

School Handbook



Academy Prep

Center of Lakeland

2023–2024

August 2023

Dear Students and Parents:

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I welcome you to the Academy Prep Center of Lakeland for the 2023-24 school year. Our first four years have witnessed the graduation of two classes, now enrolled in some of the best day and boarding college prep schools locally and throughout the country. We now stride together into our fifth year with an ever strengthening academic and enrichment program that is unrivaled in Polk County.

In our society we speak often about equality of opportunity. Education is vital to realizing this equality. It is our obligation to strive diligently and seriously to provide an outstanding education so that our students may take full advantage of the opportunities they will encounter in their lives. To do this we must set and enforce high standards, and we must ensure that time spent in instruction and other school activities is not compromised or devalued.

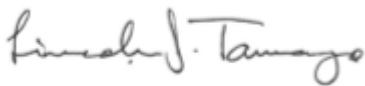
This is a collaborative enterprise. Its success depends on the efforts of our faculty, staff, parents, and, of course, students.

The rules, procedures, and standards in this handbook are intended to ensure that our students' time here is not compromised and that they can, as a result, derive the full benefit of the substantial educational opportunities at APL. This handbook enumerates and describes our students' and families' obligations and responsibilities at APL. As we launch into this school year and the opportunities and challenges we will certainly be facing, I urge you to take the time to go through this handbook together.

I believe strongly that school is very much part of the "real world" – it is not a world apart. The consequences, good and bad, of what our students do here are real and enduring.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lincoln J. Tamayo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

Lincoln J. Tamayo
Head of School

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Mission

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

APL History and Philosophy

APL Center of Lakeland (APL) is a tuition-free, independent middle school for families who qualify for need-based scholarships. In the atmosphere of an extended family, APL encourages and teaches students to excel in academics, ethics, morality, and life skills. Opening its doors in 2019, it is modeled after its predecessors, Nativity Mission Center, which opened in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, New York, in 1971, as well as the Academy Prep Centers of St. Petersburg and Tampa, in operation since 1997 and 2003 respectively.

The school is dedicated to educating economically-disadvantaged students by providing an academically challenging, enriching and structured environment, followed by eight years of graduate support and guidance through high school and college. APL admits students who demonstrate the potential 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, artistic, social, and physical development of its students. APL students 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.

Contact Information

1021 Lakeland Hills Blvd
Lakeland, FL 33805

863-940-8900
lakeland.academyprep.org

Nondiscrimination Policy

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

Handbook Changes

This handbook may be amended at any time. Policy changes, should they occur, will be relayed promptly to families.

The School Day

General Schedule

Week A		Week B		
Monday–Thursday	Friday	Monday–Tuesday	Wednesday–Thursday	Friday
Breakfast 7:00am–7:25am Students may be dropped no earlier than 7:00am each school day.				
Convocation 7:30am–7:50am Students who arrive after 7:30am are tardy and should report to the front office.				
Homeroom 8:00am–8:20am				
1st Period 8:23am–9:13am	1st Period 8:23am–9:13am	1st Period 8:23am–9:13am	1st Period 8:23am–9:43am	1st Period 8:23am–9:13am
2nd Period 9:16am–10:06am	2nd Period 9:16am–10:06am	2nd Period 9:16am–10:06am		2nd Period 9:16am–10:06am
3rd Period 10:09am–10:59am	3rd Period 10:09am–10:59am	3rd Period 10:09am–10:59am		2nd Period 9:46am–11:06am
Lunch/Recess 11:02am–11:52am		Lunch/Recess 11:02am–11:52am		Lunch/Recess 11:09am–11:59am
5th Period 11:55am–12:45pm	5th Period 11:55am–12:45pm	5th Period 11:55am–12:45pm	4th Period 12:02pm–1:22pm	5th Period 11:55am–12:45pm
6th Period 12:48pm–1:38pm	6th Period 12:48pm–1:38pm	6th Period 12:48pm–1:38pm		5th Period 1:25pm–2:45pm
7th Period 1:41pm–2:31 pm	7th Period 1:41pm–2:31 pm	7th Period 1:41pm–2:31 pm		7th Period 1:41pm–2:31 pm
Study Hall 2:34pm–3:14pm	Snack 2:34pm–2:45pm	Study Hall 2:34pm–3:14pm	Study Hall 2:48pm–3:18pm	Snack 2:34pm–2:45pm
Snack 3:17pm–3:30pm	Enrichment 2:45pm–4:00pm	Snack 3:17pm–3:30pm	Snack 3:20pm–3:30pm	Enrichment 2:45pm–4:00pm
Enrichment 3:30pm–4:45pm	Dismissal 4:05pm	Enrichment 3:30pm–4:45pm	Enrichment 3:30pm–4:45pm	Dismissal 4:05pm
Dismissal A 4:50 pm		Dismissal A 4:50 pm		
Extended Study Hall 4:55pm–5:35pm		Extended Study Hall 4:55pm–5:35pm		
Dismissal B 5:40pm		Dismissal B 5:40pm		

Week A/B schedule can be found on the student programs calendar on the website.

Arrival, Breakfast and Morning Convocation

Students may be dropped off no earlier than 7:00am each school day. When arriving for dropoff, please use the right lane and do not block the callbox for faculty/staff entry.

After exiting their vehicle, students proceed directly to the meals pavilion adjacent to the gymnasium. Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave the school grounds without permission from an APL administrator.

Breakfast is served from 7:00am to 7:25am. Students eat breakfast at the tables at the meals pavilion and are expected to throw away all trash after eating. Students are not permitted to bring their own breakfast.

When convocation is called at 7:30am, students must line up, by homeroom and in height order, silently in front of the gymnasium. Anyone not in line at that time will be considered tardy.

Convocation in the gymnasium begins the formal school day and consists of an affirmation, the Pledge of Allegiance, announcements, public speaking from our student ambassadors, and the recitation of the school pledge. Students are dismissed at the end of convocation and led directly to their homeroom by their homeroom teachers.

Students who arrive after 7:30am are tardy and should report to the front desk.

Classes

Students are expected to be prepared for all classes. They should have at the start of class all necessary materials (e.g., textbooks, novels, Chromebooks, binders, paper, writing implements, etc.) and homework. Conduct in class must be respectful of both their teachers and fellow students. Students must observe rules of classroom conduct and etiquette as outlined by their teachers.

Homework, a vital part of any education as it reinforces classwork, will be assigned regularly. It is expected that students complete all homework as assigned; completion of homework assignments is factored into grading.

Transition Periods (3 minutes between periods)

Between classes, students should prepare themselves as quickly as possible. When transitioning to the next scheduled activity, students may go to their assigned lockers and use water fountains and bathrooms, but must arrive on time to the next scheduled class/activity.

Backpacks and Lockers

Students may carry their backpacks with them only within the main building, except for PE and enrichments conducted in the gym or outside. Lockers will be assigned to students by name. Students may bring a lock from home or purchase a lock at the front desk. It is a student's responsibility to remember their locker combination or keep track of a locker key. APL is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. Defacing lockers, outside or inside, is not allowed - no exceptions.

Hall Passes

A hall pass must be issued by a teacher before a student is permitted to leave a classroom. Students must keep their hall pass with them at all times when outside the classroom.

Meals and Recess

Unless otherwise permitted by administration after review of a legitimate written authorization from a physician, students may not bring their own food to school. No food will be permitted in classrooms, lockers, or elsewhere within the buildings unless authorized by the APL administration for a specific program/event.

Students sit in the meals pavilion to eat breakfast, lunch, and snack and are expected to exhibit polite and proper mealtime behavior. When finished, they clean up after themselves, including throwing away all refuse and picking up their area.

Physical Education and Interscholastic Sports

Students must participate in physical education and will not be exempt without written authorization from a physician. In addition to intramural sports offered in enrichment, APL offers competitive boys and girls interscholastic sports, subject to local scheduling and availability.

Leaving School at the End of the Day

The school day ends at 4:50 Monday-Thursday or at 5:40 for those students who have selected extended study hall. All students are dismissed at 4:05pm on Friday. Students must wait until their vehicle is at the pickup station before entering. Other dismissal times are occasionally scheduled to accommodate special events and team sport practices. Alternate schedules are announced well in advance.

Parents are responsible for student pick up. School transportation is not provided. Students will be dismissed to walk or ride public transportation only if their parent/guardian has previously submitted a signed request to the school office. APL staff will not release a child to a hired car unless previously approved in writing. Those who have transportation challenges are strongly encouraged to call the school office to request a carpool arrangement.

Late Pickup Fee

Monday-Thursday dismissal is at either 4:50 pm or 5:40 pm (must choose one time). On Friday, dismissal is at 4:05pm. Students who are not picked up within 15 minutes of their chosen time will be assessed a \$15 late fee for each instance.

Academics, Enrichments, and Field Trips

Required Courses

Academic	Centers of Excellence
English	Chess
Mathematics	Music
Science	Physical Education (P.E.)
History	Art
Spanish (7th and 8th grade only)	Study Skills
	Graduate Support (8th grade only)

Enrichment Courses

Required enrichment courses in the *Centers of Excellence* (Art, Chess, Music, Athletics) and other areas (cooking, gardening, ropes course, step, yoga, etc.) are integral to the APL program as they broaden the intellectual and social horizons of our students. Enrichment courses run 3:30-4:45pm Monday – Thursday and 2:45-4:00pm Friday. However, if a student is involved with an organized program off-campus (e.g., athletic practice/games, contracted tutoring, contracted music classes, etc.) which necessitates early dismissal from an enrichment class, APL will excuse the early dismissal through written agreement with the student’s parent/guardian and the off-campus coach/tutor/teacher.

Required Enrichments	
5th Grade	Challenge by Choice, Bucket Drumming, Spanish, Creative LEGO Workshop, 1 Open Selection
6th Grade	Spanish, 4 Open Selections
7th Grade	5 Open Selections
8th Grade	5 Open Selections

Student Planner

Each student is issued a student planner on the first day of school. Students are expected to utilize their planner daily to write down all homework assignments and keep track of major projects, tests/quizzes, and due dates. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review their child’s planner regularly to stay abreast of the student’s work. Each planner includes a “homeroom pocket” that will be utilized for important communication, permission slips, progress reports, and grade cards. Should a student lose his/her planner, replacement is required, and the family will be charged a \$5 replacement fee.

Field Trips

APL field trips are designed to expose students to the cultural, educational, environmental, and historic wealth of the Lakeland and surrounding areas and provide students an opportunity to become involved in community service. They are

intended to provide a learning experience and a chance to build APL spirit and unity among students, faculty, staff, and our surrounding communities.

These required field trips usually occur one Saturday per month for each grade level. Trips typically run from 8:00am to 2:00pm. Occasionally, field trips may be planned on school days or evenings. Please refer to the school calendar (at the back of this handbook) for specific field trip dates by grade. If a field trip is canceled, APL will provide timely notice. A student who needs to be excused from a field trip must obtain prior approval from administration.

Students accumulating excessive disciplinary infractions may not be allowed to participate in field trips and will be marked as an unexcused absence for the trip(s). In addition, as field trips are conducted only one Saturday per month, and as field trips are an important part of the APL curriculum/program, excused absences will not be granted for non-APL weekend activities. Please note that unexcused absences for field trips will warrant a consequence.

Parents/guardians are required to drop off and pick up their children on time for field trips. Families are strongly encouraged to carpool if transportation is needed. Students picked up more than 15 minutes late will be assessed a \$15 fee.

Testing

Students may expect weekly or biweekly assessments in all subjects, as well as final exams at the end of each semester.

Students will complete MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress) testing in early fall, winter, and late spring in order to measure overall student progress. Parents will be notified in advance of these testing periods. These tests, in addition to grades, are used to help identify areas of growth, students in need of academic assistance, and in supporting applications to competitive college prep programs.

Select 7th and 8th graders have the opportunity to take Florida End-of-Course exams (algebra and/or geometry) in the spring of each year. Select 8th graders will participate in SSAT test prep and testing, the results of which are included in college prep school applications.

Grades

Students will receive academic and conduct grades in each of their subjects, except for Grad Support, Study Skills, and enrichments. Letter grades and their numerical and grade point equivalents are as follows:

Academic Grades			Conduct Grades	
Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Grade Points	Code	
A	90-100	4.0	E	Excellent
B+	85-89	3.5	S	Satisfactory
B	80-84	3.0	N	Needs Improvement
C+	75-79	2.5	U	Unsatisfactory
C	70-74	2.0		
D+	65-69	1.5		
D	60-64	1.0		
F	59 and less	0.0		

All academic courses will be considered for the purposes of determining Academic Grade Point Average (GPA), honor roll, and other honors.

Progress Reports

Midway through each grading period, progress reports are sent home detailing a student's performance in each subject. Progress reports will indicate areas the student should strengthen in order to improve performance before the end of the term. Progress reports also include comments regarding the student's conduct.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued four (4) times during the school year at the conclusion of each grading period. Report cards for the first three grading periods are not mailed home. They are passed out by homeroom teachers and carried home in the "homeroom pocket" in the student planner. Report cards for the final grading period are mailed to the student's home at the completion of the school year if there are no outstanding fees owed to the school.

Teacher Conferences and Communication

At any time during the school year, but especially after reviewing progress reports and report cards, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact teachers regarding their child's academics or behavior. Parents/guardians can contact the guidance department or directly email a teacher to discuss or schedule an appointment (emails are available on APL's website and at the end of this handbook).

Academic Awards and Recognitions

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

- *Academy Prep Honors* are awarded to students who achieve A's in all subjects.
- *High Academic Honors* are awarded to students who achieve an Academic Grade Point Average (GPA) greater than 3.5 with no grade in any subject less than a B.
- *Academic Honors* are awarded to students who achieve an Academic GPA of 3.0 to 3.5 with no grade in any subject less than a B.

Academic awards will be announced to students during convocation as well as in APL's weekly newsletter.

Students may also be awarded for perfect attendance, excellent school spirit, most improved GPA, and no disciplinary offenses during the academic year. These awards, and others, are given annually at the awards assembly in May.

Eligibility for Student Activities

Students must maintain an academic GPA of at least 2.0 with no F's in any class in order to participate in interscholastic sports, chess, student government, or other special activities. GPAs will be reviewed at the middle and end of every month. At the discretion of administration, coaches, or student government advisors, students may be removed from interscholastic sports, chess, student government, and other activities at any time for poor grades or behavior.

Promotion to Next Grade

A student will not be promoted to the next grade if the student averages an F over the course of the year or during the 4th quarter in **any** academic subject. Arrangements may be made by the parents with administration to correct such a deficiency through the subsequent summer session.

Continued enrollment at APL depends upon the student's overall academic and behavioral performance. Students who do not maintain at least a 2.0 GPA based on their final grades in their academic subjects, or who are not meeting APL's standards of excellence in conduct, are not likely to be invited to return APL.

Expectations for Upperclassmen/Academic Probation/Graduation

Beginning in the 7th grade, all students will be required to maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA in their academic subjects for each report card issued. A student who fails to achieve the required academic GPA on any report card will be placed on Academic Probation. Any subsequent report card's academic GPA of less than 2.0 will result in that student's disenrollment from APL. A student may be removed from Academic Probation at the discretion of administration.

APL supports all students to achieve their fullest potential. Students on Academic Probation will receive a variety of services and assistance, and a staff member will provide updates to families.

Summer Session

The school year begins with summer session. This experience is intended to combine elements of academics, nature and the outdoors, and athletics. A student reinforces the academic skills developed during the previous school year while building teamwork, spirit, and camaraderie. A student's personal development depends upon a broad range of educational experiences throughout the year. Consistent with this philosophy, **APL requires that its students participate in the three-week summer session each June**. After the completion of summer session, all students are required to complete an additional assignment due upon their return to school in August.

Conduct and Discipline

APL encourages and teaches students to excel in academics, ethics, morality, and life skills. Our students and graduates are expected to positively contribute to their communities and demonstrate charity and concern in all their actions. Students are expected to behave in a manner that does not threaten, interfere with, or deprive other students of their right to a great education.

APL faculty and staff will create a positive, safe, and challenging learning environment that encourages and supports student success. Underlying causes for misbehavior will be explored, and when necessary positive redirection will guide the student toward more appropriate behaviors.

APL administration considers the individual student and circumstances when issuing disciplinary action. Consequences may include detention, suspension, and disenrollment. Teachers manage classroom behavior according to their individual policies. All disciplinary measures will be conducted in a manner that is respectful to the student.

Prohibited Conduct

Weapons are not permitted on APL's campus. Bringing a weapon of any kind to school results in disenrollment and the possibility of consultation with law enforcement authorities.

APL does not tolerate fighting or theft. Either likely result in suspension or disenrollment.

APL does not tolerate bullying. Students engaging in bullying, on or off campus, digitally or otherwise, will be issued consequences up to and including disenrollment.

Students are not permitted to have a cell phone or any other personal electronic device on their person at any time while on campus. Such devices should be left at home. If a student must bring a device to school, including but not limited to a cell phone, headphones, smartwatch, or any item not school-related (as determined by administration), it must be powered off and turned in to school personnel immediately upon arrival. If otherwise found, faculty/staff will confiscate such items, and the student will be issued a consequence. Parents/guardians will be notified and must come to the main office to retrieve confiscated item(s).

APL does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Cheating on a test or any other school assignment is a serious offense. Handing in another student's work is a form of cheating, as is copying from another student's exam or school work. Students caught cheating will be issued appropriate consequences, up to and including disenrollment.

APL does not tolerate plagiarism. Plagiarism is purposefully taking the words or ideas of another person or appropriating the work of artificial intelligence without a citation. Students are always expected to complete their own work and cite their sources. Students caught plagiarizing will be issued appropriate consequences, up to and including disenrollment.

Students are prohibited from contacting faculty and staff through non-APL social media. Doing so will result in disciplinary action, up to and including disenrollment.

Safety in Private Spaces

Students are only to use the restrooms and changing facilities that correspond to their sex assigned at birth while on campus at APL. Any student who willfully enters a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when directed by a member of staff will be issued a disciplinary consequence.

General School Policies

Visitors

Parents/guardians and all other visitors must check in at the front desk. Except during dropoff and dismissal, the school's gates will be closed and all campus visitors must be granted access using the gate's call box.

On-Campus Guests

Students are expected to greet on-campus guests. When guests enter the classroom, students stop working, stand up, and greet the guests with an introduction and welcome.

Attendance

Absences

Regular attendance is necessary for a student to perform well in his or her studies and to keep up with class work. It is the parents'/guardians' and student's responsibility to ensure that the student attends school every day.

If a student is absent, a parent/guardian is required to call the front desk and provide as much notice as possible. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing assignments during absences. Assignments must be submitted upon return according to a teacher's policy. On a case-by-case basis, due dates may be extended.

A student with six (6) or more unexcused absences during a grading period will receive a grade of "F" for all classes for that grading period. During the subsequent grading period, that student's grades will be restored for the period in question if the student has fewer than six (6) unexcused absences.

The following absences will be excused: certified medical absences (including serious illnesses confirmed in writing by the parent/guardian), funerals, participation in school-sponsored activities, and absences approved in advance by administration.

Tardiness

Tardiness disrupts the school day and classes. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians and student to ensure that the student arrives at school on time. Students are responsible for arriving to classes on time.

Students who report to school after convocation begins are tardy and must report to the front desk to receive a pass and wait for their homeroom.

Chronic tardiness negatively impacts students' learning, grades, and future opportunities. After three (3) unexcused tardies in a grading period, a consequence will be issued for each additional tardy.

Check-in and Check-out

Students may not be checked out early after 4:00pm Monday through Thursday or 3:00pm Friday. The school day ends at 4:50pm Monday through Thursday and 4:05pm Friday. An early check-out is excused only with prior approval from administration or with a doctor's note received the following school day. Unexcused early check out will result in a consequence for the student.

Students checking out early must be signed out by an authorized adult presenting a valid ID. Contact the front desk to add authorized adults.

Students returning to school after being checked out must report first to the front desk for a pass.

Emergencies

Except for rare and/or unforeseen circumstances, APL will follow the Polk County Schools system in determining whether to cancel or delay school in the event of inclement weather or other general emergency. APL will notify families via email, text, and posts on social media.

In the event that inclement weather forces the closing of school during the school day, APL will contact parents/guardians to arrange for transportation home. When necessary, APL may close for a day or dismiss early. On such an occasion, APL will provide timely notice to families. Please verify your contact information in FACTS. Call the front desk to make changes.

Alarms and Drills

APL works closely with local public safety agencies to develop appropriate contingency plans for emergencies. When there is a fire alarm, weather emergency, or lock down, students are expected to remain silent and follow directions from faculty and staff. Procedures are the same for drills and actual emergencies. Families will be notified when a drill or an actual emergency occurs.

Health and Medical

Food Allergies and Restrictions

Any food allergies and restrictions require written notification from the student's physician. APL will work with the meals provider to ensure appropriate replacement foods are available whenever necessary; if replacement foods are not available through APL's meals provider, APL will coordinate a diet-appropriate meal plan (in writing) with the student's parent/guardian.

Health Conditions

Parents/guardians should make every effort to obtain a physician's note regarding any health conditions, such as seasonal allergies or chronic headaches, that may affect their child's participation in school activities. Faculty and staff will do their best to accommodate such conditions.

Emergency Services

Only emergency first aid treatment will be given by APL without permission from a parent/guardian. If a parent cannot be reached and a student is in need of immediate medical attention, administration will use their best judgment to seek help for the student and will continue to attempt to reach parents/guardians.

Medication

When possible, all prescription medications should be administered at home. If medication must be given at school, it will be administered by the front office staff and stored in a locked cabinet at all times. Follow these procedures:

1. Provide documentation from a medical professional to the front desk.
2. Medication must be brought to the front desk by the parent/guardian of the student. Parents/guardians must arrange for a separate supply of medication for school. Medication will not be transported between home and school.
3. Medication must be in the original prescription container with the date, dosage, name of drug, and the student's and physician's names clearly marked. APL will not administer expired medication.
4. All medication must come ready to dispense. Front desk staff will not cut or alter any medication. Medication either discontinued or not taken home at the end of the school year will be discarded.

5. Updated documentation must be provided to the front desk before implementing any changes to medication dosage, times, etc.

Over-the-counter medication, such as pain relievers, will only be dispensed if the student's parent/guardian has filed an authorization form with the front office. Prior to any medication of this nature being dispensed, the front office will contact a parent/guardian for permission. **APL does not have a medical professional on campus.**

Books and School Supplies

Textbooks, workbooks, Chromebooks and other supplies issued by APL are the responsibility of each student. Lost or damaged books will be replaced at the student's expense, and students who damage electronic devices will lose privileges and incur fees (see *Technology* for details).

A school supply list is distributed to students and their families before the beginning of the school year. Families unable to obtain all of the necessary supplies should contact the front office for assistance.

Lost and Found

Please label all belongings, especially APL polo shirts, uniform bottoms, P.E. clothes, hoodies, sweatshirts, and sweaters, with your child's name. Items that are lost/misplaced on campus will be collected in the lost and found at the front desk. It is the student's responsibility to check lost and found for their belongings. After a reasonable amount of time, abandoned items will be discarded.

Birthdays

Student birthdays are announced during convocation. Gifts given at school or delivered to APL will be held at the front desk until dismissal.

Students are permitted to bring single-serve treats (e.g., cupcakes or cookies) for their entire homeroom on their birthday or the following school day. Please avoid common allergens, especially peanuts. Birthday treats may not be shared with students in other homerooms. Treats must be delivered to the front office.

Party invitations may not be distributed at school.

Holidays on Campus

Unless otherwise notified by APL, students are not permitted to wear anything other than their uniforms or to bring candy, treats, or other items to school in celebration of holidays. On rare occasions, APL may choose to honor certain celebrations and will notify families if students are permitted to wear special clothing and/or bring items in for the celebration.

Grooming and Attire

The dress code is established to promote focus and discipline. Students are expected to arrive dressed according to the dress code. School uniform shirts and PE uniforms must be purchased through APL. Uniform bottoms, belts, shoes, and socks are available at many local retailers. Hoodies/sweatshirts may be purchased at APL.

<i>APL Dress Code</i>	
Shirts	Grades 5-7: Dark green APL polo shirt purchased from APL. Grade 8: White APL polo shirt purchased from APL.
Belt	Plain black belt with simple buckle.
Shoes	All black, closed, rubber-soled shoes. Athletic shoes are acceptable. Shoes must be all black , including laces, soles, trim, logo, etc. and may not be high tops or boots.
Socks	Solid white crew socks (no logos) falling below the calf and above the ankle.
Physical Education and Athletic Enrichment	APL gray shirt and green shorts, purchased from APL. Athletic shoes of any color are acceptable for Physical Education classes and athletic competition only. Students may be provided with sport specific uniforms for competitions.
Jackets and Sweaters	Solid navy blue jackets with the APL logo purchased from APL, or solid navy blue (no logos) sweatshirts sold at local retailers; in cold weather, heavier jackets of any color may be worn outside should the temperature fall below 55 degrees.
Undershirts	White, navy blue, hunter-green, or physical education shirts are permitted.
Bottoms	Navy blue pants, shorts, skorts, or skirts. Shorts, skorts, and skirts must not be shorter than 2 inches above the knee cap. Sweatpants and painter pants are not permitted.
Jewelry	Watches are the only acceptable wrist wear. Smart watches are considered electronics and must be delivered to APL staff upon arrival. Girls may have small ear studs or small ½ inch hoops in the lowest earlobe. Only one earring is permitted per ear. No other visible jewelry is permitted.
Hair and Hair Accessories	Hair must be kept neat, clean, and out of the eyes and may not reach below the middle of the back. Hair ties, headbands, and clips must be either black, brown, yellow, dark green, or navy blue. Students' hair should not prevent them from participating in school activities, including physical education. Hair must remain the student's natural color. Hair carvings (including mohawks) and eyebrow designs are not permitted; nor are beards and mustaches.
Makeup and Nail Polish	Makeup (including lip gloss), nail polish, and acrylic nails are not permitted.

School Technology and Responsible Use

The APL IT department is committed to providing all students 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 APL, parents and students for the care and appropriate use of Chromebooks, iPads, and other school technology resources.

Students must use APL's technology for school purposes responsibly, ethically, and legally. This includes instances when students may access this technology outside of school. If students have doubts about whether a resource has educational merit, they should ask their teacher, administration or the APL 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 APL, including, but not limited to: Email, Calendar, Docs, Apps, all applications provided by Google Workspace, and FACTS (student information system). These usage policies also extend to when these programs are used off campus and outside school hours.

Devices

APL issues each student a Chromebook laptop computer, charger, and protective case. This equipment, if properly cared for and maintained, will remain with the student throughout their time at APL. Students who successfully complete the APL 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 <i>deliberate</i> Chromebook damage, repeat negligence, loss or theft	Full cost of repair or replacement (estimated at time of collection)

By signing the technology agreement the student and parent/guardian confirm that they understand the fees associated with loss or damage to the student's Chromebook and the accessories. If you have any issues or questions about your student's Chromebook please contact the APL IT department by emailing techsupport@academyprep.org

Systems and Software

All APL students 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 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 students' 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. APL uses Securly to manage student Chromebooks, and we have enabled Securly Home to help you regulate your student's Chromebook use. 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 children's technology use at home. We apply "always-on" content filtering to restrict access to adult 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 APL 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 email and docs will be flagged and sent to school administration. Students 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 the student conduct code
- 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 APL devices and systems may be archived, deleted, monitored and reviewed for content and appropriateness at any time. Because these files remain the property of APL, there should be no expectation of privacy regarding such materials. APL will investigate any suspected inappropriate uses of its resources or systems. Internet browsing and search history, as well as Google Drive, and local hard disk contents, may be inspected if a breach of security, harassment, or other violations are suspected to have occurred.

Students 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.

APL also reserves the right to issue serious consequences to any student, 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 student's enrollment at APL.

Chromebook Care

Students are expected to treat their laptop with care and respect at all times. Chromebooks are assigned to individual students, and the responsibility for the care of the Chromebook rests with that individual. Students 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 all times.
- 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. Students 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 the Chromebook by the Chromebook case 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 avoid damaging 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 who 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 APL 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.

Family and Parental/Guardian Participation

APL firmly believes that family and parental/guardian involvement in our school is vital to the well-being of our students. Therefore, parents, guardians, and family members are expected to participate actively in the APL community.

Family Service Hours

From the start of the summer session through the end of April, parents/guardians are required to provide the following hours of service to APL:

5 th -7 th Grade Families	40 service hours
8 th Grade Families	30 service hours

If the required hours are not served by May 3, 2024, a fee of \$3.00 per unserved hour will be assessed and the student will not receive their final report card until the fee is paid in full.

APL strives to create opportunities to earn service hours in ways which are meaningful to parents/guardians. Service hours may be obtained in varied ways, such as chaperoning field trips, providing food for a school function, decorating for an event, carpooling, recess and meals supervision, donations, yard signs, student referrals, office help, study hall, etc. Contact the front desk to obtain a list of current volunteer opportunities.

Other adult family members and friends may represent parents/guardians for service hours. Arrangements for these service hours are made privately between each family and the front desk. Parents/guardians are required to track and submit hours to the front desk.

Administration may take a family's special circumstances (including the number of children enrolled) into consideration when monitoring and determining the service hours requirement. Families with two or more children enrolled at APL are expected to provide service hours for only one student.

Communication

Email and Text

Email and text are the main forms of communication used by APL. Parents/guardians must ensure the front desk has their current contact information. Parents/guardians are expected to regularly check their email and read the newsletter each week for important announcements and news.

Teacher and Staff Email

Teachers and staff welcome communication from parents. Appointments can be made and questions can often be answered through email (emails are available on APL's website and at the end of this handbook).

FACTS

FACTS is APL's school management system. It is used to track grades, behavior, family contact information, service hours, and more. At the beginning of each school year, students and parents will receive information explaining how to access FACTS accounts. A login portal is provided on the school website. Login information can be reset by emailing techsupport@academyprep.org.

News, Social Media, and School Promotion

APL is often featured on a variety of news and media outlets, including social media. Every effort is made to protect students' identities. Families are encouraged to follow APL's own social media accounts. These accounts are managed internally and are an additional way to feature students' successes at APL.

Parent Council

The Parent Council exists to cultivate family involvement at APL and provide opportunities for parents/guardians to share their perspective on school events and issues. The Parent Council will help to coordinate various student events, family volunteers, educational opportunities, and social events.

The Parent Council consists of 8-10 parent representatives, including one from each homeroom. Parent Council will meet monthly on campus on a day to be agreed upon by the Parent Council and APL's liaison to the Council.

Family Costs & Billing

It costs well over \$20,000 per student per year to operate APL. Your SUFS scholarship only covers about \$7,000 of that cost. Therefore, there are some relatively low costs and fees families incur while attending APL.

Scholarships

Application

Every APL family must submit an online scholarship application to either Step Up For Students (sufs.org/ema, preferred provider) or AAA Scholarship (www.aaascholarships.org) each year. The application and timely submission of any documents required by either scholarship provider is the responsibility of each individual and not APL. Each family must provide their award ID number to the Admissions & Records Coordinator as soon as it is received.

Scholarship Payment Approval

Four times a year, around September, November, February, and April, you will receive an email notification to login to your online EMA account and authorize scholarship payment. Please approve payments immediately to ensure your child's uninterrupted attendance at APL.

Renewal of Scholarships

Families must renew the scholarship each year as soon as the renewal window opens. It is vitally important that scholarship renewals be completed as soon as possible, as demand for these scholarships have increased dramatically. Failure to do so could adversely affect a student's continued enrollment at APL.

Uniforms

APL is the sole provider of school shirts and PE uniforms, which are purchased through an online order form during July and as needed through the front desk during the school year. Uniforms may only be charged to the account if there is not a current balance and will require a down payment.

Activity Fees

Activity fees fund a portion of various enrichment activities and field trips, including the 8th grade spring trip. Activity fees are \$200 per year for the first student, billed in August, and due in early May (early April for 8th grade).

	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children	4+ Children
Activity Fees	\$200	\$100	\$50	\$0
TOTAL	\$200	\$300	\$350	\$350
DUE DATES	March 29, 2024 (8th grade) May 3, 2024 (5th-7th grades)			

Family Fees

As explained throughout this handbook, there are several instances where a family may incur additional fees. See the table below, which is not exclusive, for a summary of the most common fees:

Late Pick Up	\$15 per incident
Chromebook Damage	\$50 first incident; full cost additional or intentional incidents
Lost Items	Full replacement cost
Unserved Service Hours	\$3 per hour

Payments

Accounts are maintained in QuickBooks and payments can be made at the front desk or electronically through emailed invoices, which will be sent every time a new charge is added to your account. Account statements are sent home with every progress report and report card. We accept cash, checks, and money orders at the front desk. Credit card and ACH payments can be made online or at the front desk.

Unpaid Account Balances

8th graders with an outstanding balance as of March 29, 2024 will not attend the spring trip.

All families with any unpaid balance as of May 10, 2024 will result in the student/s not being able to attend APL, take final exams, or receive report cards and transcripts until the balance is paid in full.

Faculty and Staff Email List

Last Name	First Name	Position	Email Address
Abrahams	Steve	Chess	sabrahams@academyprep.org
Adorno	Sasha	Art	sadorno@academyprep.org
Allen	Blue	AmeriCorps Fellow	aallen@academyprep.org
Bennett	Jasmar	Enrichment Coordinator	jbennett@academyprep.org
Burgos	Arianis	Spanish	aburgos@academyprep.org
Cobbs	Shonte	Math - 5/6	scobbs@academyprep.org
Duarte	Jennifer	Academic Support Specialist	jduarte@academyprep.org
Eliot	Robin	English - 6/8	reliot@academyprep.org
Foster	Brett	School Counselor	bfoster@academyprep.org
Gadson	Jac'Quan	AmeriCorps Fellow	jgadson@academyprep.org
Garced	Elsie	Admin Assistant - Operations	egarced@academyprep.org
Hartfield	Aspen	AmeriCorps Fellow	ahartfield@academyprep.org
Hayes	Renard	Music	rhayes@academyprep.org
Hernandez	Tony	Math - 7/8	ahernandez@academyprep.org
Innella	Melissa	Development Manager	minnella@academyprep.org
Johnson	Quay	AmeriCorps Fellow	jjohnson@academyprep.org
Keen	Tim	History - 5/8	tkeen@academyprep.org
Knowles	Rebecca	Development Director	rknowles@academyprep.org
Leal	Samantha	Admin Assistant - Front Desk	sleal@academyprep.org
Marcelino	Alexandra	English - 5/7	amarcelino@academyprep.org
Mattioli	Andi	Science - 6/7	amattioli@academyprep.org
Melli	Andrea	History - 6/7	amelli@academyprep.org
Napolitano	Vinny	Maintenance Supervisor	vnapolitano@academyprep.org
Pena	Emma	PE & Athletics Coordinator	epena@academyprep.org
Phelps	Michelle	Director of Operations	mphelps@academyprep.org
Pollock	Monica	AHOS - Graduate Support & Student Affairs	mpollock@academyprep.org
Santos	Samantha	Admin Assistant - Communications	ssantos@academyprep.org
Searfoss	Keilah	Admissions & Records Coordinator	ksearfoss@academyprep.org
Short	Stephanie	Science - 5/8	sshort@academyprep.org
Tamayo	Lincoln	Head of School	ltamayo@academyprep.org
Toms	Anna	AHOS - Academics & Curricular Programs	atoms@academyprep.org
Welniak	Zach	Technology Specialist	zwelniak@academyprep.org
Wright	Breonna	Graduate Support Coordinator	bwright@academyprep.org

School Calendar

New Family Orientation, 5pm	Thursday, June 1
Summer Session, 7:30 am-1:55 pm M-F	Monday-Friday, June 5-23
7th Grade Field Trip to Rays Game	Wednesday, June 21
Welcome to APL Night, 5-7pm	Thursday, August 10
First Day of School	Monday, August 14
Professional Development Day, Non-Student Day	Friday, August 25
Labor Day, School Closed	Monday, September 4
Progress Reports Distributed	Friday, September 8
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, September 9
5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, September 16
Professional Development, Non-Student Day	Friday, September 22
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, September 23
Cookin' for Kids Fundraiser	Saturday, September 30
8th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, September 30
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, October 7
End of First Grading Period	Friday, October 13
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, October 14
Professional Planning Day, Non-Student Day	Monday, October 16
Second Grading Period Begins	Tuesday, October 17
Report Cards Distributed	Friday, October 20
5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, October 21
8th Grade Field Trip	Friday, October 27
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, November 4
Veterans Day (observed), School Closed	Friday, November 10
Progress Reports Distributed	Friday, November 17
Thanksgiving Holiday, Office Open Monday & Tuesday	Monday-Friday, November 20-24
8th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, December 2
MAP Midterm Testing, Noon Dismissal	Monday-Friday, December 11-15
End of Second Grading Period	Friday, December 15
Christmas Holiday, Office Open Monday & Tuesday	Monday, December 18 - Monday, January 1
Report Cards Mailed	Monday, December 18
Professional Planning Day, Non-Student Day	Tuesday, January 2
Professional Development Day, Non-Student Day	Wednesday, January 3
Students Return, Third Grading Period Begins	Thursday, January 4
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, January 6
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, January 13
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, School Closed	Monday, January 15

8th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, January 20
5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, January 20
Progress Reports Distributed	Friday, February 2
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, February 3
8th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, February 10
Evening of Stars, Noon Dismissal	Thursday, February 15
Professional Planning Day, Non-Student Day	Friday, February 16
5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, February 17
President's Day, School Closed	Monday, February 19
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, February 24
7th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, March 2
End of Third Grading Period	Friday, March 1
First Day of Fourth Grading Period	Monday, March 4
Report Cards Distributed	Friday, March 8
Spring Break, Office Open Monday & Tuesday	Monday-Friday, March 11-15
5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, March 23
8th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, March 23
Easter Break, School Closed	Friday-Monday, March 29-April 1
8th Grade Trip	Tuesday-Thursday, April 2-4
"Camp Out" 5th Grade Field Trip	Saturday - Sunday, April 6-7
Progress Reports Distributed	Friday, April 12
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, April 13
7th Grade Field Trip	Friday, April 20
Professional Development Day, Non-Student Day	Friday, April 26
Teacher Appreciation Week	Monday-Friday, May 6-10
6th Grade Field Trip	Saturday, May 4th
Final Exams, 8th Grade	Thursday-Tuesday, May 9-14
Awards Assembly	Friday, May 10
Final Exams, 5th-7th grades, Noon Dismissal	Monday-Thursday, May 13-17
8th Grade Last Day of School	Tuesday, May 14
8th Grade Commencement	Wednesday, May 15
End of Fourth Grading Period, Last Day of School, Noon Dismissal	Friday, May 17
Professional Planning Day, Non-Student Day	Monday, May 20
Report Cards Distributed	Wednesday, May 22
June 2024 Summer Session	Monday- Friday, June 3-21