Physicians may obtain the Florida Certification of Immunization Forms 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.

Personal Technology

The Academy considers there to be three keys to digital citizenship: looking after yourself, looking to the well-being of others, and looking after the property of others.

CELL PHONES AND TELEPHONE MESSAGES: Upper Division students may bring cell phones to school. Except during the designated times of lunch and breaks, phones must be silenced and stored away from sight. Travel time between classes is not an appropriate time for phone use. Unless given permission, students may not use their cell phones during class, including study halls. Improperly used cell phones will be confiscated by the teacher and turned into the Upper Division office. 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.

Should parents need to reach their child during the school day, they should call the school 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.

EARBUDS & HEADPHONES: Earbuds and headphones, with or without cords, may be used during study hall and during class when specifically instructed by a teacher. These may not be used during breaks, lunch, or passing periods.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Academy strives to have students interact meaningfully with each other and with faculty during the school day. Therefore, students may only use electronic devices such as laptops or tablets with plug-in earbuds in study halls.

Any student who uses an electronic device for an inappropriate purpose, such as anything constituting harassing, disrespectful, or unacceptable behavior is bound by Academy's procedures, rules, Technology Acceptable Use Agreement, and Code of Honor. The Academy reserves the right to inspect and/or monitor any personal electronic device brought onto school property or to a school-sponsored event. A student 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.

Pets and Animals

Academy at the Lakes recognizes that pets can be an important part of our lives and are often included in daily family activities, such as bringing children to and from school. We also understand, however, that bringing pets to school may pose a health and safety risk to our students, as some children are allergic or fearful; even the most well-behaved animals may behave unpredictably when confronted by many people, especially children (who also behave unpredictably). As a result, family pets are not allowed on the school campus during the school day or at school-related events without the express permission of the Head of School. Domesticated animals will only be allowed on campus under the following conditions: if they are a certified service or guide dog, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines; or to support a school program or curriculum.

Senior Privileges

To gain experience with the freedoms students will have in college, seniors have special privileges. They may go off campus for lunch with written parental permission. Parents must submit a completed Senior Privileges Form before privileges will begin. As long as seniors accurately sign in and out at the office, they may avail themselves of this privilege when they are not in an assigned class. These privileges are dependent on students being up to date with assignments and in accordance with all Academy rules and policies, including dress code, cell phone, attendance and tardy policies. Any abuse of these privileges along with the failure to meet academic or other school responsibilities will result in the suspension of these privileges.

Solicitors

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

Sports

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

Summer School

Summer at the Lakes Summer School is the official summer school program of the Academy at the Lakes. We offer both for-credit high school classes as well as noncredit, enrichment classes for students in Kindergarten through 8th Grade. High school classes are taught through a blended learning model (a mixture of face to face and online). Students meet with teachers on campus during the first week of the course for set-up instructions and during the last week of the course for final review and assessments. Students have access to teachers via phone, e-mail, and Zoom throughout the course. Elementary and middle school courses are conducted on the McCormick and Wendlek Campuses from early June to the end of July. Enrollment for the summer program begins in March of each year. More detailed information will be distributed before then. In

order to ensure the availability of 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 must be returned at the end of the semester or school year. Should a student lose or damage a textbook, his or her parents will be billed for the replacement cost.

Visitors

STUDENT VISITORS: Other than prospective student visits arranged through the Admissions Office, students must make arrangements for visitors with the Division Director at least 48 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. A visitor must sign in and out at the office and wear a Visitor's badge while on campus.

ADULT VISITORS: All visitors must sign in at the office and wear a Visitor's badge, including Academy parents and alumni.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Policy

The Upper Division Director coordinates academic matters. There are situations when, for various reasons, it is best that a student not be promoted to the next grade level. In case of course failure, the school may, at its discretion, require summer work, the retaking of a class, or the repeating of a grade. Students whose GPA falls below 2.0 will be placed on academic probation and given one semester to raise their GPA.

Intellectual, social, emotional, or physical growth may be such that the child will benefit most if the present grade is repeated. It is the school's policy that decisions of this nature will only be made after meeting with the family, teachers, and administrative staff 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 placement.

Resolving Classroom Concerns

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

Grades

GRADING SCALE:	90-100	A	4.0
	80-89	B	3.0
	70-79	C	2.0
	60-69	D	1.0
	0-59	F	0.0

ACADEMIC HONORS: Students who achieve a 4.0 grade point average at the end of an academic quarter 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*.

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 (chorus, strings, band, and theater) 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.

Graduation Requirements

Total Credits

4 English (I –II –III –IV)

4 Math

3 Science (Biology, at least 2 with substantial lab)

3 Social Science (World History, U.S. History, American Government/Economics)

3 Foreign Language (at least 2 in the same language)

1 Health Opportunities in Physical Education (HOPE)

1 Fine Arts

1 Senior Seminar

4 Other credits

150 Hours Community Service (pro-rated for years of enrollment)

Externship/Job Shadow of 30-35 hours completed during Spring Break of junior or senior year or during the summer between 11th and 12th grade.

These are minimum requirements. A student may elect to take additional credits. No student is permitted to take fewer than 5 credits during a school year, except under extenuating circumstances. Academy at the Lakes does not allow students to graduate early.

Homework

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS IN THE UPPER DIVISION: Homework is a regular experience for students in the Upper Division. Faculty members give assignments to supplement the ideas, concepts, skills, and content covered in class. Faculty members also assign long-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.

Students and parents are encouraged to regularly refer to the weekly assignments page and student grades page through the *Facts Family Portal* link on the school website.

HOMEWORK AND HOLIDAYS: Families may always request an extension on homework assigned over any religious holiday observed by that family.

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, if accepted by a teacher, will be subject to a grade penalty up to and including the full value of the assignment.

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 about the missing work to explain the expectations for making it up.

Extra Help

We encourage students to seek out extra help directly from their teachers before enlisting a tutor. Extra help is available every day after 3:15 pm, Monday through Thursday. Students may make an appointment with their teachers for extra help.

Final Exams

During the last week of each semester, students sit for exams in each of their core classes: English, math, science, social studies and foreign language. 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. Any exception must be approved by the Division Director at least one month ahead of time. 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 borrowing of materials in the school library. If you have a question about materials in the library, please contact our Director of Library Services, Jay Gibson at jgibson@academyatthelakes.org.

Honor Societies

Academy at the Lakes has chapters of the National Honor Society and National English Honor Society. The criteria for student induction into these societies are as follows:

National Honor Society

- Students in 11th and 12th grades must be enrolled in Academy for at least one semester and must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 are eligible for membership.
- Students must have completed a minimum number of community service hours to apply for membership
 - Class of 2023 and Class of 2024 - 50 hours
 - Class of 2025 and beyond - 75 hours
- Students are evaluated based on service, character, citizenship and leadership according to the guidelines stated in the NHS Handbook.
- Students shall be accepted by a majority vote of the faculty council based on the NHS criteria.
- Students who have already been inducted into the NHS at a previous school will automatically be enrolled in Academy's chapter.
- Students must maintain a minimum GPA and adhere to the guidelines or risk removal from NHS.

National English Honor Society

- Students must attend the school one semester prior to being considered.
- Students must complete two semesters of English prior to induction as members
- Students must maintain a minimum overall grade point average of a 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) prior to induction as members
- Students must maintain a minimum overall English grade point average of a 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) prior to induction as members

Online Courses

An Academy at the Lakes diploma is awarded to students who successfully complete the Academy's required curriculum for graduation with Academy's faculty on campus.

Online courses can be valuable supplementary education and are encouraged for this purpose. However, courses students take outside of Academy (whether online or in person) will only be granted Academy credit under limited circumstances. All such courses for credit must be approved by the Division Director. Appropriate circumstances for granting Academy credit may include:

- 1) A student wishes to take a course not offered at Academy at the Lakes.
- 2) A student cannot get a required course needed to graduate into his/her scheduled day at Academy.
- 3) A student wishes to retake a course for grade repair or improvement of skills.
- 4) Health reasons mandate that a student must study at home for an extended period of

time.

- 5) If a course is offered by Academy at the Lakes Summer School, it will not be approved to be taken online.

*Academy will consider students' wishes to accelerate a particular core course of study on a case by case basis.

College Courses

Students may take courses, outside the high school graduation requirements, at colleges/universities in the area or over the summers. These courses can provide valuable experiences and expand educational opportunities. Students must work around their schedule at Academy at the Lakes. Academy reserves the right to accept or deny these credits towards high school graduation.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Support Services Team

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 Administrative Team and the Student Support Services Team are available to work with students and families as needed. At AATL we are committed to the success of each individual and seek to provide appropriate support when needed so that all students will attain this goal. The Student Support Services Team includes the Academic Support Director, the School Psychologist, the School Counselor, and the School Reading Specialist. This Team supports students, parents, and faculty in areas of academic, social, and emotional skills and development.

Academic Support

In addition to after school extra help regularly available to all Upper Division students, Academic Support is available for students who are experiencing a short or long-term challenge meeting the academic demands of AATL. Academic Support may include additional instructional time, organizational support, and instruction in effective study skills. Academic Support is typically provided during students' study halls

Accommodations

If a student has been identified with a qualifying diagnosis, they may be eligible for specific accommodations. The Student Support Team will work with the family to determine appropriate accommodations which will best serve the student while also meeting the expectations of the AATL academic program. AATL will not make modifications to the academic expectations. In some cases, the Academy may not be the best match for a student and the family will have to make other school arrangements.

Advisory Program

All Upper Division students are assigned to a faculty advisor who meets regularly with their advisory group throughout the school year. One goal of advisory is to build supportive communities and relationships within a small-group setting. Advisors also act as advocates for their advisees by assisting them on their Upper Division journey.

Counseling Services

The mission of the Academy at the Lakes counseling department is to empower all students to reach their potential in academic, personal, and social development. The counseling department 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 navigate through their middle and high school career. Counseling services will also include prevention and/or intervention activities to meet students' needs through individual or group counseling in areas including academic, social and emotional learning (e.g., anger, stress, and time 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. Confidentiality is an essential part of building trusting relationships with students. The counselor will keep student interactions confidential unless professional judgment warrants otherwise. School counselors may need to break confidentiality when a student threatens to harm themselves or others, the student has been harmed by others, and/or when others report concerns about the student's safety.

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, behavior that is inconsistent with our Statement on Diversity (pg. 9), 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 Honor Code.

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 supports safety, integrity, and care for the school, its people, its property and its reputation.
4. Refrain from the use of profane 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 *cyber bullying*, 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

Cyber bullying means bullying by any electronic communication through the use of any electronic device, including but not limited to email, text message, social media post, or instant message. Cyber bullying includes the creation of a webpage, blog, or social media account 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.

Cyber bullying 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 sincere 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.

Hazing

The Academy prohibits all forms of hazing, whether it occurs on or off campus and regardless of a student's consent to participate. Hazing is considered a serious violation of the Academy's Code of Honor. A student violates this policy whenever he or she engages or assists in the planning or committing of any act of hazing, whether on or off campus. Each student is also responsible for immediately reporting any planned or actual hazing activity to a member of the faculty, coaching staff, or administration; failure to do so is also a violation of this policy. Any student found by the administration to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including separation from the school. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of hazing activity.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following instances: 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 in the school 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 sexual 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. 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 the computer in all disciplines and its capacity to access the Internet has increased the possibility for computer fraud, using the computer to misrepresent someone else's work as your own. Academy at the Lakes does not tolerate this in any way and offenses will be treated as plagiarism under the Code of Honor. The fact that the computer 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, instant messages, chat rooms, social networking sites (such as Zoom, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, iMessage, and YouTube) or the telephone 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.

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Vaping

The use of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and other inhaled substances (hereinafter "illicit substances") is a health, safety, and environmental hazard for students, faculty, and staff. The use of such substances by students harms both individuals and their community. It adversely affects the individual's physical, mental, and emotional development. It also violates federal, state, and local laws.

Accordingly, the use or possession of illicit substances – including the full range of vaping and electronic cigarette devices, whatever the vaporized liquid – *or their paraphernalia* are strictly prohibited from campus and from all school-related field trips or events off campus. Student use or possession of any such substances – on or off campus – is considered a major offense warranting a serious disciplinary response, from the required completion of a drug/alcohol

prevention program, suspension, and up to possible separation from school. Any student found to have engaged in the selling or distribution of illicit substances may be separated from school. Any student adjudicated or involved with the criminal or juvenile justice system in connection with the possession, use, or distribution of such substances – whether on or off campus – also faces possible separation from school. The Academy at the Lakes community will not tolerate the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and other inhaled substances in our community.

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 will be expected to meet with the student privately and then, if necessary, report the violation to the Dean or Division Director. The Dean or 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, and the violation will be considered a major disciplinary offense. The Dean or Division Director will recommend a course of action based upon his or her investigation.

When a student recognizes that he or she has violated the Code of Honor, either 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 notified and the school procedures for such offenses 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 the violator to make an admission of having violated the Code of Honor to an appropriate adult; (b) not confront the violator but report the violation to a faculty member, advisor, or administrator – 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.

Interventions and consequences for inappropriate behavior include the following:

1. A student who behaves inappropriately will receive counseling from teachers and 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 may 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/or separation from the school.
9. 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.
10. 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 from the school.
11. 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.
12. 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 the adjudication 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. If a student is placed on probation, parents and the student will meet with the Division Director to discuss a plan for improvement. 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, school 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.

WHOM TO CONTACT

- For **general school information or events**:
 - First, check the Handbook, the password-protected portal on the website, *Facts Family Portal*, and/or e-mail messages.
 - Second, contact the McCormick Campus Administrative Assistant, Ms. Bernardino:
 - mbernardino@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x301
 - Or contact the Upper Division Director, Ms. Sciortino:
 - jsciortino@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x307
- If your question deals with **college counseling, transcripts and records** for your student: Contact the Upper Division Assistant Director and College Counselor and Registrar, Mrs. Pitcairn:
 - dspitcairn@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x328
- If your question deals with **student activities or discipline** for your student: Contact the McCormick Campus Dean of Students, Mr. Soler
 - jsoler@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x364
- If your question deals with **educational support or academic accommodations** for your student: Contact Academic Support, Judy Kent
 - Jkent@academyatthelakes.org
 - 813-948-7600 x400
- If your question deals with **counseling** for your student: Contact our Guidance Counselor, Ms. Matthews
 - amatthews@academyatthelakes.org

- (813) 948-7600 x350
 - (813) 308-9408 Google Voice for text and voice messages
- If your question deals with a particular **class, teacher or curriculum**:
 - First, contact that teacher:
 - E-mail address as listed in the School Directory
 - (813) 948-7600 (Please note: during the school day you may have to leave a voicemail message.)
 - Home phone as listed in the School Directory
 - Second, contact Mrs. Sciortino (see above) for any follow-up.
- If your question deals with **athletics**:
 - For athletic schedules, consult the school website
 - Otherwise, first contact the Athletic Director, Mr. Haslam:
 - thaslam@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x331
 - Contact the coach for team specific information:
 - Contact information for coaches who are not members of the faculty will be provided at the beginning of each sport's season.
- If your question deals with **billing or payments**:
 - Contact the Business Office Assistant, Mrs. Benson:
 - pbenson@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x217
 - Or contact the Chief Financial Officer: Mr. Pesch
 - ppesch@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x314
- If your question deals with **admissions**:
 - Contact our Associate Director of Admissions, Ms. Starkey:
 - mstarkey@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 909-7919 or (813) 948-7600 x315
 - Or contact our Director of Admissions, Ms. Gunther:
 - sgunther@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 909-7919 or (813) 948-7600 x931
- If your question deals with **financial support of the school**:
 - Contact the Director of Development, Dr. Fugate
 - jfugate@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x323
- If your question deals with **health or medical matters** for your student:
 - Contact our School Nurse, Ms. Prade, RN:
 - mprade@academyatthelakes.org

- (813) 948-7600 x377
- **Lower Division:**
 - Lower Division Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Gonzalez (“Miss Twila”):
 - tgonzalez@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x201
 - Lower Division Director, Ms. Jewell
 - RJewell@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x311
- **Middle Division:**
 - Middle Division Assistant Director, Mrs. Jeter
 - sjeter@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x300
 - Middle Division Director, Mr. Pitcairn:
 - jpitcairn@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x306
- **Head of School:**
 - Assistant to the Head of School, Mrs. Sooklal:
 - ksooklal@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x316
 - Head of School, Mr. Heller:
 - mheller@academyatthelakes.org
 - (813) 948-7600 x305



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



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!")