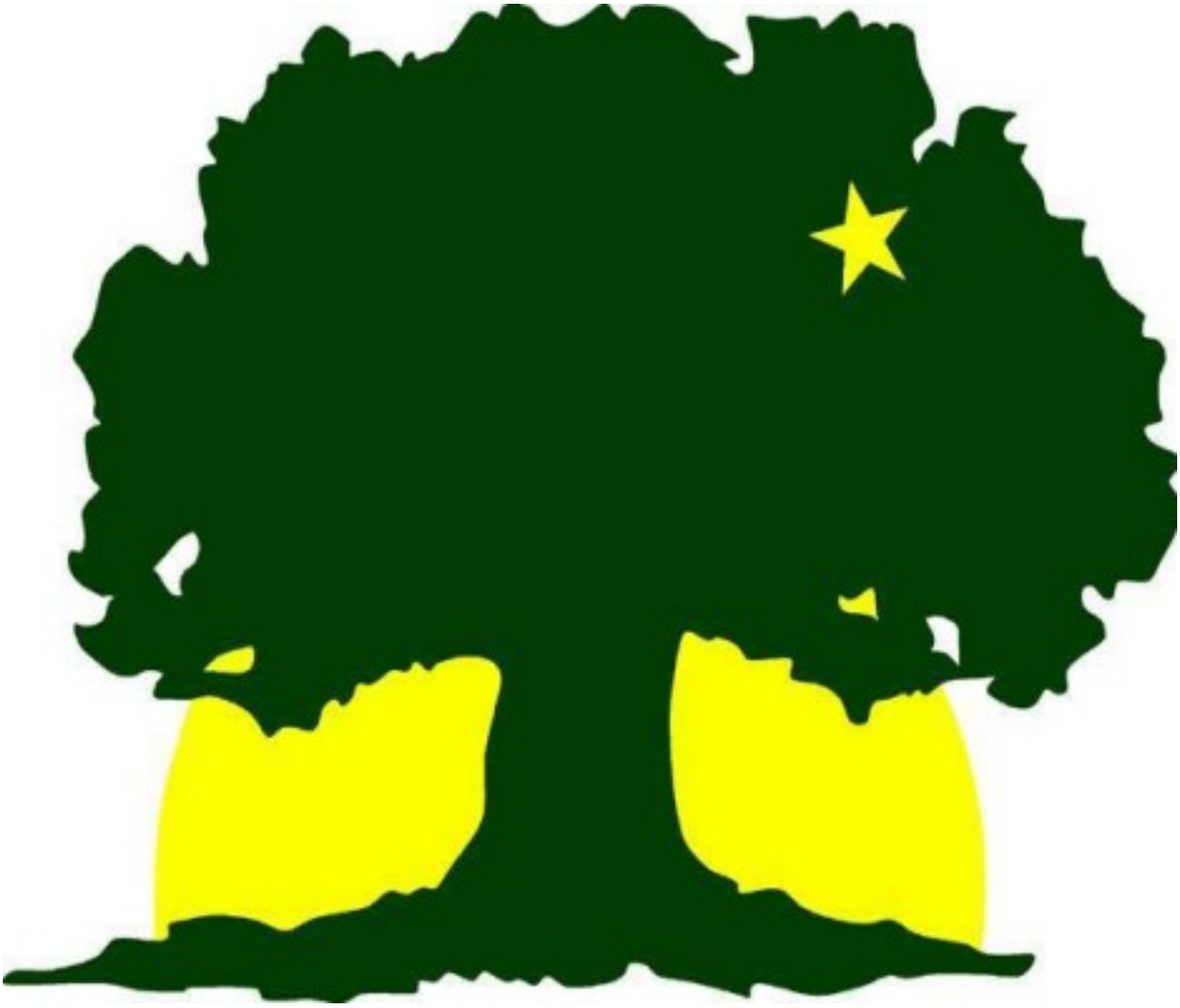


Scholar and Parent/Guardian Handbook 2026-2027

Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg

Joan Fortune Campus

Home of the Eagles

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Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg

SCHOLAR & PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Mission

To inspire and empower scholars qualifying for need-based scholarships to be future community leaders through a rigorous middle school program coupled with ongoing graduate support.

Statement of Philosophy

Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg was established in 1997 as a tuition-free, independent middle school for children who qualify for need-based scholarships. In the atmosphere of an extended family, Academy Prep encourages and teaches scholars to excel in academics, ethical and moral understanding and judgment, and life skills. The school is modeled after its predecessor, the Nativity Mission Center, which operated in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, New York, from 1971. A second Academy Prep Center opened in Tampa in 2003. A third Academy Prep Center opened in Lakeland in 2019.

The school is dedicated to educating economically-disadvantaged children, primarily from its neighborhood in South St. Petersburg, through providing an academically challenging, enriching, and structured environment.

Academy Prep admits scholars who demonstrate the ability to handle a rigorous and demanding academic program designed to prepare them for success in secondary school and college. Through its year-round program, the school promotes the intellectual, athletic, and social development of its scholars. Academy Prep scholars and graduates are expected to act as mature and responsible individuals who contribute to their communities and demonstrate charity and concern in all their actions.

Scholars may apply for admission only to the fifth and sixth grades. We do not accept new seventh or eighth graders because it takes at least three, and preferably four, years for our scholars to benefit fully from the Academy Prep program.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg admits scholars of any race, color, and national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to scholars at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its education policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

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Academy Prep
Center of St. Petersburg

Dear Scholars and Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I want to welcome you to Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg for the 2026-2027 school year.

I am confident that we will not only honor our mission, but through the support and commitment of the entire Academy Prep family, enhance the lives of our scholars and in turn our community. The success of our high school and college graduates makes us proud to help lead the next generation of Academy Prep scholars. We are delighted to declare that over 90% of our scholars graduate from high school on time. This is made possible because of the immense support and guidance provided by the graduate support team that works tirelessly to serve our graduates in high school and college.

The administration, teachers and staff are dedicated to our scholars and are committed to providing a safe and caring learning environment. This is evident in our curriculum, enrichment activities, and field trips. We look forward to the same high level of commitment from our scholars and parents/guardians because this is a joint enterprise. Scholar success depends on the efforts of faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and of course, the scholars themselves.

The rules, procedures, and standards in this handbook are intended to ensure that our scholars' time here is maximized and that they derive the full benefit of the substantial educational opportunities we provide. This handbook describes, in detail, our scholar and family obligations and responsibilities. I strongly believe that school is very much part of the "real world" – it is not a world apart. The consequences, good and bad, of what our scholars do here are real and enduring. Along with you, I look forward to celebrating their success and encouraging them to be the greatest.

I truly look forward to working with all of you, and I wish all of our scholars a successful and meaningful school year.

Sincerely,

Gina Burkett
Head of School

General Information

Arrival, Breakfast, and Morning Convocation

Scholars arrive between 7:15am and 7:40 am and proceed to lockers and then the picnic tables.

Breakfast is served from 7:15am to 7:30am. Scholars eat breakfast at the tables outside the Multi-Purpose Building (MPB). Scholars may not bring their own breakfast to school, but certainly may choose to have breakfast at home prior to arrival at school.

Once scholars arrive on campus, they may not leave school grounds without permission from an Academy Prep staff member, and they must be signed out in the front office by a parent/guardian.

After finishing breakfast, scholars will remain at the picnic tables until the start of Convocation. Scholars must throw away all their trash after finishing breakfast. When convocation is called at 7:40 a.m., scholars must silently line up by grade and by height order to enter the MPB.
Please note: Any scholar arriving after 7:45 a.m. will be tardy and must go to the front office to sign in.

Convocation begins the school day and comprises a message, prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, announcements, and the school pledge recited by all students, faculty, and staff.

After convocation, scholars are led by their homeroom teachers to their lockers in preparation for first period classes.

Arrival and Dismissal

Please note for children's safety and ease of movement during arrival and dismissal; we require parents'/guardians' help in adhering to our policy of dropping off and picking up scholars inside the school's gates. If a parent/guardian chooses to park outside the gate and not go through the car line, then the parent/guardian must come onto the campus and escort the scholar to the car. Scholars at dismissal are NOT permitted to walk outside the gate of Academy Prep to a car without being escorted by their parents/guardians or a school employee.

Scholars who walk or ride bikes to school must have permission forms on file with the school office before they are allowed to walk or ride bicycles home from school. Bikers are required to walk their bikes once they enter school grounds. **If scholars are dropped off before 7:15 a.m., they must stand outside the gate until opening.**

Dismissal for all students Monday-Thursday is at 5:00 pm. Late fees will apply for scholars not picked up by 5:15 pm.

Each Friday, school is dismissed at 4:00 p.m. Late fees will apply for scholars not picked up by 4:15 p.m.

Attendance

The official start of the school day begins with Convocation at 7:45 a.m. Parents/guardians must notify the school office by 8:15 a.m. if their child will be absent. The school requires a doctor's note if a scholar is absent for more than three consecutive school days.

Regular attendance is an essential part of the Academy Prep educational program. Academy Prep is an in-person, campus-based school. The Academy's educational program is designed around regular participation in classroom

instruction, enrichment activities, transitions between classes, meals, physical education, field trips, social development, and other activities conducted on campus.
Academy Prep recognizes that scholars may occasionally be absent because of illness, injury, medical appointments, family emergencies, religious observances, or other circumstances permitted by this Handbook. The Academy will work with families to address legitimate absences and, when appropriate and legally required, will consider reasonable accommodations.

However, an excused absence does not eliminate the importance of attendance or create an entitlement to indefinite enrollment when a scholar is unable to participate meaningfully in the Academy Prep program.
A scholar's attendance, regardless of academic performance, is a required element in ensuring that the scholar is receiving the benefit of classroom instruction and the complete Academy Prep experience. Because instruction, skills, assessments, classroom discussions, enrichment activities, and other educational experiences build upon one another, prolonged or recurring absences may substantially interfere with a scholar's ability to benefit from the Academy Prep program.

If a scholar is absent more than ten (10) days in any semester, the scholar may not be invited to return for the following school year. In addition, regardless of whether individual absences are excused, a pattern of extended or recurring absences may result in non-renewal when the scholar is unable to participate meaningfully in the Academy Prep educational program.

Academy Prep will evaluate individual circumstances and any legally required accommodations before making a decision concerning continued enrollment or re-enrollment.

Returning to school

Scholars returning to school after being dismissed early (for an appointment, etc.) must always report first to the main office and receive a note before being admitted to class.

Parents/guardians who wish to pick up books and/or assignments for absent scholars must call the office before noon. Requests for homework and assignments received after noon cannot be guaranteed. Scholars will be given one day to make up assigned homework for each day of an excused absence, including those due to observance of particular religious holidays.

Returning to School After an Extended Absence

When a scholar has been absent for an extended period because of illness, injury, medical treatment, or another significant circumstance, the Academy may request appropriate documentation regarding the scholar's anticipated return date and ability to participate safely in the Academy Prep program.

Before a scholar returns following an extended absence, Academy Prep may require a meeting with the parent/guardian and appropriate school personnel to discuss:

- the scholar's anticipated attendance;
- the scholar's ability to participate in the regular school day;
- any accommodations requested by the family;
- any health or safety considerations;
- the academic work and instructional content missed during the absence;
- the scholar's ability to participate in classroom instruction and required school activities; and
- any other information reasonably necessary to determine whether the scholar can participate in the Academy Prep program.

When appropriate and legally required, Academy Prep will engage in an individualized discussion with the family concerning reasonable accommodations.

Approval to return to campus does not guarantee that all missed work, instruction, assessments, activities, or other educational experiences can be recreated or waived.

Tardies

Tardiness is considered a serious matter as it disrupts the school day of the tardy scholar, his/her classmates, and teachers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the scholar and his/her parents/guardians to ensure that the scholar arrives at school on time. Teachers cannot be responsible for work missed because of a scholar's repeated tardiness, and there are important concepts and information shared during convocation that make it a vital part of a scholar's school day. **Scholars arriving on campus at 7:45 a.m. or later are tardy and should report to the main office where they will sign in and wait outside in silence until Convocation is dismissed.**

Excessive tardies and unexcused absences will not be tolerated. If the Head of School sees that a family is not respecting the school's start time, a conversation will occur with the possibility of asking the family to come in for a special conference. After **three unexcused tardies** in a semester, a phone call will be made to the family to discuss the reasons for late arrival or absence and remind parents of the policies. Also after three unexcused tardies in a semester, **scholars will receive 2 demerits for each subsequent unexcused tardy on their record**. After **five tardies in a semester**, a warning letter will be sent home, placing the family on probation, indicating immediate improvement is needed to ensure a student's continued enrollment at Academy Prep. After **eight tardies in a semester,** the family will be notified that further tardiness or absences will result in a meeting with administration team, parent intervention plan or NOT receiving an invitation for the next school year.

Absences from School

If a scholar needs to be absent from school during the regular school week, communication must be submitted to the school's office prior to the absence or, in the case of illness, the morning of the absence.

Acceptable reasons for missing school include:

- Family crisis;
- Illness;
- Death in the immediate family;
- Medical or dental appointment;
- A communicable disease or infection;
- Religious observance as permitted by applicable law; and
- Other circumstances approved by the Head of School.

A scholar's absence affects the scholar, classmates, and teachers. Academy Prep therefore expects scholars to attend regularly and for the full school day.

In the event a scholar is absent for more than three consecutive school days, the school requires a doctor's note.

If a scholar has an extended or recurring absence, Academy Prep may request additional medical documentation reasonably necessary to understand the anticipated duration of the absence and the scholar's ability to return to and participate in the Academy Prep on-campus program.

Extended Absence and Continued Enrollment

Academy Prep understands that a serious illness, injury, medical treatment, or other circumstance may require a scholar to remain away from school for an extended period.
Academy Prep will make reasonable efforts to work collaboratively with families and will consider reasonable accommodations when appropriate and legally required. However, Academy Prep is not a homebound school, hospital school, or long-term virtual school. The Academy does not maintain a separate program designed to provide the full Academy Prep curriculum to scholars who are unable to attend campus for an extended period.

Accordingly, a prolonged absence does not create an obligation for Academy Prep to provide individualized instruction for every missed class period, duplicate the classroom experience, waive required curriculum, or maintain indefinite enrollment while a scholar is unable to participate in the on-campus program.

If a scholar's absences become so frequent or prolonged that the scholar cannot meaningfully participate in the Academy Prep educational program, the Academy may require the scholar to withdraw or may determine that the scholar will not be invited to re-enroll for the following school year, subject to applicable law and any legally required accommodations.

Summer School Attendance Policy

If a scholar needs to be absent from school during the regular school week, communication must be submitted to the school's office **prior** to the absence or the morning of the absence in case of illness. A scholar's absence affects the scholar, his/her classmates, and the teacher. Therefore, if a scholar has (3) or more unexcused absence during the summer session, he/she is considered in violation of our summer attendance policy and runs the risk of not being invited back for the next school year.

Classes

Scholars are expected to be prepared for all classes. Their conduct in class must be respectful toward both their teachers and their fellow classmates. Scholars must observe all classroom rules of conduct and etiquette. By the end of each class, scholars must ensure homework and assignments are written in their school planners, materials and books are put away, and then line up in an orderly manner to proceed to their next scheduled class/activity.

Transition *Periods*

Between classes, scholars should prepare themselves as quickly as possible. When a transition to another classroom is necessary, scholars will proceed silently to their next classroom in a straight line, accompanied by their teacher. Scholars may not use the restroom during a classroom transition unless directed by a teacher.

Lunch *and Recess*

Unless otherwise permitted by the Head of School after review of a legitimate written authorization from a trained and licensed medical professional, scholars may not bring their own lunch to school. Personal food preferences,selective eating habits,or the choice to refuse available meals do not constitute medical dietary restrictions.Although consistently choosing not to eat may result in headaches,fatigue,or other adverse effects, these consequences alone do not establish a medical necessity for an alternate meal.Developing healthy eating habits and learning to make appropriate food choices are important aspects of a scholar's growth and development. **No food or drink aside from unflavored water is permitted in classrooms, lockers, or elsewhere within the buildings.** Scholars sit down to eat and are expected to exhibit polite and proper mealtime behavior. When finished, and only with staff permission, they clean up after themselves, including throwing away all trash and cleaning up their area.

Scholars remain seated at their tables during lunch, unless allowed by their teacher to participate in an authorized activity or to use the restroom. Following line up after lunch and recess, they proceed to their lockers, and the next class led by their teachers.

Enrichment Program

The Academy Prep enrichment program, which is mandatory for all scholars, runs Monday through Thursday during school hours. The program offers many activities each quarter, all of which are specifically designed to broaden the physical, social, and intellectual skills of our scholars.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Cell phones and/or electronic devices include but are not limited to, AirPods or MP3 players, Smart Watches, and hand-held Gaming Devices. If a scholar needs to bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school, they must be powered off and turned into the office upon arrival. The item will be placed in an envelope with the scholar's name. All envelopes will be locked in the office for the day. Scholars may retrieve their items from a staff member at the end of the day. **Any scholar found with a cell phone during the school day will have it confiscated and be issued demerits. The cell phone will be returned only to the parent/guardian.** Parents/guardians are requested to refrain from calling their children during the school day. Messages may be given to scholars only through contact with the office.

FACTS Online Grades

Each family will receive a username and password for the school's software program that will give access to grades as well as other important information for parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should check grades and behavior on a weekly basis. When a child is absent, homework is found on Google Classroom as the student should connect with the teacher upon his or her return to campus.

Field Trips

Field trips are an enjoyable, educational, and mandatory part of our program. Trips are planned to coincide with topics being emphasized in the curriculum. Permission for children to accompany their class on all field trips is authorized by a signature from a parent/guardian on our field trip permission form.

Mandatory field trips will be held every other month on Saturday for each grade level. Occasionally, field trips may be planned on school days or evenings. Field trips will begin in August and will run through May. Detailed information of upcoming field trips will be emailed to families at the beginning of the school year. If a field trip is canceled, the parent will be notified promptly. **If a scholar misses a field trip, he/she will be assigned another replacement field trip that will be assigned by the administration.** This may include attending a field trip with a different grade. If the parent has any questions or concerns regarding field trips, please contact:

Mr. Ken Watson
Dean of Student Life
kwatson@academyprep.org
727-322-0800, ext. 2115

The school may ask parents/guardians who choose to attend a particularly expensive field trip to pay their own way.

It is important that parents/guardians drop off and pick up their children within 15 minutes of the designated drop-off and pick-up times for the field trip. Earlier arrivals cause problems for staff members preparing for the field trip. Pick-up late fees will apply for late pickup.

Unexcused Absences from Saturday Field Trips

If a scholar must miss a required Saturday Field Trip, parents/guardians must notify the Dean of Student Life prior to the field trip to determine if the request is considered an excused absence. In cases of unexpected absences due to extenuating circumstances, please call the chaperone(s) listed on the field trip form no later than the morning of the trip. The policy regarding field trips is as follows:

- Each unexcused absence will result in the scholar serving a silent recess on the Monday following the trip, and the scholar will be assigned a makeup field trip.
- After two missed field trips, the student will receive demerits, and a warning letter will be issued to the family, placing them on probation.
- After the third missed field trip, the scholar may not be permitted to re-enroll at AP for the following year.

Annual *Class Trips*

In all grades, scholars have the opportunity to go on end-of-year class trips. Scholar participation in these trips is dependent on maintaining acceptable behavior,payment of activity fees in a timely manner and good academic standings as well as scholars attending all mandatory Saturday field trips. A scholar suspended or with a lengthy disciplinary record may not be permitted to participate.

Food, Beverages, and Gum

1. **No outside food is permitted on campus** unless granted permission from the Head of School.
2. **Gum is prohibited everywhere on campus grounds.** Scholars found chewing gum will immediately be issued a silent recess.
3. Breakfast is provided at Academy Prep from 7:15-7:30 a.m. daily. Scholars are not required but are encouraged to have breakfast on campus if they do not have a healthy meal before leaving home in the morning.
4. **All scholars are required to receive a school-provided lunch.** Scholars who have special dietaryrestrictions and allergies must submit the appropriate paperwork from a physician to receive an alternate meal option.
5. Food may sometimes be prepared on campus as an extension of the curriculum. Academy Prep will ensure that adequate safety precautions are in place whenever this occurs, and these items will not take the place of school-provided breakfast or lunch.
6. A snack is provided Monday through Thursday at 4:00 p.m.
7. If a student brings a drink onto campus, **it must be in a clear container containing only water**.

General Health

- *Ability to Participate Safely in the Academy Prep Program*

Academy Prep is an educational institution and is not a medical facility. The Academy does not employ a school nurse on campus and does not provide ongoing one-on-one nursing, medical, personal-care, or custodial services to individual scholars.

Academy Prep staff members are responsible for supervising and educating scholars within the ordinary scope of the Academy Prep program. Staff members are not generally responsible for providing ongoing:

- nursing services;
- medical treatment;
- lifting or physically carrying a scholar;
- transfers between a wheelchair, chair, toilet, bed, or other surface;

- toileting or changing assistance;
- bathing or personal hygiene services;
- feeding assistance requiring one-to-one care;
- continuous one-to-one medical monitoring; or
- other personal-care services requiring specialized training, equipment, or dedicated one-to-one staffing.

The use of a wheelchair, mobility device, communication device, or other assistive technology does not, by itself, prevent a scholar from attending Academy Prep. The Academy will consider reasonable accommodations and accessibility needs on an individualized basis and as required by applicable law.

At the same time, the Academy cannot guarantee that it will be able to provide every requested service or accommodation. Academy Prep may determine that a requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of its educational program, require services outside the scope of the school's ordinary program, create an undue burden, or create a significant health or safety concern.

When a scholar's needs require services or levels of assistance that Academy Prep cannot safely or reasonably provide, the Academy will communicate with the parent/guardian regarding the scholar's needs and available options.

The Academy's inability to provide ongoing medical or personal-care services does not constitute a determination regarding the scholar's medical condition or educational potential. It reflects the nature and staffing structure of the Academy Prep educational program.

Immunization, & First Aid

All scholars at all grade levels must have proof of a physical examination on file in the office. In addition, state law requires immunization dates to be on file with the school before a child begins school.

The school office must be made aware of any allergies, physical limitations, medical conditions, or other health-related information that may be important in an emergency or may affect a scholar's ability to participate in the Academy Prep school day.

During the school day, office staff will assist scholars who become ill or injured within the ordinary scope of the school's available first-aid procedures.

Academy Prep does not employ a school nurse on campus. Academy Prep staff are not medical professionals and should not be expected to provide nursing services or ongoing medical care beyond the ordinary first-aid and medication procedures described in this Handbook.

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached and a scholar is in need of medical attention due to injury or illness, the Head of School and/or staff will use their best judgment to seek appropriate emergency assistance and will continue attempting to contact the parent/legal guardian. Without permission from a parent/legal guardian, only emergency first-aid treatment will be provided to the extent permitted by law.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the Academy with current emergency contact information and accurate information concerning the scholar's medical and physical needs.

Administration of Medication

Medications may be essential for some scholars. When possible, all medications should be administered at home. If medication must be given at school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. A medical authorization form, signed by the parent/guardian and physician requesting the administration of medication, must accompany all medication.
2. Medication must be brought to the front office by a responsible adult.
3. Medication must be in the prescription container with the date, dosage, name of drug, and the scholar's and physician's names clearly marked.
4. Medication must remain in the container in which it was originally dispensed.
5. Parents/guardians should arrange for a separate supply of medication for school. Medication will not be transported between home and school on a daily or weekly basis.
6. When medications are added or changed in any way, a new authorization form will be required.
7. When medication dosages or times are changed, both a written request from the parent/guardian and appropriate medical/pharmacy documentation must be provided.
8. Medication will be stored in a secure location at the school.
9. Because Academy Prep does not employ a school nurse, medication may be administered by designated office staff in accordance with school procedures and applicable law.
10. When medication is discontinued or at the end of the school year, medication not taken home will be disposed of in accordance with applicable procedures.

Academy Prep cannot dispense over-the-counter pain relievers or other medication without the required authorization.

The administration of medication at school does not mean that Academy Prep is able to provide ongoing nursing or personal-care services. Families must notify the school if a scholar's medical needs change in a manner that may affect the scholar's ability to participate safely in the school day.

Late Fees

Families will be charged $5.00 for every 15-minute increment for late pick-ups. Scholars who have not been collected after the close of school will be required to wait in a designated area until their ride arrives. All accrued late fees will be added to the scholar's monthly balance.

Lockers

All scholars will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year. Scholars are directed not to bring valuables to school, and for this reason, valuables outside school supplies should not be stored in the locker. Scholars will have designated times in order to go to their lockers throughout the school day. **Administration may perform locker checks at any time during the day and may search through lockers for many different reasons.** If there are items being stored in the locker that should not be on campus, these will be confiscated and taken to the front office for a parent to pick up at a later date.

Media Consent

Occasionally, there will be times when the media will be on campus, either taking pictures or interviewing children about various activities at Academy Prep. A media consent form is sent home when a scholar is initially enrolled and will serve as that scholar’s permission for the duration of enrollment with Academy Prep.

Communication with Faculty and Staff

When a parent or student needs to contact a faculty or staff member, they are encouraged to utilize the school’s email

system or call the school during the normal school day and ask to be transferred to that individual's extension. Teachers and staff have been advised to respond to all questions and inquiries within 24 hours during the school week.

If a parent is on campus and has not made an appointment with a teacher but wishes to communicate, he/she must first go to the front office and ask if the teacher is available to meet. A parent should never go directly to a teacher's classroom.

Aside from situations such as Saturday field trips and other off-campus events where it may be a logistical necessity, faculty and staff are not permitted to respond to calls or texts from scholars on their personal cell phones.

Because both teachers and administrators use email extensively to communicate important information to parents, it is vital that parents always have the correct email on file with the school. Please check ParentWeb through Facts to ensure the email address listed there is correct; if not, call the school so we can update it on your behalf.

Parties

No party invitations may be distributed on campus unless ALL scholars in that class/gender are invited. Scholars are invited to share their birthdays at school with their classmates. If a parent wishes to provide a birthday snack, prior arrangements should be made with the front office. We suggest manageable treats such as commercially prepared cookies or cupcakes. No party favors or gifts are to be distributed at school.

Personal Equipment

Scholars are not permitted to bring materials to school that are not related to the school curriculum, including, but not limited to, balls, toys, playing cards, magazines, electronic gaming devices, or other inappropriate items as determined by the Head of School. Such items will be confiscated and will be returned to the parent or guardian only.

Replacement of Lost Instructional Materials

Planners, textbooks, workbooks, novels, Chromebooks/iPads, and, in some cases, calculators are supplied to scholars. They are responsible for taking care of these materials. Lost or damaged books, materials, and electronics will be replaced at the scholar's expense.

Scholars must provide their own school supplies, including pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, and binders. A school supplies list will be distributed to scholars and their families before the beginning of school.

Signing In and Out

All scholars departing or returning to campus must be signed in or out by a parent or guardian at the office. No scholar may leave campus without going through the office. Teachers have been instructed not to release children directly from the classroom to a parent or guardian. Parents/guardians are required to pick up their children in the office, as the office staff will contact the teacher and ensure the child makes their way from the classroom to the office.

Safety in Private Spaces

Students are only to use gender-designated restrooms/locker facilities to which their given gender at birth corresponds. Any student who willfully enters a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex on the premises of the educational institution and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any faculty or staff member will be subject to disciplinary action.

Scholars' Records

The case often arises where other schools or institutions (camps, physicians, educational psychologists, therapists) require official transcripts, recommendations, or behavioral questionnaires. We ask that parents/guardians provide us

with at least one week's notice before the information needs to be mailed. **Please note**: No records, recommendations, or observation forms, other than progress/report cards, will be released directly to parents or legal guardians. It is standard practice among schools and Academy Prep policy to mail all such information directly to the receiving institution. Additionally, documents, including report cards, will not be released until accounts are paid in full.

Transportation

Academy Prep vehicles are used for transporting students for enrichment activities, sporting events, and field trips. Scholars must remain seat-belted and seated quietly at all times to ensure the safety and well-being of the driver and all passengers. Scholars must obey the driver at all times. No one will throw anything in the vehicle or from the vehicle windows or deface the school vehicles in any way. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any vehicle damage caused by their children.

Any transportation of scholars taking place in a personal vehicle owned by another parent or employee is strongly discouraged and should only be done with parental permission and during extenuating circumstances. Importantly, insurance coverage for transportation that takes place outside of school van usage is only covered by that person's individual personal insurance policy and not the school's. The driver takes all responsibility for all parties in the vehicle, even if being transported to or from an AP event.

Visitors' *Passes*

All adults coming onto campus must sign in at the office to receive a visitor's pass, which must indicate the purpose for their visit. This includes all parents/guardians working in a volunteer capacity. Visitors' passes are to be visible during the entire time on the campus.

Community *Clean-Up*

Participation in chores displays Academy Prep spirit and a willingness to give back to one's community. Scholars will participate in community clean-up on our campus, which may include vacuuming classroom floors, sweeping the outdoor walkways and basketball courts, picking up trash, cleaning the whiteboards, emptying trash bins, etc.

Enrichment Activities

The Academy Prep enrichment program runs Monday through Thursday each week. Every student is required to participate in this portion of the school day, and absences are counted the same as if a student missed a core class during the day. The enrichment program includes sports, chess, art, music, dance, sewing, gardening, photography, community service projects, and other activities designed to broaden the physical and social skills of our students.

Please note that early dismissals during the enrichment period are discouraged, and if absolutely necessary, the front office will need 11 am notice in order to keep the student from departing for an off-campus enrichment. Otherwise, the student may be off-campus and not be available for an early pick-up.

Study Hall

Study Hall is designed to provide a quiet, comfortable, safe, and productive environment for scholars to complete their homework assignments, make up overdue work, and receive additional assistance to strengthen their overall academic performance at Academy Prep. Study hall runs either during mid-day or from 4:00-5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Study Hall Rules

During Study Hall, scholars must maintain a proper study environment. This means, above all:

- No talking or bothering other students
- No eating
- No disruptive or destructive behavior

School Technology and Responsible Use

The Academy Prep IT department is committed to providing all scholars and staff with an appropriate personal computer, interactive classroom technology, a comprehensive library of digital educational resources, and a robust and stable network. This responsible use section outlines an agreement between Academy Prep, parents, and scholars for the care and appropriate use of Chromebooks, iPads, and other school technology resources.

Scholars must use Academy Prep's technology for school purposes responsibly, ethically, and legally. This includes instances when scholars may access this technology outside of school. If scholars have doubts about whether a resource has educational merit, they should ask their teacher, administration or the IT department: techsupport@academyprep.org.

Scope of Technology Policies

Policies, guidelines, and rules refer to all technology devices including, but not limited to: Chromebooks, iPads, printers, projectors, phones, cameras, and network infrastructure owned or leased by the school. These policies also apply to any online service provided by Academy Prep, including, but not limited to: Email, Calendar, Docs, Apps, all applications provided by Google Workspace, and FACTS SIS - (formerly RenWeb) (student information system). These usage policies also extend to when these programs are used off-campus and outside school hours.

Chromebook Program Summary

Devices

Academy Prep issues each scholar in grades 6-8 a Chromebook laptop computer, charger, and protective case. This equipment, if properly cared for and maintained, will remain with the scholar throughout their time at Academy Prep. Scholars who successfully complete the Academy Prep program may keep their Chromebook after graduation.

If the Chromebook is lost, stolen or damaged, it will be your responsibility to cover the cost of repair or replacement; therefore, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the following fee schedule.

Lost/damaged charger	$20
Lost/damaged case	$35
Tier 1 damage: 1st incident of physical Chromebook damage (any subsequent repairs fall under tier 2)	$50
Tier 2 damage: 2nd incident of physical damage, or any *deliberate* Chromebook damage, repeat negligence, loss, or theft	Full cost of repair or replacement (estimated at time of collection)

By signing this agreement, you confirm that you understand the fees associated with loss or damage to your scholar's Chromebook and the accessories. If you have any issues or questions about your scholars' Chromebook, please contact the Academy Prep IT department by emailing techsupport@academyprep.org

Systems and Software

All Academy Prep scholars are issued accounts for the online systems they will be required to use. This includes a Google Workspace account for email, file storage, and productivity apps, as well as a FACTS SIS (formerly Renweb) account where they can check their grades and view assignments.

In addition to these core systems, teachers may utilize online resources to create digital assignments and assign skill-building activities. The IT department works with our teachers to vet online resources when possible, but there may be services that track or otherwise collect data on scholars' online activity. If you have any questions about a website or program we are using in class, please reach out to the IT department: techsupport@academyprep.org.

Chromebooks are to be used for school related or educational activity only. Academy Prep uses Securly to manage Chromebooks, and we have enabled Securly Home to help parents regulate Chromebook use at home. To learn more about Securly Home and the Chromebook management tools available to you, please contact the IT department: techsupport@academyprep.org.

Appropriate Use and Privacy

Families are expected to monitor their scholar's technology use at home. We apply "always-on" content filtering to restrict access to inappropriate content, such as pornography, gambling, drug, or gun violence-related sites, but no filtering system is perfect. We encourage you to use Securly Home or contact Academy Prep administration if you have concerns about your child's Chromebook use. We also implement an automated email and document scanning software which warns our school counselors whenever there is any mention of potentially dangerous or harmful activity. References to bullying, harassment, drug use, self-harm, or violence in emails and docs will be flagged and sent to school counselors. Scholars should have no expectation of privacy when using their school-issued Chromebook.

The following activities and behavior are prohibited:

- Any illegal activity
- Academic dishonesty/inauthenticity (cheating, plagiarism, work generated by artificial intelligence unless assigned by a teacher, etc.)
- Violations of security or privacy (password theft, accessing documents without permission, or monitoring another person's private communications)
- Viewing, downloading, or transmitting inappropriate, pornographic, obscene or indecent materials
- Harassment, hazing, bullying, or any other uses that contribute to the violation of behavior policies
- Recreational / non-educational use of digital communication (social media, email, and messaging services, etc.)
- Use of the system for personal business (online commerce, banking, etc.)

- Unauthorized system modifications
- Damage (intentional physical damage, as well as erasure, corruption, or modification of school-owned software and files)
- Attempts to bypass AP network security and filtering (use of proxy servers, vpn apps, network analyzers, etc.)

All communications and information transmitted by, received from, stored within, or passing through Academy Prep devices and systems may be archived, deleted, monitored, and reviewed for content and appropriateness at any time. Because these files remain the property of Academy Prep, there should be no expectation of privacy regarding such materials. Academy Prep will investigate any suspected inappropriate uses of its resources or systems. Internet browsing, search history, Google Drive, and local hard disk contents may be inspected if a breach of security, harassment, or other violations are suspected to have occurred.

Scholars are allowed to access only those files that belong to them or which they are certain they have permission to use. Files stored within the school computer systems (e.g., Google Drive) should be limited to those relating to formal school courses or activities. Email (or any other computer communication) should be used only for educational purposes. Social media and other recreational messaging services are prohibited.

Academy Prep also reserves the right to issue serious consequences to any scholar, up to and including disenrollment, for creating and/or sharing information and/or images on the internet that are offensive, malicious, harassing, and/or illegal - regardless of whether such creating and/or sharing of information and/or images is directly linked to that scholar's enrollment at Academy Prep.

Chromebook Care

Scholars are expected to treat their laptop with care and respect at all times. Chromebooks are assigned to individual scholars, and the responsibility for the care of the Chromebook rests with that individual. Scholars may not lend their Chromebook to another person. Failure to adhere to the following precautions may result in disciplinary action, damage fees, and/or the loss of the Chromebook.

- Keep the Chromebook in the protective case at <u>all times.</u>
- The Chromebook can be cleaned with a soft, lint-free cloth. Do not apply liquids to the Chromebook. Avoid getting moisture in the openings. Do not use window cleaners, household cleaners, aerosol sprays, solvents, alcohol, ammonia, or abrasives to clean the Chromebook.
- Do not write on, scratch, or otherwise deface the body or screen of the Chromebook. Stickers on the palm rest, clamshell, or any other part of the Chromebook are also not allowed. Scholars who deface their Chromebook will be required to thoroughly clean the device or pay for a replacement.
- Take care at all times that the Chromebook does not fall or drop. Never throw, slide or swing their Chromebook by the strap.
- Take care when opening and closing the Chromebook case. Do not pull on zippers with excessive force when going around corners. Do not store papers, pencils, or other materials in the Chromebook case. The only items in the Chromebook case should be the laptop in the main compartment, and the charger in the front pouch.

- Never carry the Chromebook by the screen, never slam it shut, and always open it gently to ensure they don't damage the display hinges.
- Protect the Chromebook from extreme heat or cold, direct sunlight, weather, water, or other liquid, drinks, food, and pets. Never leave it in a car, even if the car is locked. Never eat or drink (including water) while using the laptop, or use the laptop near others that are eating or drinking.
- Do not use the Chromebook on a bed or soft surface that could interfere with the cooling system.
- The Chromebook contains all necessary hardware and software. Modifications are prohibited.

Any issues, including physical damage, must be reported to the IT Department **immediately**. Do not attempt to repair the device yourself and do not take it to a repair shop. Return it to the IT Department so we can issue a loaner device and schedule a repair.

All Chromebooks are labeled with an Academy Prep asset tag. This inventory tag may not be removed for any reason. Take every possible precaution to prevent loss or theft. Store the Chromebook in a secure place and only use it in your home or at school. If a theft has occurred, families are responsible for filing a police report and providing documentation to the IT Department.

Social Media

In today's growing use of technology, it is easier for scholars to forget that posting negativity towards classmates or others on social media or gaming platforms (texting, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, sending pictures, hacking, etc.) can be considered bullying. Even if these actions were done off-campus during non-school hours, if another scholar is affected, the school will get involved, and school discipline will be administered.

School's Right to Inspect Physical and Intellectual Property

The school has the right to inspect any item brought onto APSP campus. This includes phones, purses, electronic devices, contents of backpacks, lockers, and anything stored on school-provided online accounts (AP-provided email, Google Drive, etc.).

To ensure the protection of all parties involved, the school reserves the right to record any distance learning initiated by APSP to include voice, image and identity. Please note that no one is authorized to record interactions at APSP, including any online educational activity, whether via phone, tape recording or other electronic device, without authorization from the Head of School.

Academic Policies

Grading Scale

Scholars will receive academic and conduct grades in all subjects. Core subjects, including Spanish for Upper School students, will have grade points assigned for the purpose of computing grade point averages. Letter grades and their numerical and grade point equivalents for these core subjects are as follows:

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	GPA Points
A	90-100	4.0
B+	85-89	3.5
B	80-84	3.0
C+	75-79	2.5
C	70-74	2.0
D+	65-69	1.5
D	60-64	1.0
F	59 and below	0.0

For courses graded on a Pass/Fail basis (*e.g.* Physical Education, Art, and Character Education), the minimum numeric grade to earn a 'Pass' will be 70%.

Academic Awards and Recognitions

Each term, scholars are honored for displaying above-average to exceptional academic performance. Academic honors will be awarded on three levels: Academy Prep Honors, High Academic Honors, and Academic Honors.

- **Deans List** is awarded to scholars who achieve an A in all subjects (GPA of 4.0).
- **High Academic Honors** are awarded to scholars who achieve an Academic Grade Point Average (GPA) at or greater than 3.50 with no grade in any subject less than a B.
- **Academic Honors** are awarded to scholars who achieve an Academic GPA of 3.00 to 3.49 with no grade in any subject less than a B.

Certificates and awards during the first three quarters of the academic year will be announced and presented during Convocation as well as attached on Academy Prep's weekly newsletter. Awards for Quarter 4 and all year-long academic awards will be presented during a special ceremony during the summer session.

Class Citizenship Grades

Scholars will receive a citizenship grade in every course: E for Excellent, S for Satisfactory, N for Needs Improvement, or U for Unsatisfactory. At the beginning of each quarter, this conduct grade will reset and begin with an 'E.'

Homework/Classwork

In addition to any homework assignments, it is expected that all Academy Prep scholars will spend at least 60 to 90 minutes each day studying, preparing for classes, and/or reading independently.

If a scholar is absent from school, the scholar and parent/guardian are encouraged to check Google Classroom to view assigned classwork and/or homework. Teachers upload most assignments into Google Classroom, which students can access from an internet-capable device.

Scholars will be given one day upon return to make up assigned homework for each day of an excused absence, including those due to observance of a particular religious holiday.

If an absence is lengthy or involves unusual circumstances, the Assistant Head of School, in consultation with the faculty and Head of School, may extend due dates for particular assignments when feasible.

Extended Absences and Missed Instruction

Academy Prep's curriculum is sequential. Concepts, skills, assignments, classroom discussions, assessments, and instructional activities frequently build upon previously taught material.

For this reason, assignments posted online or provided to a scholar during an absence do not necessarily constitute a complete substitute for classroom instruction.

Academy Prep will make reasonable efforts to provide appropriate assignments and instructional materials for an absent scholar when feasible. However, Academy Prep cannot guarantee that all classroom instruction or experiences can be recreated outside the classroom.

The Academy is not required to exempt a scholar from required curriculum, assessments, projects, instructional materials, or academic standards solely because the scholar has been absent.

Certain educational experiences including classroom discussions, collaborative activities, laboratories, enrichment activities, physical activities, field trips, demonstrations, and other in-person experiences may not be capable of being fully replicated or made up.

The Academy will determine, in its academic judgment, which missed work or experiences can reasonably be completed after the scholar's return.

Late Work

Any work that is missing or incomplete on the assigned due date will be considered late, and penalties may be assessed for work that is turned in after the due date. Scholars will have 1 day to complete a missing assignment if they were present on the day the assignment was given. Scholars will be given 2 days if they were absent or left early the day the assignment was given unless additional time is otherwise given by the teacher in collaboration with the Academic Dean. Scholars are expected to:

- Submit assignments by the assigned deadline.
- Check Google Classroom and other required platforms regularly.
- Communicate with teachers when they are absent or experiencing a legitimate problem.
- Request assistance before an assignment becomes significantly overdue.
- Complete missed work within the timeframe provided by the teacher.
- Take responsibility for their academic progress and outstanding assignments.

Assessment

Scholars may expect weekly assessments in all core subjects, as well as final exams or final projects at the conclusion of each semester. Proper studying, preparation, and editing/revision are essential for the successful completion of all coursework. There will also be standardized testing periods during the year in order to determine the academic progress of each scholar. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of these testing days.

Scholar-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are required when necessary for the success of the scholar. Conferences concerning the scholar's progress can, at times, be accomplished by telephone or email. When an in-person conference is deemed necessary, parents/guardians will receive a written notice or phone call to set up a mutually agreeable time. During 7th and 8th grade, mandatory meetings will begin with Graduate Support to prepare you and your scholar for the transition to high school.**Parents or legal guardians contacted by the office for a conference are required to attend. Scholars are also required to attend.**

Progress Reports

Midway through each quarter, progress reports detailing a scholar's performance in each of his or her academic subjects will be sent home via email or USPS. Progress reports will indicate areas the scholar should strengthen in order to improve performance before the end of the term and also determine study hall placement.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued four (4) times during the school year, at the conclusion of each grading period (quarter). Report cards will be mailed twice a year in December and May. Quarter 4 report cards will not be mailed until all fees are paid and accounts are current. Permanent records of scholars' grades will be kept on file at the school.

Academic Probation

A scholar whose GPA falls below a 2.0 or earns a failing grade in any class at the end of a given quarter will be placed on Academic Probation for the remaining quarter(s) of that school year and potentially into the next school year. At the beginning of the subsequent quarter, the scholar and parents/guardians must meet with the Head of School or Assistant Head of School/Academic Dean and the faculty to formulate an academic improvement plan. A scholar who fails to achieve a 2.0 GPA for an additional quarter or does not bring up all failing grade(s) to passing grade(s) while on academic probation is subject to dismissal from Academy Prep.

Promotion to Next Grade

If a scholar fails a course for the semester at Academy Prep, then he/she will not be invited back for the following semester or next school year. Failing is defined as a final GPA for the course less than 1.0.

Continued enrollment at Academy Prep depends upon the scholar's overall academic and behavioral performance and regular participation in the Academy Prep educational program.

Scholars who do not maintain a C average (2.0) or better GPA based on their final grades in their academic subjects, or who in the opinion of the Head of School are not progressing academically or living up to the school's standards of excellence in conduct, are not likely to be invited to attend Academy Prep for the following year.

Continued enrollment also depends upon regular attendance and the scholar's ability to participate meaningfully in the Academy Prep program.

A scholar may not be able to demonstrate the academic progress necessary for promotion when prolonged or recurring absences prevent the scholar from receiving sufficient classroom instruction, completing required assessments, participating in required activities, or demonstrating mastery of the curriculum.

Academy Prep will consider individual circumstances and any legally required accommodations before making an enrollment or promotion decision.

Expectations for Upperclassmen

Beginning in 7th grade, all scholars will be required to maintain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 for each progress report and report card. A scholar who fails to achieve the required 2.0 minimum will immediately be placed on Academic Probation, meaning that any subsequent report card GPA less than 2.0 may result in that scholar's immediate dismissal from Academy Prep.

Expectations for Graduation

8th grade scholars at Academy Prep are expected to maintain high academic standards leading up to graduation. In order to graduate from AP, scholars must maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher when all four quarters of their 8th grade year are averaged together. They also must earn a minimum 2.0 GPA with no Fs during the 3rd and 4th quarters (Spring semester). If an 8th grader fails to meet these requirements, he/she will not be permitted to walk at graduation and will not receive a diploma from Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg. Not walking at graduation means that the scholar

will not be able to participate in the ceremony or be part of class events. More significantly, a scholar who does not walk at graduation and earn an Academy Prep diploma will not receive Graduate Support in high school/college since he/she will not be an alumnus/alumna of Academy Prep.

Note: A scholar not earning his/her diploma from Academy Prep does not preclude him/her from being accepted into high school, and each high school sets their own policies on grades required to accept credits from middle school.

Dress Code

The dress code promotes a sense of personal discipline and civility on our campus. Scholars are expected to arrive at school fully in dress code and remain so throughout the day. This includes shirts being tucked in. We ask that children and parents/guardians review and discuss this information together, recognizing that grooming and dress decisions are a joint responsibility. Please write scholars names in their clothing and no belt loops are permitted to be cut from uniforms.

School shirts should be purchased from our official supplier, Big Fish Company, as all shirts must have the official school logo. The uniform pants, shorts, skorts, dresses, and jumpers are available at many local retailers.

Everyday Wear for Boys and Girls

- Dark green polo shirt with school logo (long or short sleeve). Please note: 8th graders must wear white polo shirts with the school logo. There are two options: cotton or moisture-wicking fabric.
- Plain black belt with simple, unadorned buckle.
- **Black shoes.** Plain black athletic sneakers are acceptable, but there are no exceptions as to color. They must be all black, including the laces, tongue, soles, trim, logo, etc.
- Solid black crew socks above the ankle but not the calf.
- NOTE: Only plain white, navy blue, or hunter green t-shirts or Academy Prep P.E. t-shirts are permitted to be worn as undershirts.

Pants/Shorts For Boys

- Solid navy blue pants or navy blue shorts
- All shorts should fall just above the knee cap. Anything shorter, and your child will be asked to change.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts For Girls

- Solid navy blue pants, capris, shorts, or skirt/skort/jumper
- **All shorts, skorts, and skirts should fall just above the knee cap. Anything shorter will prompt us to require your child to change.**

Shoes/Accessories

- Scholars must wear all black, closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes with black crew socks. Sandals, platform shoes, and backless shoes are not permitted.
- Socks must be black crew socks that fall above the ankle but not fully above the calf. No ankle socks are permitted.
- Caps, hats, and bandanas are not to be worn.
- Coats are not to be worn inside school buildings.

Jewelry

Analog or digital watches are permitted, but **'smart' watches with internet accessibility are prohibited.**

● *Earrings:* Girls may have no more than two small ear studs or small ½ inch hoop earrings (one in each ear) worn in the lowest hole in the lower earlobe. No dangle earrings are allowed; acceptable colors include silver, gold, black, brown, white, yellow, green, or navy blue.

- **Male scholars may not wear earrings.**

● Scholars will not be permitted to wear jewelry that is visible outside of their clothing with the exception of a watch. This includes necklaces, rings, bracelets, and any other ring attached to the body.

Cold Weather Attire & Outerwear

- All scholars are provided a forest green zip-up jacket with an AP logo, and this should be the primary jacket worn during colder weather. Alternatively, solid navy blue or forest green sweaters or sweatshirts **without any visible non-AP logos** may be worn over scholars' AP polo shirts.
- In exceptionally cold weather (below 50F), an additional heavy overcoat may be worn outside of the uniform jacket or sweatshirt. This can be worn outside during recess, etc., and must be taken off BEFORE entering a classroom or other gathering place. Therefore, it is important for scholars to wear a uniform-approved jacket or sweatshirt underneath the overcoat for additional warmth when inside the buildings.
- Students may also wear a solid navy blue, forest green, black, or white long-sleeved shirt under their AP polo shirts. No two-tone or two-color, neon colors or other variations are permitted.
- Young ladies may wear navy blue, forest green, black, or white leggings with a uniform skirt. No two-tone or two-color, neon colors or other variations are permitted. If not wearing a uniform skirt with leggings, girls must wear the uniform navy blue long pants.
- Young gentlemen are not permitted to wear leggings. During cold weather, they must wear uniform-approved long pants in navy blue.
- Wearing a hoodie on the head or a hat is only allowed by special permission from administration due to extremely cold weather and, even then, can only be worn outside. Scholars who repeatedly wear their hoodies on their heads without permission will have their sweatshirts or jackets confiscated.

Hair and Haircuts

- Boys' hair must be kept neat and clean and be out of the eyes.
- Two tones and hair designs (lines, words, or mohawks) are prohibited. No student (male or female) may have a full mohawk, nor should there be the appearance of a fauxhawk, which means hair is braided tight on the sides and full at the top, lending the appearance of a mohawk.
- No beards or mustaches are allowed. This can include what a scholar may consider as peach fuzz.
- Girls' hair must be kept neat and clean. This should be done without the use of bandanas or scarves.
- **No unnatural colors or highlights in stark contrast to the scholar's natural hair color are allowed. Braids must be scholars' natural hair color.**
- All hair accessories must be **black, brown, white, yellow, green, or navy blue.**
- No hair clips, twine, or beads may be in a scholar's hair. This statement includes various materials and colors.

Makeup and Nail Polish

- No makeup (eye shadow, blush, eyeliner, lipstick, etc.) is allowed.
- **Lip gloss is not permitted at any time during the school day.** Chapstick or lip balm is only permissible when it is necessary to stop chapped or cracked lips.

● Scholars' nails must be their natural nails. No acrylic or other material over the natural nail is permitted. ● No colored nail polish is allowed. This includes glitter/sparkles/etc. and any designs. Nails should be plain. ● If nails are being professionally manicured, only a clear polish is permitted. Light pink polish is not acceptable, even though it is sometimes called "natural." Polish *must* be "clear."

● Nails should be short (meaning no longer than ⅛" from the tip of any finger), neat, and clean. ● French tips are prohibited, nor are any other colored tips. Nails should not be shaped or pointed but somewhat squared or rounded.

Dress for Enrichment Activities

Scholars participating in physical enrichment activities such as golf, tennis, or personal fitness are permitted to dress out. If a scholar chooses to dress out, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Scholars may wear their P.E. uniform.
- Scholars may wear forest green mesh shorts and any Academy Prep-issued t-shirt.
- Scholars may also wear a solid white or gray t-shirt free from logos or advertisements.

Special Dress Days

Occasionally, scholars will be offered the opportunity to participate in special dress days when non-uniform attire is permitted due to a holiday, bringing awareness to a social issue (e.g., cancer awareness), or school celebration (e.g., spirit week). On these days, a few basic rules still apply:

- Any scholars not specifically dressing in the requested attire must be in full uniform. These are not "free dress" days but opportunities to partake in a fun or meaningful experience.
- No ripped, torn, or otherwise unkempt pieces of clothing may be worn.
- Shoes must be close-toed and close-backed (no flip-flops, sandals, etc.)
- All clothes should remain modest and free of inappropriate language or innuendo.
- Rules regarding hair, nails, etc., remain in effect.

"Free Dress" Days

Classes may earn "free dress" or "dress down" days for good behavior, good deeds, and other positive actions in our AP community. Free dress days permit scholars to wear their favorite attire provided the same basic rules are followed:

- Any scholars not participating must be in full uniform.
- No ripped, torn, or otherwise unkempt pieces of clothing may be worn.
- Shoes must be close-toed and close-backed (no flip-flops, sandals, etc.)
- All clothes should remain modest and free of inappropriate language or innuendo
- Rules regarding jewelry, hair, nails, etc., remain in effect.
- No dresses, skirts, leggings, or biker shorts are allowed on dress-down days.

Uniform/Dress Code Enforcement Policy

The following steps will be taken to support compliance:

- Scholars violating the dress code will be asked to call their parent/guardian to notify them and request the appropriate clothing be brought to school. Belts and/or socks can be purchased from the school (if there are supplies) and/or charged to a parent's account.
- For hair, nail, jewelry, and other grooming standards, scholars will be asked to immediately change to a compliant style if possible. If the scholar refuses or, when applicable, returns to school the next day without the needed change(s), he/she will not be permitted to attend classes and will instead be sent home.

Fashionable hairstyles, hair accessories, nails, clothing, shoes, etc., sometimes change in the middle of the year. If/when there is a new style that the Academy Prep administration feels is distracting to the learning environment, AP reserves the right to request an immediate change to a less distracting style.

Physical Education

Uniforms

Required Physical Education uniforms are purchased directly from Big Fish Company. The P.E. uniform consists of a gray t-shirt and green mesh shorts which can be purchased for Big Fish. Scholars can also wear a plain gray,white,black or green t-shirt, free from logos or advertisements, with forest green or black mesh shorts, which can be purchased from local department stores; these items are also acceptable for P.E. class. Black socks and athletic or running shoes are required. In cold weather, plain sweatpants without visible logos in navy, gray, black, or green are acceptable.

A period of five minutes will be provided for dressing out, and five minutes to change at the end of class. Students must change back into their AP uniform before returning back to class. P.E. uniforms must be taken home at the end of each week to be cleaned, and more regularly if they become soiled. Lost and found items will be recovered on a day-to-day basis. At the end of each term, unclaimed items will be donated.

Physical Education Excuses

If a scholar is to be excused from P.E., he/she must bring a note from a parent/guardian. After three successive days of such notes or for repeated or extended illness, the scholar must bring a doctor's note.

Athletics

Interscholastic Athletic Program

Scholars in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade are encouraged to participate in the Academy Prep athletic program. A variety of sports are available to scholars at every level of experience and competence. Some programs require that teams conduct tryouts and cuts, even at the middle school level, based on league rules or space limitations.

Affiliation

Academy Prep is a member of the Florida High School Athletics Association (FHSAA). The FHSAA sets the guidelines, policies, procedures, and regulations for middle and high school athletics in the state of Florida.

Athletic Interscholastic Programs Offered **(***as transportation allows and as there are enough participants***)**

Fall

- Volleyball - Girls
- Soccer - Co-ed
- Swimming - Co-ed

Winter

- Basketball - Girls' and Boys' teams

Spring

- Track and Field - Co-ed
- Flag Football - Co-ed
- Swimming - Co-ed

Eligibility

In order to participate, all athletes must submit the following:

- A copy of the birth certificate to demonstrate eligibility with FHSAA.
- A doctor's physical examination each year. The physical is good for 365 days. This exam must be completed using the FHSAA sports physical form - **EL2**.
- The FHSAA also required that every school must have on file a parental consent and release form before a student-athlete can participate in any form of physical conditioning, regardless of when such conditioning occurs. These forms will be required of any athlete who participates on a team - **EL3**.
- Maintain acceptable academic standards. Athletes must earn a GPA of 2.5 or higher on the quarterly report card issued before their specific athletic season begins.
- To maintain eligibility during a season, scholars must maintain high academics and good behavior, which will be assessed by the Academic Dean, Athletic Director, and Dean of Students. Every Monday during the athletic season, the grades of each player will be checked by an administrator to ensure that each player has earned a minimum 2.0 GPA with no F in any subject and no referrals.
- In order to be eligible to participate in a game or match, a scholar must be present by 10:00 a.m. that school day.
- Exceptions to these rules are based on extenuating circumstances that must be approved by the Head of School or assigned representative. If a scholar is deemed ineligible, he/she will not play in the game(s) that are scheduled for that week. However, the scholar will be expected to continue to participate in practice and attend the games with the rest of the team. Their presence is a reflection of their commitment and support for their teammates.

Uniforms

All game uniforms will be provided by the school. The athlete is responsible for proper footwear for the given sport being played. Once the uniform has been issued to the athlete, it then becomes his/her responsibility to keep it clean, bring it on game days, and return it as soon as the season is finished. Lost or damaged (bleached, torn, etc.) uniforms will have to be replaced at the expense of the athlete**. An important note: our uniforms are not stock items, so if they have to be replaced, it must be done as a special order. Uniform companies carry a charge of twice the price for special orders**.

To properly care for school-issues uniforms:

- Do not use bleach or hot dryer settings when cleaning uniforms.
- Wash uniforms immediately after each game.

Any special t-shirts, sweatshirts, game day shirts, or warm-ups other than those provided by the school will be purchased by the athletes.

Transportation

Academy Prep provides transportation for all off-campus games/practices. At the discretion of the Athletic Director and with written permission from a parent or guardian, a scholar may obtain alternative transportation when returning from an off-campus event. Parents/guardians who wish to take their children home from away games instead of relying on school transportation need to inform coaches ahead of time and speak to coaches in person when departing the game.

Athletes' Responsibilities

1. In order to be eligible to participate in a practice or competition, an athlete must have been present by 10:00 a.m. that school day.
2. Scholars are required to complete a particular sport's season before moving to their next sport. Scholars who

quit one sport may not participate in another sport until the first sport's season is over.
3. Athletes are encouraged to participate in a variety of sports. Those who are completing one season playing on an AP team are not penalized for beginning the next season late.
4. It is the responsibility of athletes to use good time management, maintain a good academic record, and communicate with their coaches and teachers if there is a need for help in their classes.
5. Scholars on Academic Probation, those in mandatory after-school study hall, and those who are not meeting academic expectations per the Academic Dean and Athletic Director will not be allowed to participate in games.
6. The FHSAA rules read that any athlete will be ejected and fined for "Gross Unsportsmanlike Conduct," which is defined as follows: Gross Unsportsmanlike Conduct is striking, cursing, or threatening an official or an opponent. It also includes malicious contact with intent to inflict bodily harm, spitting on officials or opponents, and uttering slurs of gender, racial or ethnic nature. Any athlete ejected from an FHSAA contest may be fined $250.00 and will be suspended for up to six weeks by the FHSAA. The FHSAA holds the Head of School and Athletic Director of member schools responsible for the enforcement of its rules and regulations, including the conduct of the spectators, student body, coaches, and athletes.

Parents/Guardians of Athletes

Concerns should be addressed by making an appointment with the coach and the Athletics Coordinator and/or Assistant Head of School. Do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or following a contest or practice!

Conduct

Scholars have a responsibility to respect the rights of others and to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains the order of the school. Scholars who engage in inappropriate behavior may be subject to the disciplinary actions of silent recess, lunch detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Scholars are not permitted to:

- Be disruptive in classrooms, around campus, or during school-sponsored activities
- Interfere with another scholar's learning or general learning environment in the classroom
- Cheat on tests and other school assignments, or plagiarize materials without attribution
- Use any type of generative AI to complete assignments presented as their own (i.e., essays, etc.)
- Use offensive language or make obscene gestures
- Threaten or harm another scholar or staff member, or exhibit aggressive behavior
- Act in a manner considered to be disrespectful towards school staff, volunteers, other students, or visitors
- Steal or take by force things that belong to others
- Damage or deface school property
- Litter inside/outside the school buildings or off-campus during a school-sponsored activity
- Bring to school dangerous objects such as knives, guns, mock guns, or other weapons prohibited by state law
- Bring non-prescribed drugs to school; all prescribed and over-the-counter drugs must be delivered to the school office by the parent or guardian. (See section on Administration of Medication).

Bringing weapons to school results in automatic expulsion. Fighting or theft most likely results in automatic suspension; multiple incidents of fighting or theft most likely will result in expulsion.

Cell Phones and Other Devices

Students are not permitted to bring cell phones, electronic devices, AirPods, or other inappropriate items (as

determined by the Head of School) to school. Only school-issued headphones are permitted. **Such items will be confiscated if not brought into the main office prior to Convocation. (Note: If a student needs to bring a cell phone or other electronic device to school, the student must leave these items in the main office prior to Convocation. The student may retrieve these items following dismissal.)**

Gum

Students are not allowed to chew gum at any time while at school and are not allowed to eat outside of the designated dining area. Chewing gum results in automatic silent recess and 5 demerits.

Campus and Classroom Behavior

The following classroom and campus rules of decorum will be adhered to by scholars:

● *Dismissal at the end of class:* When the class has concluded, the teacher will guide scholars through the 3-step dismissal procedure. Scholars must quietly and quickly comply in order to be dismissed to their next class.

● *Walking from one class to another:* Scholars will walk quietly, in order, in a single-file line from one class to the next when they are dismissed. If the teacher requests that they stand in line outside the door until they are invited into the classroom, they do so in line and in silence. Students are not to get water or use the restroom without obtaining the teacher's permission first.

● *Greeting guests:* When a guest is escorted into or enters the classroom, scholars will immediately stop what they are doing, put writing utensils down, and wait to be introduced. If the guest shakes their hand, scholars will smile, look directly at the guest, and introduce themselves. When guests are touring or spending time on campus, whenever possible, scholars are expected to stop as they are walking by, extend their hand, and introduce themselves, adding, “Welcome to Academy Prep!” Scholars are urged to interact with guests as much as possible.

● *Use of “Yes, Ma’am" and "Yes, Sir”:* Whenever scholars are asked or told anything by a teacher, staff member, or adult guest, they will reply with “Yes, Ma’am/Sir.” If they are called over to be asked to do something, they will immediately stop what they are doing, walk to the adult and respond with “Yes, Ma’am/Sir.”

Discipline Tracking

As a way to record scholars’ disciplinary infractions, a demerit system is used. Demerits are issued for infractions ranging from minor to severe. Below is an outline of the demerit value for various infractions and consequences.

Dress Code Infractions – 2 Demerits

Tardies – 2 Demerits

Silent Recess (minor offenses) – 5 Demerits

Scholars will receive a Silent Recess for the following infractions:

- Constantly talking out of turn
- Moving without permission after a warning has been issued (walking around the room, dancing, etc.)
- Unexcused absence from Saturday Field Trip
- Outside food in lockers
- Phone not turned into office
- Distracting behaviors after a warning was issued (singing, humming, tapping, etc.…)
- Flicking paper balls or other objects across the room after a warning was issued
- Other distracting behaviors

Lunch Detention (major offenses) – 10 Demerits

Students will receive a lunch detention for the following infractions:

- Disrespect to authority
- Habitual name-calling
- Use of profanity
- Attempting to deface school property
- Repeatedly refusing to cooperate
- Horseplaying (neck slapping, play fighting, etc…)

Referral/Suspension (severe offenses) – 20 Demerits

Students will receive a referral, which may result in a suspension, for the following infractions:

- Fighting
- Bullying
- Theft
- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Falsification of records
- Threatening the safety of a teacher or scholar
- Hateful/explicit language
- Shouting at others or being excessively disrespectful to authority
- Destruction of school property
- Leaving, or attempting to leave, campus without permission
- Throwing objects that can injure others
- Possession of a weapon or harmful object
- Inappropriate physical contact

A referral means the parent/guardian will be contacted directly by administration and will include, at a minimum, two (2) lunch detentions or a suspension. It also often includes an additional writing assignment given by the Dean of Student Life; this writing assignment is due the next day.

Scholars who receive 75 demerits in any given quarter will be issued an Out-of-School Suspension (OSS). Suspensions may also include a written assignment due upon the student's return to school.

Behavioral Warning/Contract

Students exceeding 50 demerits in any given semester will be placed on a behavioral warning. If the scholar's behavior persists after the behavior warning, he/she will be placed on a behavioral contract.

Expulsion

Any violation in the referral/suspension section may be considered for expulsion, or not permitted to re-enroll for a subsequent quarter, semester, or school year at the discretion of the Head of School.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Cheating on tests and other school assignments is a serious offense.Scholars who are caught cheating will be subject to the following disciplinary consequences:

- **First Offense:** The scholar will receive a **zero** on the test or assignment, a **Lunch Detention**, and **10 demerits**.
- **Second Offense:** The scholar will receive a **disciplinary referral**, **In-School Suspension (ISS)**, and a **parent conference** will be required.
- **Third Offense:** The scholar will receive a **two-day suspension**, along with any **additional disciplinary**

measures deemed appropriate by the Academic Dean and the Head of School.

Cheating offenses are but are not limited to ….

- Copying another student's work
- Allowing another student to copy your work
- Using notes during a test without permission
- Looking at another student's assessment
- Sharing answers before, during, or after an assessment
- Using AI (ChatGPT or similar tools) without teacher permission
- Plagiarizing from the internet or another source
- Copying and pasting information without citation
- Using a phone, smartwatch, or other electronic device
- Altering graded work and requesting additional credit
- Having another person complete your work

Responsibilities and Expectations of Scholars

All scholars share responsibility with the administration and faculty to develop a safe learning environment within the school. Continued enrollment at Academy Prep depends on the cooperation of the scholar to comply with the following commitments:

- Adhere to all rules and regulations stated in the Scholar & Parent/Guardian Handbook.
- Follow the school dress code as explained in the Scholar & Parent/Guardian Handbook.
- Adhere to the expectations of the Homework/Classwork Guidelines.
- Read, understand, and abide by the Discipline Guidelines.
- Report incidents or activities that may threaten or disrupt the school environment.

Discipline Policy

At Academy Prep, we respect ourselves, each other, and the environment. This statement provides a firm expectation of the conduct of all members of the Academy Prep Family - scholars, faculty, parents/guardians, staff, and visitors. An important element in the educational and social development of scholars is a clear expectation for standards of behavior. Every Academy Prep scholar deserves to experience Academy Prep as a welcoming place for his/her growth and learning. Personal pride and consciousness of the needs and rights of others are fostered throughout these years. Scholars are expected to be considerate of others in the school community at all times.

Respect and responsibility are central values of the Academy Prep community. Scholars' behavior is expected to be appropriate for the particular situation and setting. Teachers manage scholar behavior within their own classrooms. Scholars and teachers engage in discussions about feelings and the well-being of each member of the class. The administrative team and guidance counselor work with teachers and scholars on behavior modification when necessary. Any scholar who is unable to demonstrate acceptable behavior will be given consequences, such as a school service for inappropriate choices. The goal is to enable scholars to take ownership of their proper behavior. We help them achieve this goal through guidance, understanding, and appropriate intervention. Teachers and administrators will notify parents/guardians of behavior that warrants greater concern and work in partnership with them to develop appropriate plans of action.

For those whose behavior does not meet the school's expectations promoted in our mission, the discipline system has been established.

Parent/Guardian-School Partnership

At Academy Prep, we believe in the importance of building partnerships between a scholars' parents/guardians and our school. The positive, collaborative, and constructive family-school relationship enhances our ability to serve the scholars and accomplish our mission. We accept the responsibility to work with parents/guardians to provide opportunities for scholars to develop. Should a situation occur in which the Head of School concludes that the actions or language of a parent or guardian make such a positive relationship impossible, the school reserves the right to terminate or refuse a scholar's re-enrollment contract.

Throughout the year, parents/guardians visit and are involved in activities during the school day. Parents/guardians are required to sign in and out at the office and wear a visitor's badge at all times. At no time should a parent/guardian or other family member reprimand, confront, or discipline someone else's child. If intervention appears necessary, contact a school employee immediately.

The success of an outstanding college preparatory program relies in great measure on the quality of its parental involvement. At Academy Prep, many avenues for participation exist for parents/guardians, such as serving as class parents, volunteering in the classroom, serving as a member of the PTO council, assisting with lunch service, chaperoning field trips, and volunteering for events such as the Snow Ball. Additionally, parents/guardians support the school by following arrival and dismissal procedures, reinforcing the school's policies with their children, turning to teachers and school administrators when they have questions and need information, ensuring scholar compliance with uniform and dress codes, and contributing in many other ways to support our educational mission. We appreciate our involved parent body and are continuously available to partner with them in the joy of guiding our students.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Parents/Guardians

A scholar's continued enrollment at Academy Prep depends upon the cooperation of parents/guardians in his or her educational endeavors.

Academy Prep parents/guardians are expected to:

- Sign the Contract of Scholar & Parent/Guardian Responsibility stating that they will abide by all policies, procedures, and rules of the school as a condition of enrollment.
- Ensure their children attend school regularly, on time, and for the whole school day in accordance with applicable Florida law and the policies of Academy Prep.
- Promptly notify the front office of absences, illnesses, medical appointments, and other circumstances affecting attendance.
- Provide required medical documentation when requested under the school's attendance and health policies.
- Communicate promptly with the school regarding changes in a scholar's medical, physical, or educational needs that may affect the scholar's ability to participate in the school day.
- Work cooperatively with the school regarding reasonable accommodations when appropriate and legally required.
- Provide accurate information concerning the scholar's medical and physical needs that may affect the scholar's safety or participation.
- Ensure that their child is able to participate in the Academy Prep program with the accommodations and services that the Academy has agreed to provide.
- Understand that Academy Prep does not provide ongoing nursing, personal-care, lifting, transferring, toileting, or other one-to-one medical services unless expressly agreed to by the Academy as part of an approved

accommodation.
- Work with the school and be proactive in responding to academic, disciplinary, attendance, medical, or other matters pertaining to their child.
- Attend conferences and meetings requested by Academy Prep administration.
- Ensure the child is at school on time and is picked up from school and school-related activities in a timely manner.

Failure to comply with the attendance, communication, or other responsibilities described above may affect a scholar's continued enrollment.

Parent/Guardian Engagement Hours

From the start of the summer session through the end of our school year in May, parents/guardians are required to provide the following hours of service to Academy Prep:

5th Grade Parents and Guardians 40 hours of service
6th Grade Parents and Guardians 40 hours of service
7th Grade Parents and Guardians 40 hours of service
8th Grade Parents and Guardians 30 hours of service

The Family Picnic will be the last opportunity for earning engagement hours on April 24th.

If the required hours are not served by April 24th, a fee of $3.00 per unserved hour will be assessed. Unserved engagement hour fees are due by May7.

With the school's approval, other adult family members and friends may represent the parents/guardians for service hours. Arrangements for these service hours are made privately between each family and the Community Relations office, and the Community Relations office monitors the hours. Completion of the service hours requirement is a condition of a student's continued enrollment at Academy Prep.

The Head of School may take a family's special circumstances (including the number of children enrolled) into consideration when monitoring and determining the service hours requirement.

Service hours may be completed in multiple and varied ways, such as serving as a chaperone on field trips, baking goods for a school function, decorating for an event, backstage help, helping other scholars with rides to/from school, playground supervision, help serving meals, garden donations, office help, etc. Please read the newsletters and email blasts for service opportunities throughout the year.

When on campus, please check in at the front desk to receive credit for your service hours.

Step Up For Students (SUFS) Scholarship Fee and Family Application

Florida's Step Up for Students Scholarship Program provides a scholarship of $8,059.00 (for the 2026-27 school year) per student from Florida corporations to Academy Prep in support of the education of all Academy Prep students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program.

Any *new* family that does not qualify for a SUFS Scholarship or an equivalent financial need-based scholarship (e.g., FES) will not be eligible to attend Academy Prep. SUFS eligibility must be submitted to Academy Prep by the published deadline.

Monthly Activity Fees

Academy Prep requires a $100 per semester activity fee from each scholar beginning in August. A second child requires a $50 per semester fee, while a third child requires a $25 per semester fee. Fees for the first semester are due no later than November 27th. If fees are not paid by the due date, your child will not be permitted to participate in special activities in December to include Winter Showcase, Spirit Week, Holiday luncheon, Fall Ball, etc.

Second Semester Activity Fees are due before the scholar's class field trip or the scholar cannot participate in the field trip. All fees are due by April 23rd. This includes tech fees, unpaid activity fees, etc. If fees are not paid by April 23rd, the student will not be permitted to attend class field trips or take final exams. 8th-grade students cannot attend graduation if fees are not paid. Transcripts and records will not be released to schools until fees are paid in full.

Additional Fees

Additional fees may be charged to your account. These can include uniforms (belts/socks), lost novels, electronic repairs and replacement fees and late pick-up fees. The fee balance, regardless of its source, is still due by November 27th for the first semester and April 23rd for the second semester. It is our desire that all activity and additional fees be paid when invoiced. Failure to pay the final balance by the due date may result in the student not being allowed to take final exams, not participating in class trips, 8th graders being able to participate in their graduation ceremony, and school records not being released to families and/or requesting schools/agencies. This includes college prep programs to which 8th graders are applying.

Emergency Procedures

No School Days

Academy Prep generally will follow the Pinellas County Schools system in determining whether to cancel or delay school in the event of inclement weather or other local/state/national emergency. Scholars and parents/guardians should listen to announcements on the radio or TV for pertinent information. If inclement weather forces the closing of school during the school day, Academy Prep will make every effort to contact each scholar's parent/guardian to arrange for transportation home.

Whenever feasible, in cases of emergency, Academy Prep will attempt to send messages through cell phones on record and through text/email blasts. Please be sure that your contact information is always correct with the school office.

On a special occasion, Academy Prep may close for a day or dismiss early. On such an occasion, the Head of School will provide adequate notice to all families.

Evacuation

Maps instructing students where to go in the event of an emergency that necessitates vacating the classes are displayed in every classroom.

1. Scholars will exit the classroom in an orderly and silent single file.
2. Teachers will take roll once their class has reached the designated area.
3. Teachers will be the last to exit the classroom closing the door behind them.
4. Scholars will be kept in class groups and will not be permitted to wander.
5. If a fire drill occurs, the administrator will give teachers and scholars the all clear, allowing them to return to the building and offering any additional information required.

Step Up For Students Scholarship and Attendance

Academy Prep participates in applicable Florida school choice scholarship programs, including programs administered by Step Up For Students.

Scholarship participation is subject to applicable state law, scholarship program requirements, and the policies and procedures established by the scholarship funding organization.

Parents/guardians are responsible for maintaining their scholar's eligibility for applicable scholarship programs and for complying with all requirements communicated by Step Up For Students.

Academy Prep is required to maintain appropriate enrollment and attendance records and to comply with applicable requirements governing participating private schools.

Scholarship funding requirements are separate from Academy Prep's own enrollment and attendance policies. A family's receipt of scholarship funding does not exempt a scholar from Academy Prep's attendance requirements, academic standards, health and safety requirements, or other handbook policies.

Likewise, an excused absence does not automatically create an entitlement to continued enrollment or to a waiver of Academy Prep's academic or attendance standards.

Parents/guardians should consult Step Up For Students directly regarding the effect of absences, withdrawal, re-enrollment, or changes in enrollment status on their individual scholarship.

Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg

stpete.academyprep.org

To acknowledge please have your child return this page or Acknowledge on the Google Form Provided.

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I have read Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg's 2026-2027 scholar/parent handbook, and if I have any questions, I will call the school to ensure I understand the school's policies and guidelines. I will also go over these guidelines with my child to ensure his/her understanding.

_____ _____

Parent's/Guardian's Name (printed) Date

_____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

_____

Scholar's Name and Grade (printed)

_____

Scholar's Signature