

The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle

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Policies and Procedures Manual

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Mission Statement - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is a learning community of faith and service rooted in the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church, and dedicated to promoting educational excellence for all students.

1.2. Beliefs

We believe that:

- Jesus is the best model for teachers and students.
- Parents are the primary educators of their children.
- The responsibility of educating children and teaching them the beliefs of the Catholic Church is shared with parents, teachers, administrators, the parish, and the community.
- Teachers and parents work together best when they communicate frequently in a spirit of cooperation.
- Parents, teachers, administrators, and members of the school community work together to create an atmosphere in which children grow in faith and develop their God-given gifts, their self-esteem, and the ability to make responsible decisions.
- The parish and school work together to meet the needs of both communities.
- All decisions are made based on the best interests of the students.
- Students thrive best in an environment in which their spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical and cultural welfare is nurtured.
- Social justice, appreciation of diversity, and concern for others are important aspects of students' education.
- All children can learn and succeed.
- A safe, secure learning environment fosters student achievement and excellence.
- A rigorous and challenging academic program promotes student growth and academic achievement.
- Differentiated instruction is essential for effective learning.

- The administration and faculty maintain the educational standards required by the Archdiocese of Washington and the State of Maryland.
- Excellence is the result of commitment to continuous improvement and life-long learning.

The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is a Responsive Classroom School. We strongly believe in the need for emotional and social growth and support to be present for academic growth to occur.

1.2.1. Non-Discrimination Policy –

The Archdiocese Admissions Non-Discrimination Policy can be found on the website of the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington:

www.adwcatholicschools.org

1.3. Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities to the School

All parents are required to:

1. Understand and support the religious nature of the school
2. Partner with the school in the education of their children
3. Promote the school and speak well of it to others
4. Keep current with all the communications from the school
5. Establish a good working relationship with their child/ren's teachers
6. Attend parent meetings and conferences
7. Support the fundraising efforts of the Home/School Association
8. Participate in the Service Hours Program
9. Meet all financial obligations in a timely manner - the education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

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1.4. Accreditation - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is fully accredited by AdvancEd, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

1.5. Compliance - The policies and procedures in this manual are in conformity with the policies in the Archdiocesan Policies and Regulations book. An agreement must be signed yearly by parents in support of the policies.

2. ADMISSIONS/ENROLLMENT POLICY

2.1. Criteria - Admission to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle shall be considered for students who meet the criteria listed below.

1. Satisfactory progress in academic grades
2. Standardized test scores that reflect at or above grade level achievement
3. Satisfactory conduct reports
4. Satisfactory performance on screening test administered by The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle
5. Satisfactory attendance records
6. Age requirement guidelines

This information is reviewed by the principal, and the final acceptance determination is made by the principal.

2.2. Priority - Qualified students who apply for admission to the School for Grades Pre-K-8 are admitted in the following priority sequence, on a space available basis:

1. Faculty/Staff children and siblings of current students
2. Children of registered, practicing and participating members of Saint Matthias Apostle Parish
3. Children of registered members of other Catholic parishes
4. Non-Catholics

2.3. Catholic Discounted Tuition Rate Requirements - Qualification for the discounted tuition rate is reviewed at the time of registration or reregistration for each new

academic year. A family will qualify for the reduced tuition rate based on the following criteria and principles:

1. Parents must apply EACH SCHOOL YEAR for the Catholic discounted rate. This is done by completing the VERIFICATION FORM. The pastor of Saint Matthias Parish will review each application and give final approval of the Catholic discounted rate. The deadline for the application process is strictly enforced.
2. A family must be registered parishioners of a Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Washington.
3. The family (parent/s and child/ren) must be actively practicing their faith by weekly attendance at Sunday Mass or services.
4. A regular and consistent manner in which they meet their obligations (financial or otherwise) to the school during the previous year, unless extenuating circumstance exist and are made known to the principal and/or Pastor.
5. Parents must notify the principal and the Pastor of a financial need.

The family understands that payments toward tuition do not constitute a charitable contribution to the church since goods and services are received for tuition payments, namely, the education of the child. Therefore, tuition payments are not tax deductible.

2.4. Religious Participation Requirement

To conform to Archdiocesan policy 3620, Parent/Guardian Cooperation:

Parents/Guardians and students understand and acknowledge the Roman Catholic religious nature of The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle. Parents/Guardians and students agree not to publicly repudiate the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and will respect and support the unique identity that The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle derives from its Catholic faith. As the primary educators of their children, parents/guardians will not act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle.

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Parents/Guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and the students shall participate in all required school programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educators of the students, parents/guardians agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the church and school and will comply with the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington and The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle.

2.5. Required Items from Parents/Guardians - Parents who are seeking admission to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle for their children must submit **an application through TADS**, including the following items:

2.5.1. Applicants for Grades Pre-K-8

1. A completed Application For Admission
2. A non-refundable Application Fee
3. A copy of the student's current report card and a copy of the previous year's report card
4. A copy of the student's latest standardized test scores
5. Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
6. Birth Certificate
7. Service Hours Fee if you are unable to volunteer (See Section 3.11.)
8. Immunization Policy Acknowledgement and Health Assessment & Health Evaluation Forms by September 15
9. IEP, 504 Plan, and educational testing results, if applicable

All forms are required before the student begins school.

2.6. Notification of Acceptance/Non-acceptance - All applicants will be notified within three (3) weeks of completing their admissions packet as to their admittance status. For some students, a completed application may include our own assessment testing.

2.7. Parental Verification - Parents are required to notify the school, within one week of receiving the financial contract, of the

acceptance of the space for the coming year. This is done by signing and returning the financial contract through TADS .

2.8. Probation for New Students - All students are given a one year probation period. If a student fails to comply with the school's philosophy, code of behavior, or academic expectations, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child from school. This request will occur at a conference with the parents. Probation may be extended into the next year.

2.9. Re-registration - Parents are required to re-register their child for each school year and pay the re-registration fee. Re-registration is accepted on the basis of academics, discipline, financial records and parent support.

3. TUITION AND FEES

3.1. Adherence to Financial Policies - All policies regarding finances are strictly enforced.

3.2. Setting Tuition Rates and Other Fees - Tuition rates, registration fees, book fees, and all other fees are determined on a yearly basis. Tuition rates are proposed annually by the principal. The rates are reviewed by the Parish Finance Council for the final approval of the Pastor.

3.3. Tuition Payments - Tuition is processed through **TADS**. You must notify the school in writing of any changes in your banking arrangements a minimum of 10 days before the due date. Failure to notify the school will result in the assessment of an Administrative Fee of \$100 and may result in the dismissal of the student(s) from the school.

3.4. Financial Contract Agreements - All parents are required to sign a Financial Contract Agreement through TADS for tuition payments for each school year. This contract may not be edited or altered in any way by the parents.

3.5. Returned Checks - The fee for returned checks is \$35.00. After two returned checks per school year, all payments must be paid in certified funds.

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3.6. Failure to Pay Tuition and Fees - Report cards and conferences may be withheld each marking period until all debts are paid. In addition, no student transcripts or recommendations will be forwarded to other schools. Debts are defined as follows:

- tuition
- late fees
- late pickup fees
- returned checks and fees
- ESP payments
- HSA debts
- library books and materials
- CYO fees
- fundraising fees
- volunteer service hours
- lost or damaged textbooks and other school-issued materials
- damage to school property

Students may be suspended five (5) days after quarterly report cards are distributed if debts are not paid. The school reserves the right to cancel the registration of any student whose family fails to satisfactorily meet financial obligations during the preceding semester. All debts must be paid in full before a student can be re-registered for the following school year. Eighth grade diplomas will be withheld until all fees are paid in full. Additionally, students may not participate in graduation exercises. All fees and monies must be paid before final report card is released. Please make note for financial contracts which extend into June. Your child's final report card will not be released until final contracted payment is processed.

3.6.1. Collection of Unpaid Tuition and Fees - Any outstanding debts will be referred to a collection agency determined by the Pastor. A surcharge of up to 30% will be assessed to cover the cost of the agency's services. In addition, the school reserves the right to impose other penalties, up to and including any and all legal fees and/or costs associated with said collection. All such debts defined herein, as well as those

not specifically delineated, will be paid by the guarantor of the outstanding bill.

3.7. Refunds*

3.7.1. Refund for Tuition Payments in Full, Transfers Before School Year - Students whose families have made tuition payments in full, but wish to withdraw their child(ren) prior to August 10th, will receive a tuition refund, minus a five percent (5%) penalty.

3.7.2. Payments in Full, Transfer During the School Year - Families who pay tuition in full and transfer their child(ren) out during the school year will receive refunds as follows:

- After August 10th, but before November 1st, 80%;
- After November 1st, but before January 31st, 60% refund;
- After January 31st, but before March 1st, 40% refund; and
- After March 1st, no refund.*

3.7.3. Transfers During a Month - Parents who are making monthly payments through TADS or the school and decide to transfer students out during a particular month will NOT be refunded any tuition or Extended School Program (ESP) fees. Any and all other fees will not be prorated or refunded.

Written notification of withdrawal must be given to the Principal.

3.7.4. Application and Re-registration Fees - Re-registration and application fees are non-refundable.

3.7.5. Pastor Letter - A letter from the Pastor will not be given until the school is officially notified in writing of withdrawal from school.

3.7.6. Withdrawal Fee - Families who choose to withdraw a student or students prior to the start of school and have completed enrollment and financial contract set-up for admission to The Academy of Saint Matthias are required to pay a \$1,000

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withdrawal fee per student and are required to pay the required fundraising fee as well as the volunteer service hour fee. Please see Policy 8.7.5. for additional information.

***All requests for tuition refunds must be submitted in writing and acknowledged by the Principal, by the appropriate deadline. E-mails are not acceptable.**

- 3.8. Late Pickup Fee** - A fee of \$1.00 a minute per child is charged for late pickup at dismissal time, beginning at 3:15 p.m. on full days, and at 12:15 p.m. on half days.
- 3.9. Service Hours** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle families are REQUIRED to complete 24 hours of service in any of the following areas: school activities, Home & School Association activities, CYO, or Scouts. These activities are divided into two categories: those that require Child Protection Clearance and those that do not require Child Protection Clearance. Parents have an opportunity to sign up for areas of service at the start of each school year. Families who choose not to complete the 24 hours of service are assessed a fee of \$400. Extra service hours completed by one family may not be transferred to another school family. **All service hours must be completed by June 1st. A service hour fee is assessed for families who have not completed their hours, even if they withdraw from the school before the end of the year.**

Parents who withdraw a student prior to the end of the year are still required to complete the hours by the date of withdrawal or pay the \$480 fee.

- 3.11. Fundraising** - In order to raise funds for the school, the school conducts one major fundraiser each year. Parents are REQUIRED to participate in the Subscription Raffle Program. If parents choose not to participate, they are assessed a fee of \$350. Parents who withdraw a student prior to the due date for raffle ticket monies are still required to pay the \$350 for the raffle tickets.

4. ACADEMIC POLICIES/PROCEDURES

- 4.1. Spiritual Life Program** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle follows the mission to teach as Jesus did. This is a four-fold mission: message, worship, community and service.
1. **Message** - Religious education at The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is directed toward enabling the students' faith to "become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction" (To Teach As Jesus Did, p. 102). The religious education program reflects the content of all sources of Church documents. Only approved textbooks are used.
 2. **Community** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is a faith community that lives, prays, works and plays together. A family atmosphere is created where students flourish. Positive peer, parent and staff relationships are formed and extend beyond the walls of the school to the entire faith community. Students are closely linked to the life of the parish.
 3. **Worship** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is a community of faith. To this end, students and faculty regularly participate in Eucharistic liturgies and other forms of prayer.
 4. **Service** - At The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle students learn about human needs, justice, mercy and peace. They are given opportunities to respond to the needs of others by working together on numerous service projects.
- 4.2. Academic Program** - The curriculum at The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is in accordance with Archdiocesan regulations and guidelines set forth by the Catholic Schools Office. The curriculum is implemented by the principal and faculty to meet the needs of the students.
- 4.2.1. Special Needs** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle strives to meet the individual needs of each student to the extent that resources are available. The school cooperates with various school districts, as well as private evaluators, to assist in assessing students' educational needs.

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4.2.2. Inclusion Program - In collaboration with the Student Assistance Team (SAT), the resource teacher provides support and accommodations in and out of the classrooms for students with identified needs. The resource teacher works with teachers and parents in the development and implementation of educational plans.

4.2.3. Homework

1. Homework is assigned to reinforce and extend academic and social learning. Parents/guardians are expected to support and comply with these homework guidelines and additional guidelines specified by their child's teachers.
2. Homework assignments are to be completed by the assigned date and in the manner required by the teachers.
3. Students are responsible for all homework assignments. Absence from school, tardiness, vacation, suspension, early dismissals, band lessons, rehearsals, sports activities, etc., are not acceptable as reasons for not having the required homework assignments.
4. Teachers are not required to give homework assignments before extended vacations, but may do so at their discretion.
5. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to check tests and other school work handed back by the teacher. Please check **both work coming home and grades posted through the Rediker Parent Portal.**
6. In the interest of safety and to foster responsibility, students are not permitted to return to their classrooms or lockers after dismissal. Students have ample time before dismissal to pack the materials they need to complete assignments.

4.2.4. Classroom Work

1. Tests missed for a valid reason must be made up. Failure on the part of a student to make up required tests **may** result in the student receiving a zero for the grade.
2. Classroom assignments are to be completed as required by the teachers.
3. Students are responsible for all classroom assignments. Absence from school, tardiness, vacation, suspension, early dismissal, band lessons, rehearsals, etc., are not acceptable reasons for not having the required classroom assignments.

4.2.5. Work Missed Due to Absence

1. Homework and classroom work for any student who is absent may be obtained by the parents/guardians by calling the School Office and requesting assignments. Calls for requests must be made by **8:30 a.m.** Assignments and materials will be available for pickup between **3:00 and 3:15 p.m.**
2. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardians to obtain from the teacher(s) all assignments and tests required to be made up because of absence.
3. It is the responsibility of the student to hand in all completed make-up work to the appropriate teacher(s).
4. Students are permitted no more than 2 times the number of days absent (up to 10 calendar days) to complete all required assignments (class work, homework, tests, and quizzes). Example: If a student misses 4 consecutive days, the student will have 8 calendar days in which to complete all assignments.

4.2.6. Progress of Grades

1. **Student progress can be measured online using Rediker and by tracking student progress in assessments and work sent home.**
2. **Families are encouraged to set up conferences or otherwise contact teachers if any questions arise about a student's progress.**

4.2.7. Report Cards

1. The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle utilizes the required report card of the Archdiocese of Washington. Multiple assessments are used when determining grades such as: tests, quizzes, classwork, homework, projects, and participation.

The grading scale for students is as follows:

Grades Pre-K-2: use a skill-based report card, with achievement marked in different categories.

Grade 3: E = Excellent, G = Good, S = Satisfactory, I = Improvement Needed, U = Unsatisfactory

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Grades 4-8: A = 93-100, B = 85-92, C = 77-84,
D= 70-76, F = Below 70

Students receive a grade from the Related Arts subjects: art, music, physical education: E= Excellent, I = Improvement Needed, G = Good, U = Unsatisfactory, S = Satisfactory

2. Report cards are distributed four times a year for Grades 1-8 and two times a year for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.
3. In November, parent/guardian-teacher conferences are required for students in Grades Pre-K-8.
4. Failure of parent/guardian to attend the mandatory conference **may** result in no report card being issued to a student until a conference has been held.
5. A report card may not be distributed to a student if tuition and fee payments are not current. This includes home/school and CYO debts.

4.2.8. Academic Honors - An Honor Roll and a Principal's List for Grades 4-8 will be published at the end of each quarter marking period. The requirements for the Honor Roll and the Principal's List are as follows:

1. Principal's List
Minimum Requirements:
 - a. Grade of A or E in Reading, Religion, Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Vocabulary and Spanish for the marking period
 - b. G in Music, Art and P.E. for the marking period
2. Honor Roll
Minimum Requirements:
 - a. Grade of B or G in the following subjects: Reading, Religion, Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Vocabulary and Spanish for the marking period
 - b. G in Music, Art and P.E. for the quarter marking period

4.3. Promotion to Next Grade Level

4.3.1. Philosophy on Promotion - Promotion to the next grade is dependent on many variables, including academic levels, and social/emotional development. The need to retain students is a decision made over the course of the year by the classroom teacher(s), resource teacher and principal.

4.3.2. Kindergarten Admissions and Promotion - In accordance with the Archdiocese of Washington Policy 3513: Students seeking admission into an Archdiocesan school shall follow age admission guidelines of the local jurisdiction in which the school is located. Early admission may be considered if a child has been identified as eligible by his/her local public school. Documentation of early admission eligibility shall be on file at the school. Students' ages shall be verified by a birth certificate or U.S. government-issued identification.

4.4. Summer School

1. If a student has received a D or F average for the year (or I or U in grade 3) on the report card, at its discretion the school may require the student to attend an approved summer school or be tutored by an approved tutor. The student will also be required to provide written proof of attendance and a passing grade during the summer session to the school before going on to the next grade level.
2. Failure of a student to attend required summer school/tutoring may result in the student not being allowed to return to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle the following year.
3. Failure to successfully complete the course may result in a student not being promoted to the next grade or the student may be required to attain additional requirements during the school year.

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4.5. Textbooks/Workbooks

4.5.1. Textbooks On Loan From the School

1. Textbooks are to be covered at all times with covers which will protect the books and not cause damage when applied or removed.
2. The name of the student using the book is to be written in the appropriate space.
3. Any textbook lost or damaged is to be paid for by parent/guardian before a final report card is issued to the student.
4. At the end of the school year, the textbooks must be returned to the school before a final report card is issued to the student.
5. Pictures, drawings, and graffiti are not to appear on books or covers.

4.5.2. Consumable Books

1. Purchased consumable books belong to the student, but may be collected by the teacher at the end of the school year.
2. The name of the student must be written in the appropriate space.
3. The teacher may require that consumable books be covered with clear contact paper.
4. Workbooks that are lost or no longer usable must be replaced at parent/guardian expense.
5. Pictures, drawings, and graffiti are not to appear on any consumable books.

4.6. Technology and the Internet

To conform to Archdiocesan Policy 3212, Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet by Students in Catholic Schools:

Students shall use all Technology Equipment, including, but not limited to, computers, networking systems, Internet, mobile devices, communication devices, cell phones, email, social networking sites, calculators, DVD players, and cameras (“Technology Equipment”) with care and respect, whether at school, at home, or elsewhere. Students shall not type, send or otherwise use any inappropriate or offensive words, or display,

send, or otherwise use inappropriate or offensive images, sounds or messages from or on Technology Equipment. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in a manner which violates any local, state, or federal laws. Students shall immediately report to a teacher or supervising staff member any inappropriate material or misuse of Technology Equipment of which the student becomes aware. Students shall not use Technology Equipment in any way to engage in cyber bullying behavior. **Any student use of cell phones and mobile devices during school hours is prohibited, with the exception of medical emergencies and the teachers’ discretion.**

When using the School’s Technology Equipment, all students: shall not reconfigure any school hardware, software, or network settings; shall print, download, or otherwise transfer only that information approved by the teacher or supervisor; shall obtain the permission of a teacher or supervisor before loading a file or disk onto a school computer; shall not use any school Technology Equipment to create, store, transfer or use software or electronic content in a manner which violates the rights of the holder of copyright in the software or the content; shall not plagiarize works on the Internet; shall not load any software onto school computers without first obtaining the teacher’s permission; shall only use the Internet for school-related projects and shall visit only the sites assigned by the teacher; shall not ‘surf’ the Internet or visit ‘Facebook’ or any other social networking websites while at school; shall not give out, post, or otherwise distribute personal information such as photographs, home addresses, telephone numbers, parents’ work addresses or telephone numbers, or the name and location of the school.

Each student’s parent/guardian must review the Technology and Internet Usage Agreement with the student and sign and return the Agreement during the first week of each school year.

- 4.6.1 Electronic Devices** - Students may bring electronic readers to school after parents and students have completed and submitted The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle’s E-Reader Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement Form. For projects that require the use of personal electronic devices such as laptop

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computers, notebooks, iPads, they may be brought to school for the duration of the project. Parents and teachers must give permission by completing the appropriate form.

4.7. Instrumental Music Program - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle participates in the Archdiocesan Instrumental Music Program for students in Grades 4 to 8. The Archdiocesan Program assigns a qualified music instructor. All financial arrangements, lessons and rental/purchase of instruments are handled privately between parents and the Band Director. The school permits students in the band to be released from classes for a half hour lesson each week. The schedule is set up on a rotating basis so that the same academic classes are not always missed. It is the responsibility of the student to make up the work from a missed class.

4.8. Libraries - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle has two libraries. The lower level library is for students in Pre-K to 3. The upper level library is for students in Grades 4-8. Students who check out library books must have them returned by the proper time set by the school's librarians. Fines are assessed for late returns and lost materials.

4.9. Testing - Students in Grades 2-8 are required to participate in the Archdiocesan Standardized Testing Program. These tests are held in the fall, winter and spring of each school year. Results of these tests are shared with the parents.

4.10. Counseling Opportunities and Expectations - Saint Matthias is committed to providing a **safe and supportive environment for each of its students. Students or parents who request the assistance of a counselor will be directed to the resource teacher for help and/or referral. If the school identifies a student who needs counseling services, it will provide such referral to the parents/custodial parent(s)/legal guardian(s)/social services. Should the child's parents/custodial parent(s)/legal guardian(s)/social services decide to refrain from acting upon the referral, the school may not be able to meet the needs of the child(ren).**

In the event of an emergency or crisis, the Archdiocese of Washington may send a team of school counseling professionals to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle. One-time, initial counseling services may be rendered to students by school or archdiocesan counseling staff in the event of a crisis or emergency

4.11. Evaluations by Out-of-School Agency/Person

1. If the School determines that it is necessary to request an evaluation (medical, academic and/or psychological) of a student, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to have the evaluation completed by a licensed professional and the results provided to the school within an agreed upon time.
2. Failure of parent/guardian to have the evaluation done can result in the student not being permitted to remain in the school.

5. OPERATING PROCEDURES

5.1. Hours of Operation

5.1.1. School Office Hours

1. Monday through Friday: **8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**
2. Saturday, Sunday and Holidays: Closed

Please check with the school office for summer hours.

5.1.2. Classroom Hours for Grades K-8

1. Monday through Friday: **8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**
2. Early dismissal dates specified on the school calendar: **8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**

5.1.3. School Supervision - The School does not provide supervision **before 7:50 a.m. or after 3:10 p.m.** The School does not accept responsibility for the children who arrive before 7:50 a.m. and who do not leave after 3:10 p.m. unless enrolled in the Extended School Program.

Students dropped off before 8:00 a.m. are charged a childcare fee.

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5.1.4. Pickup After 3:10 p.m. - All students are to be picked up from school no later than 10 minutes after dismissal; that is, 3:10 p.m. on normal days and 12:10 p.m. on half-days. If a child is not picked up on time, a parent must come into the building to pick up the child. See Section 3.10.

5.2. After-School Activities - Parents are responsible for picking up children who are involved in school-related activities that occur after school dismissal. Children must be picked up at the designated time. Late pickup fees will apply.

5.3. Inclement Weather Schedule Changes

5.3.1. Delayed Openings and Emergency Situations - In case of inclement weather, parents/guardians are asked to listen to the radio, check their e-mail/voice mail, and to follow the procedures listed below:

1. The School follows the same policy as the Prince George's County Public Schools.
2. TV stations and radio stations carry delayed opening of schools for Prince George's County. Parents will be notified via school email if they have registered on the school's website.
3. In the event of inclement weather or emergency on a day that Prince George's County Schools are previously scheduled to be closed, parents/guardians should follow the directives provided by the Archdiocese of Washington.
4. The Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten follow the same hours as the rest of the school.
5. The scheduled early dismissal days will result in the closing of school for that day.

5.3.2. Early Closings - If school is already in session and for reasons of weather or emergency it becomes advisable to close early, parents/guardians are asked to listen to the radio, check their e-mail/voice mail, and to follow these procedures:

1. The school follows the same policy as Prince George's County Public Schools.
2. TV stations and radio stations will broadcast the closing.

Parents will be notified via school email if they have registered on the school's website.

3. If school is dismissed early due to weather or emergency, there will be no after-school activities, including after care (ESP).
4. If Prince George's County schools close at the regular time but cancel after-school activities, ESP will close at 4:00 p.m. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to stay informed.

5.4. Absence/Tardiness

5.4.1. Absence - If a child is absent from school:

1. Parents/guardians are to call or e-mail the School Office between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. the day of the absence and provide a written excuse the day the child returns to school. The written excuse is mandatory.
2. When requesting homework and missed assignments, parents are to call the office by 8:30 a.m.
3. In instances where a parent/guardian does not notify the school about a student's absence, the school will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent.
4. Personal vacations during school time are strongly discouraged. When a child misses school because of family vacations or other reasons other than a child's illness or family emergency, the parent is responsible for requesting all missed assignments. **Teachers will not be expected to provide assignments in advance.**

5.4.2. Tardiness

1. Students who are not in their homeroom by **8:05 a.m.** are tardy for school.
2. Tardy students **must be signed in by a parent/guardian in the front office before students are admitted to the school.**
3. Tardiness will disqualify the child's eligibility for a Perfect Attendance Award.
4. Repeated and/or unexcused tardiness can affect a student's performance in school. Chronic lateness and/or absence may jeopardize re-registration in The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle.

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5.4.3. Attendance

To conform to Archdiocesan Policy 3535:

The following are valid reasons for excused absences from school (if properly documented by the student's parent or guardian upon the student's return to school):

1. Illness of the student (after three days of illness, student must provide medical documentation that indicates that the student is able to return to school);
2. Death in the student's immediate family;
3. Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding;
4. Lawful suspension or exclusion from school by chief administrative officer;
5. Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other conditions requiring closing or suspension of classes;
6. Other absence(s) approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent or guardian.

Any absence that does not fall into one of the above categories, or is not properly documented by the student's parent/guardian, is an unexcused absence.

5.5. Leaving School Premises during School Hours

1. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds without permission from the Principal.
2. A student needs written permission, a phone call, a fax with parent signature, or the on-site presence of a parent/guardian in order to be released for early dismissal. All requests are subject to the approval of the Principal. E-mail requests will not be accepted. Due to traffic congestion and barricades on the parking lot, students will not be allowed to leave **after 2:45pm.**
3. A parent/guardian picking up a student during school hours must report to the School Office and sign out the student. No parent/guardian is permitted to go directly to a classroom, health room, or the playground to get a student.

4. Students may only be released to parents, guardians and those listed on the emergency card. If the pickup person's name is not on the emergency card, the parent must give a physical description and the driver's license must be presented at time of pickup. The office administrator will make a copy of the driver's license. If these regulations are not met, the student will not be released.
5. If a change is made in the usual pickup, a written note must be sent to the school.

5.6. Field Trips

1. The Field Trip Permission Form must be signed and returned to school before a student will be permitted to go on any school sponsored field trip.
2. Parents/guardians with more than one child must submit a separate Field Trip Permission Form for each child attending.
3. Field trip payments made by check should be made payable to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle.
4. Written notes will NOT be accepted in place of the standard field trip form.
5. Field trips are academic extensions of the classroom instruction. If a student is unable to attend a field trip, the fee is still assessed. Refund cannot be given to students who miss the trip due to illness.
6. **If social/emotional/behavioral concerns arise, a student's parent or guardian may be required to attend as a chaperone with the student on the trip in order for that child to attend. Support and partnership of the parents may be required for attendance on class trips.**
7. Parents may attend a field trip if chaperones are needed. The classroom teacher determines the number of chaperones needed.
8. Chaperones must have child protection clearance and be approved by the teacher and **School Office.**
9. Parents may not bring siblings or other children on field trips.
10. If a parent does not allow a child to go on a field trip, then the student may not be in school for the duration of the trip.

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5.7. Visitors

1. Any person (including parents) coming to the school at any time is to report to the School Office. Before going anywhere in the school, visitors are required to register by signing in and must wear an identification badge during their stay.
2. Parents shall not enter classrooms without reporting to the School Office first. Parents may not remove a student from class unless it is an emergency. The principal must give permission for a student to be called out of class.
3. Parents/guardians must have permission from the principal and teacher before visiting/observing a class.

5.8. Recess and Lunch Rules

1. Since the children will usually be going out to recess, it is required that they come to school with proper attire.
2. The students will not go out to recess if it is raining, snowing, bitterly cold, windy, or extremely hot. The recess duty teacher will monitor both the children and the weather and bring them in early if the situation warrants.
3. Students are to obey the directions of the playground supervisors whether they are teachers or volunteer parents/guardians.
4. Students must be polite, kind and caring with all classmates.
5. Once a student leaves the building for recess, the student can only re-enter the building in case of emergency, i.e., to go to the Health Room or to go to the bathroom. Permission from the recess duty teacher is required for a student to reenter the building.
6. No student may be in a classroom during recess without a teacher present.
7. Students must bring healthy food for the mid-morning snack, **Peanut products are not permitted in the classrooms.** All trash must be placed in the receptacles.
8. Students are not allowed to bring sodas to school for snack or lunch.
9. Students are not allowed to bring beverages in glass bottles/containers.
10. Students may not use nor request that food be heated in the microwave.

5.9. In-School Passes - During school hours a student is not permitted to be outside of the assigned classroom without permission.

5.10. Phone - It is requested that personal calls between parents and students be kept to an absolute minimum. Only emergency messages will be forwarded to a child.

Student outgoing messages will also be limited to emergency messages. Students may only use the phone in the front office.

Students may not use the phone to ask parents to bring forgotten homework, band instruments, etc.

Teachers are not available for calls during the school day. It is school policy that teachers' home phone numbers are not released to the school community. Parents wishing to contact teachers may do so by sending a note with their child, calling the school office or contacting the teacher by e-mail. The teacher will respond as soon as possible.

Students may not use cell phones on school property. Cell phones **will** be confiscated if seen or heard **and a parent/guardian must come and pick up the cell phone in order for it to be returned to the family.**

5.11. Health/Health Room

5.11.1. Health Room Records

1. A complete record of immunizations and vaccinations is required by state law. A student is not permitted to remain in school if a current record of required vaccinations is not on file in the school office by September 15th of each school year.
2. Health Assessment and Health Evaluation forms are **REQUIRED** for each student. Once the forms are on file at the school, parents are required to update the forms as needed.

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5.11.2. Medical Restrictions on School Activities - All students are expected to participate in outdoor activities. If a student is ill, the student should remain at home. If there are other medical reasons for a student to remain indoors, a note from the doctor must be sent to the teacher or the nurse/med tech with the medical explanation and the date the student can return to physical activity.

5.11.3. Use of Health Room - The Health Room is to be used for emergencies only. Parents/guardians of students visiting the Health Room too often with no evidence of injury or serious illness will be notified by the nurse/med. tech. If parents are called to pick up a sick child, they must do so within one hour. Please have a back-up person available if you are unable to pick up within one hour.

5.11.4. Unavailability of Parent/Guardian - It is the responsibility of parent/guardian to notify the school into whose custody a student can be released in case of illness or injury if the parent/guardian is going to be out of town or unavailable. No student will be released into the custody of anyone under 18 years of age.

5.11.5. Administration of Medication - Students taking a prescription or over-the-counter medication:

1. A medical permission form is required for students who require any medication. (The medication must be clearly marked with student's name and be brought to the nurse/med. tech. by the parent along with the medication authorization form from the doctor. See also the sample medication administration forms at the end of this book or contact school nurse/med. tech.)
2. The medication in its original container and instructions for its use, in writing, are to be hand delivered to the school nurse/med. Tech by the parent.
3. The student must report to the Health Room to receive the medication.
4. No student is allowed to administer medication of any kind to himself or another student including: cough drops, Tylenol, Advil or ANY over-the counter medication.

5. Students are NOT allowed to have medication of any type in their desks, book bags, or otherwise in their possession.

5.11.6. Student Medical Conditions - It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school of any medical condition that may relate to their child's health and safety or affect the health and safety of any other child while at school.

5.11.7. Dismissal of an Ill Student - Any child with a temperature of 100 degrees or above, or who has vomiting, diarrhea, or a suspicious rash, must be picked up promptly. A child who is sent home with a temperature of 100° or higher, is vomiting or has diarrhea may not return to school for 24 hours, or until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication (e.g., Tylenol for fever).

Any child who displays symptoms of, or is suspected of having, a contagious disease, such as (but not limited to) conjunctivitis, impetigo, or ringworm may not return to school without a written statement of treatment from a doctor. If it is suspected that a child has head lice, he/she may not return to school until he/she has been treated and has been checked by the school nurse/med. tech.

If a child is on an antibiotic, he/she needs to be home for the first 24 hours before returning to school.

5.11.8. Notification of Parent/Guardian - The nurse/med. tech. will notify parents by phone of any injury or symptoms of illness that are an emergency or may need further evaluation. A daily log documenting illnesses, injuries and administration of medications is kept.

5.12. Traffic Patterns and Parking

5.12.1. General

1. Enter The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle property at the Route 450 / Seabrook Road entrance and drive around the back of the School as directed by school personnel and/or patrols. Parents of Pre-K students drive along the front of the building and park in the designated area.

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2. Obey all Stop signs and arrival/dismissal policies.
3. Obey Safety Patrols.
4. **Drive at a safe speed.**

5.12.2. Morning Arrival

1. All K-8 students are to be dropped off no earlier than **7:50 a.m.**
2. The students must exit their vehicle from the right side only. Drivers are to stay in a single line and fill in the entire designated drop-off space.
3. Parents of students in Grades K-8 are not to park cars and walk their children to the classrooms. Parents who have a compelling reason to enter the school must enter through the front door of the school and talk to the office coordinator. **Teachers are not available for unscheduled meetings.**
4. Students are to report to homeroom immediately.
5. Students arriving late for school (**after 8:05 a.m.**) are to be **escorted by a parent/guardian and signed in at the front office as they are late for school.**
6. Pre-school parents should drive along the front of the school building and park in the designated area in the side parking lot adjacent to the side lawn. Parents must escort their pre-school children to the classroom and sign-in.

5.12.3. Afternoon Dismissal

1. Cars must be stopped in a designated line before children are released to cars.
2. Teachers will direct students to their cars after the whistle sounds.
3. **Only those adults authorized are allowed to pick up a student as indicated on the student's emergency card.** In the event that a parent requests that someone who is not on the emergency card to pick up, parents must direct that person to park in front of the church and go to the school office with proper identification. **Written notification from the parent is required ahead of time, or the parents will be contacted prior to the student being released.**
4. **PreK students are picked up and signed-out from the classroom by 2:45.**

5.12.4. Parking during School Hours

No parking is permitted behind the school or in the lot in front of the Convent. These areas are used by the students for recess.

5.13. Communications

Strong communication between the home and school is essential for student success. The following is the communication system established by the School.

5.13.1. Calendar – The school calendar is distributed and posted on the school Web site.

5.13.2. Orientation for New Parents - New parents are required to attend an orientation meeting. Each class also has “classroom parents” who help to provide information and coordinate activities.

5.13.3. Parent/Teacher Meet and Greet – Parents are invited to meet the core subject teachers prior to the first day of school. Supplies can be brought in at this time.

5.13.4. Back to School Night – held in September, provides all parents an opportunity to meet the specials teachers and meet with the principal regarding plans for the new school year. At this meeting the Home and School Association will present their activities for the year. Parents earn one volunteer hour for attendance.

5.13.5. Newsletters – On the first Thursday of the month, the *Monthly* is sent to keep families informed. This includes a calendar for the month. On subsequent Thursdays, a brief listing of new developments and news items called *Bridges* is included in the student's communications folder. The *Monthly* and *Bridges* is emailed and posted on the school website.

5.13.6. Thursday Academic & Communications Folder - The teachers send the students' academic work for the parents to review in a weekly folder along with the school's weekly newsletter. It may also include other information from the child's teachers. Each teacher will provide directions at the beginning of the year regarding what is to be signed and/or returned. Academic folders are to be returned the next day.

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5.13.7. Student Information System - Student progress can be tracked online using our student information system, Rediker. Parents are strongly encouraged to check their children's progress weekly.

5.13.8. Report Cards - The report card is a means of communicating the progress of students to their parents/guardians each quarter.

5.13.9. Principal's Availability - Parents/guardians may call the school office during school hours to make an appointment or leave a message for the principal. The principal may also be e-mailed directly at pschratz@stmatthias.org.

5.13.10. Mandatory Conference - A mandatory conference between a parent/guardian and teacher is required **in the fall** for Grades Pre-K-8. Teachers may indicate the need for a conference on the second and third quarter report cards.

5.13.11. Other Parent/Teacher Conferences - A parent/guardian wishing to speak to a teacher or set a conference **should e-mail the teachers directly. All conferences must be scheduled ahead of time and confirmed.**

5.13.12. Order of Communication - The order of communication with the school concerning a particular classroom situation is as follows:

1. First - conference between parent/guardian and teacher.
2. Second - conference between parent/guardian, teacher and Principal.
3. Third - conference between parent/guardian, teacher, Principal and Pastor.

5.13.13. E-mail - The principal, teachers, and the school office staff may be contacted via email. E-mail is not appropriate for extensive concerns or negative comments.

5.14. Lost and Found

1. Articles which are found will be kept by the Health Room for a 30-day period. After 30 days, unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

2. All personal items (clothing, supplies, etc.) are to be marked with the student's name.

5.15. School-sponsored Events or Other Events

1. The distribution and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted at any school sponsored event where individuals under the age of twenty-one are present.
2. While attending and/or participating in after school events, students are subject to the same rules and consequences as they are during school hours, whether or not their parents/guardians are present. This includes our Extended School Program and any school-sponsored clubs and activities.
3. When both the parent/guardian and child attend a school function (e.g., HSA meeting, Science Fair, etc.), parents are expected to supervise their child at all times. When the parent fails to adequately supervise his/her child, the school may implement appropriate corrective measures to ensure both the safety of the child, others and school property, in addition to assuring proper behavior.
4. Student birthday party invitations may only be distributed with the teacher's permission through school, if the entire class (or all boys or all girls) are invited.
5. Students may not be picked up in limousines on school property or anywhere within a 3 mile radius of the school.

6. SCHOOL UNIFORMS

All school uniforms are to be purchased from an approved uniform company. The school reserves the right to reject any apparel that is inconsistent with the approved uniform. The approved vendor is Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company in New Carrollton, MD.

Complete uniforms are to be worn every school day except Tag Days or when specifically instructed otherwise (e.g., for field trips, spirit days, etc.).

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6.1. Tag Day/Picture Day/Out of Uniform

On days that the school has scheduled a tag day, spirit day, picture day, or in the event that a student is out of uniform for any other reason, students should dress in clothes appropriate for the learning environment (see page 25). Should a teacher, along with the assent of the principal, determine that a student's attire is inappropriate and disruptive, parents will be called to bring a change of clothing and the student will be asked to change into the proper attire.

6.2. Warm Weather Uniforms - The warm weather uniform for all boys and girls in grades Kindergarten to 8 during August, September, May and June:

- Black or khaki dress shorts and black belt; dress shorts may not extend below the knees or more than 3 inches above the knees for both boys and girls.
- White, black or red short or long sleeve polo style shirt with school logo; shirt must be tucked in at all times. The black belt must be fastened at the natural waistline.
- White ankle socks
- Non- high top athletic shoes as non-descript as possible that are clean and in good condition. Combinations of white, black and red are preferred.

6.3. Pre-K and Kindergarten Students - wear only P.E. uniform (see 6.8.)

6.4. Girls Regulation Uniforms

6.4.1. Girls, Grades 1-5

- The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle jumper (red, white and black plaid), hemline to be no more than 1"-2" above the knee OR
- Black or khaki uniform pants (pants cannot be worn with jumper)
- White, Peter Pan collar blouse, short or long sleeves (worn with jumper) OR
- Red, white or black short sleeve polo shirt with school logo (worn with pants)

- Red, white or black knee-high socks, or red, white or black tights - no lettering or logos (no leggings or pants allowed in school)
- Black V-neck cardigan sweater
- Black school uniform shoe

6.4.2. Girls, Grades 6-8

- The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle pleated 4-kick skirt (red, white and black plaid), hemline to be no more than 1"-2" above the knee OR
- Black or khaki uniform pants (pants cannot be worn with skirt)
- Red, white or black short or long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
- Black V-neck pullover sweater with logo
- Red, white or black knee-high socks, or red, white or black tights - no lettering or logos (no leggings or pants allowed in school)
- Black school uniform shoes

6.5. Boys Regulation Uniforms

6.5.1. Boys, Grades 1-5

- Black or khaki dress pants and black belt
- Red, white, or black short or long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
- Black sweater (cardigan or V neck)
- Black socks
- Black school uniform shoes

6.5.2. Boys, Grades 6-8

- Black or khaki dress pants and black belt
- Red, white or black short or long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
- OR
- White Oxford button-down dress shirt, long or short sleeve
- Red plaid boy's tie
- Black V-neck pullover sweater with logo
- Black socks
- Black shoes

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6.6. P.E. Uniforms and Uniform for 4 Year Olds Pre-K & Kindergarten

- Uniforms must be purchased through the Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students wear the P.E. uniform every day. Students in grades 1-8 wear the P.E. uniform only on the days that they have physical education.
- Gray Saint Matthias sweat shirt and black Saint Matthias sweat pants
- Gray Saint Matthias T-shirt and black Saint Matthias shorts
- Non-descript low-top athletic shoes that are clean and in good condition
- Combinations of black, white and red are preferred
- White ankle socks

6.7. Uniform Shoes - All Grades - Girls and Boys

- **Regulation Uniform** - Students must wear black uniform shoes. No other colors are permitted on the shoes. No boot-type shoes, heels, or sandals may be worn.
- **Warm-Weather Uniform** - P.E. shoes may be worn.
- **Physical Education Shoes** – Non-descript (white, black and/or red preferred) athletic shoes
- **High tops are not permitted**

6.8. Hair Styles and Grooming

- Hair styles must conform to good grooming. Dyed hair is not permitted. Boys hair should not touch the ears or collar. Nail polish, makeup and jewelry (except watches) are not part of the school uniform. Girls may wear only one pair of small post earrings. Boys may not wear earrings.
- **All hair accessories must be neutral in color or match the school uniform. This includes, but is not limited to, hair beads, ties, and bows. Hair accessories deemed distracting must be removed.**
- Shirts are to be tucked in and belts worn at the natural waistline.
- All uniforms are to be clean, mended and neat at all times.
- All uniform pieces must be labeled with child's name.

- In the event a student reports to school out of uniform, the student must bring a written note from parent/guardian as to the reason for being out of uniform. Students out of uniform without a parent's note receive a uniform infraction. Students who receive two uniform infractions lose the privilege of participating in the next scheduled TAG day. **Four or more infractions will require the parent and student to meet with the principal.**

7. DISCIPLINE POLICIES and PROCEDURES

- 7.1. Overview** - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle follows the Responsive School Discipline Approach. The goals of this approach are to ensure that students feel safe at school, physically and emotionally and learn the skills for working and living cooperatively. In addition, we explicitly teach the values and virtues of people of good moral character. All members of the school community are expected to adhere to behavior that is trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and aimed at good citizenship. These Six Pillars of Character are the filter through which all decision-making should occur, Students who strive to be people of good character will not only be successful at our school, but happy.

The adults of The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle take time to model and teach children how to translate rules into action in different situations. At the beginning of the year, we introduce rules and behavior expectations and guide students in practicing them. Using respectful words and tones of voice, we remind children of these expectations. When children behave positively, we let them know that we noticed. These actions let children know what the expectations are and help them stay motivated to meet those expectations.

When children misbehave, the adults at school handle this misbehavior firmly while preserving the child's dignity. Our first step is to stop the misbehavior quickly and simply (for example, with a brief word or gesture). If needed, we take further steps to help the child regain self-control, and fix problems caused by his or her mistake, and get back to productive learning.

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In deciding how to handle students' misbehavior, we take into account how severe the misbehavior is and how likely it is to happen again. We may:

- Remind or tell the student to do something different
- Have the child sit closer to the teacher or other adult. Often being closer to an adult helps children remember what they are supposed to be doing.
- Use "take-a-break"
- Limit child's choice of activities for a period of time
- Guide the child in fixing the problems caused by his or her mistake

When a child needs additional support, we may:

- Use a buddy teacher take-a-break, where the child moves to a distraction-free space in another classroom
- Use private take-a-break, by moving to a non-instructional, distraction-free space
- Have the child stay for a longer period of time in a supervised space (in school suspension)
- Have the student spend a period of time at home (at-home suspension)
- Meet with the child and/or parents to find other solutions

We at The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle strongly believe that children want to and can meet expectations. We value partnering with parents to help students do well in school and feel good about going to school.

7.2. Restriction of Privileges and School Attendance - In addition to the standards for student behavior previously described, whenever a student's behavior in school deviates too far from the limits of acceptability, or his/her conduct is such that it endangers the property, health or safety of others, action may be taken to restrict privileges and the rights of school attendance. Such action may be any one of the following:

1. Probation: A conditional enrollment during a trial period. Responsibility of placing a student on probation rests with the principal.
2. In-School Suspension: A temporary restriction of activities,

privileges, and interaction with other students for a specified length of time. Responsibility for the stipulated conditions and length of in-house suspension resides with the principal.

3. Out-of-School Suspension: A temporary termination of enrollment until stipulated conditions are met. Responsibility for suspending a student resides with the principal. Parents must have a conference with the principal before the student returns.
4. Expulsion: A permanent termination of enrollment. Expulsion is exercised only through procedures designated by the Archdiocesan Department of Education Policies.

7.2.1. Offenses Subject to Procedures in Section 7.2.

1. Consistent lack of respect
2. Consistent lack of responsibility
3. Possession of weapons
4. Physical assault or violent fighting
5. Continued or willful defiance, disobedience, or disrespect of authority
6. Possession, sale, use, distribution and/or intent to distribute any illegal, controlled, mood-altering medication, chemical or alcohol. This includes school hours as well as school-sponsored events.
7. Serious theft
8. Acts which threaten the health and/or safety of others
9. Trafficking in pornographic materials
10. Verbal assault
11. Threatening physical harm, either verbal or written
12. Sexual harassment
13. Truancy
14. Possession of firecrackers, matches, lighters, smoke bombs, stink bombs
15. Arson, extortion or other criminal activity
16. Serious defacing or destruction of school property.
17. Bullying, which includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, name-calling, derogatory remarks, racial slurs, taunting intended to provoke, cyber-bullying, physical assault and intimidation.

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7.2.2. Other Reasons for Termination of Enrollment

1. Poor academic achievement or a learning disability that cannot be properly addressed by the school.
2. Parental non-compliance with the teachers' and/or principal's recommendation regarding referrals or need for testing and evaluation.
3. Parental non-compliance with school policies.
4. Parental falsification of records or withholding pertinent information regarding the child's past physical, emotional or academic problems.
5. Parents not meeting financial obligations with the school.

7.2.3. Threats - In the event of any actual or perceived threat of violence or other inappropriate/illegal behavior, The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle reserves its right to take any and all actions it deems necessary for the health and safety of its school community, including the individual(s) making the threat. These actions may include contacting law enforcement offices, mental health professionals and/or any other outside experts as the school official(s) deems necessary.

7.3. Defacing or Destruction of School Property

1. In cases of minor or major acts of vandalism, whether accidental or non-accidental, students and their parents/guardians are responsible for all repairs/replacement for all damages. This includes all mechanical and electrical devices, building, grounds, books, supplies, lockers and the possessions of other students.
2. Besides the responsibility for all repairs/replacement for damages, the student may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the School.

7.4. Maternity/Paternity - In the event that a student is found to be pregnant or known to be the father of an expected child, this circumstance alone will not be a reason for expulsion from school. The leadership of Saint Matthias is committed to doing everything in its power to continue to provide educational resources to the child(ren) in question as is consistent with the Catholic faith and life ethic.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

8.1. Prevention Programming

To conform to Archdiocesan Policy 3543:

As a Catholic school, The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle believes and teaches that each of us is called to love our neighbors and to treat them with respect. The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation in any form, including cyberbullying. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation of any member of the school community is prohibited. All reports of bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

The reprisal or retaliation against anyone who reports acts of bullying, harassment, and intimidation is strictly prohibited. All reports of reprisal or retaliation will be treated seriously. The principal's review and investigation of a credible allegation will be done in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidation mean any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including electronic communication (telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, iPod, etc.), that:

1. Physically harms an individual; damages an individual's property; substantially interferes with an individual's education or learning environment; or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property; and
2. Occurs on school property; at a school activity or event; on a school transportation vehicle or bus; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

8.2. Child Protection Policy

All children have the right to be safe and protected from harm in any and all environments - home, school, religious institutions, sports programs, and neighborhoods. To ensure a safe

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environment and to prevent children's physical, sexual abuse and neglect, The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle strictly enforces the requirements given by the Archdiocese of Washington. All parents who wish to volunteer in ANY capacity where the students are present MUST comply with the Archdiocese Child Protection Policy. The following is the list of requirements to receive child protection clearance:

1. Request a Volunteer Application Form from the School Office.
2. Complete the Volunteer Application Form and return it to the School Office.
3. Register on-line at www.virtus.org, and attend Child Protection Policy Training.
4. Make an appointment for fingerprinting with the Archdiocese, and take the completed application form with you, photo ID and fee. (Fingerprint clearance from any other place of business is not accepted.) Return certificate of completion to the Principal.

8.2.1. Child Abuse Policy - The school is required by law to report any suspected case of abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services.

8.3. Security - For the safety of the students, faculty and staff, all outside doors are locked at all times. All parents and visitors are required to enter the school building by way of the main office, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge. Students may not open an exterior door for anyone without permission from the teacher.

8.4. Safety Plan - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle has a detailed safety plan in the event of a major crisis taking place during the school day. The faculty and staff exercise the greatest care and concern in the supervision of the students. Depending on the circumstances of the event, careful and sound decisions are made regarding the safety of all the students and staff.

The following are the plans that are in place and practiced the school year:

- Sheltered in place (building lock-down)
- Classroom lock-down

- Building evacuation
- Fire
- Tornadoes and other weather related emergencies
- Accident, serious injury or illness
- Intruder/hostage situation
- Bioterrorism attack
- Bomb or bomb threat

If the students need to be evacuated from the school campus, they will walk to:

Thomas Johnson Middle School
5401 Barker Place
Lanham, Maryland 20706
Phone: 301-918-8680

Parents will be contacted after the students arrive safely at the school.

8.4.1. Daily Safety Plan

- All exterior doors are to be kept locked at all times.
- Students may not open an exterior door for anyone without permission from a teacher.
- All visitors, including parents, must report to the front office upon arrival. Each visitor must ring the bell and wait to be buzzed in by school staff. Each visitor must sign in and wear an identification badge while on school premises.
- All visitors who have business within the school, such as repairmen, delivery men, or salesmen, must be accompanied by school staff at all times.
- Students are not allowed outside the school building without permission except at recess. No student may leave school property without permission from the principal.
- A student needs written permission, a phone call, a fax with parent signature, or the on-site presence of a parent/guardian in order to be released for early dismissal. E-mail requests will not be accepted. All requests are subject to the approval of the principal. A parent/guardian must sign out a student for early dismissal. Parents/guardians may not go directly to

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the classroom, health room, or playground to get a student.

- Students may only be released to parents, guardians, and those listed in TADS. If the pickup person's name is not on the emergency card, students will not be released until verification of identification and authorization by parents is completed. If these regulations are not met, the student will not be released. There is no early dismissal after 2:45.
- Volunteers may not work inside the school, chaperone field trips, or monitor recess unless they have acquired child protection clearance.

8.5. Change of Address or Phone Number - Any changes of home address, home or business telephone numbers, e-mail, or emergency contact numbers must be changed in TADS immediately. Those in aftercare should also alert the Director of the Aftercare program.

8.6. Separated or Divorced Parents/Guardians

1. It is the responsibility of separated/divorced parents/guardians to have on file in the School Office a copy of the legal document indicating custodial/non-custodial parent and the rights, privileges, and prohibition of the other parent.
2. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act grants non-custodial parents the right to obtain school records. This act also states that it is the obligation of the custodial parent to show proof of a prohibition in cases where the rights of the non-custodial parent are limited.
3. If a statement is requested of the school because of a custody suit, the request:
 - a. Must be presented in writing by the attorney of concerned party
 - b. Will be forwarded to the Archdiocesan attorney for legal processing.

8.7. Student Records

8.7.1. General - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle fully complies with Policy #5139 as stipulated by the Archdiocese of Washington. This policy addresses the provisions of the Family

Education Rights and Privacy Act. This Act gives the parents of a student, and in certain cases the student, the right to examine the student's official records and guarantees the confidentiality of such records. Information concerning the Archdiocesan school implementation of this federal law is available at the Catholic Schools Office in Washington, D.C.

The school recognizes the importance of confidentiality and accuracy in the maintenance of records relating to students in the school. As provided more fully below, the accuracy, privacy, and confidentiality of all student records shall be preserved.

In addition, with regard to information shared in confidence by a student with faculty and/or staff of the school, such information shall remain confidential so long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake. Should a faculty and/or staff member of the school have concerns regarding the information shared, he/she shall promptly notify the principal and the child(ren)'s parents/custodial parent(s)/legal guardian(s)/social services.

8.7.2. Categories of Records Maintained

1. **Directory Information** - This category includes the names and address of parents/guardians and students, and contact information that parents agree to include.
2. **Official Academic Records** - This category includes completed registration forms, records of grades, averages, scores on standardized intelligence, readiness and aptitude tests, academic work completed, attendance data, and other documents relating directly to academic progress.
3. **Confidential File (Professional Records)** - This category includes records given by a physician, psychologist, or any other professional which are used for the treatment of the student.

8.7.3. Access to Records

1. **School Directory** - All parents have the option of being included in the School Directory that is created each year and distributed to each family. A form will be available to each family to complete as to the information the family wishes to

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include in the Directory.

2. **Official Academic Record** - Subject only to reasonable regulation as to time, place and supervision, parents of a student shall have access to that student's Official Academic Record. Such access shall include the right to inspect and to review the content of those records; the right to obtain copies of these records, at the expense of the parent; the right to a response from the school to a reasonable request for an explanation or interpretation of these records; the right to an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of those records.
3. **Recommendation Forms and Release of Records** - It is the school's policy to forward forms and records directly to the agency, school, or program that requests student information.

8.7.4. Publication Release

The school uses student pictures and may use names in its publications, news stories, TV, print and electronic media. Parents are required to complete a Publicity Release Form each school year, giving the school written consent to use the voice/audio recordings, photographs, video and quotations of their child/ren.

8.7.5. Transfer of a Student

1. Parents who transfer their children during the school year must notify the principal in writing.
2. Parents must sign a consent form to release records.
3. All textbooks, library books, etc., must be returned.
4. All records for transferring students will be sent through the U.S. mail after the form is received from the requesting school, and after all financial obligations to **The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle** have been met.
5. **If a student does transfer by parental choice during the school year, there is a withdrawal fee of \$1000 per student before the end of the first quarter, \$750 per student before the end of the second quarter, and \$500 per student before the end of the third quarter.**

8.8. Parent Organizations

1. The role of the School Advisory Board is to provide advice and assistance to the Administrative Team (the Pastor and the Principal).
2. The role of the Home School Association (HSA) is to foster communication between the school and parents and to assist in providing needed resources for the school. Service hours are required.
3. Parents who want to contact the School Advisory Board or the Home & School Association should call the School Office for contact information.

8.9. Amendments to the Policies and Procedures Manual

1. The school reserves the rights to amend or revise this Policy and Procedures Manual at any time by decision of the School Administrative Team. Notification of amendments or revisions to these policies when made during the school year and requiring immediate implementation, will be transmitted to parents by letter. All transmittals will contain the effective date of change.
2. Periodic complete revision and publication of the policy manual shall be done by the School Advisory Board and will be distributed to parents at or before the opening of the next school year.



POLICY HANDBOOK

The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle

Extended School Program

(ESP)

2017 - 2018 School Year

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Dear Parents:

The enclosed material is an explanation of the Extended School Program (ESP). Please read the entire handbook so that you will become familiar with the rules for the program. You are responsible for the enclosed information.

Please Note: The Director, in association with the Principal and Pastor, reserves the right to cancel an enrollment in ESP at any time due to...

- REPEATED LATE PICKUPS
- LATE PAYMENTS
- BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS
- RETURNED CHECKS/NO PAYMENT

The Federal Tax I.D. number for the ESP is 52-0780-162.
You will need this for your taxes.

The ESP telephone is located in the first grade classroom. The number is 301-577-9412, the same as the school office. Please refer to the menu for voice mail options, if necessary.

Thank you,
Mrs. Reedy
Director, ESP

OVERVIEW

Enrollment - The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle children are the only participants in the program.

Staff - The staff consists of the school's teachers along with other qualified personnel.

Registration - Registration takes place each year in March and April.

Time - The program is open on the days that school is in session, unless otherwise stated.

Before Care: 7:00 - 8:00 a.m.

After Care: Dismissal - 6:00 p.m.

After Care Schedule (Grades K - 8)

3:00 - 3:15 Roll call, change clothes (Pre-K does not change clothes)

3:15 - 4:30 Recess, snack in small groups

4:30 - 6:00 Homework/quiet play; movies on Fridays

WEATHER-RELATED DELAYS & CLOSINGS

The program follows P.G. Co. schools decisions for delayed openings. For example, a one hour delay results in an 8:00 a.m. Before Care opening. When P.G. County schools close early due to weather or emergency situations there will be NO ESP. If school closes at the regular time and after-school activities are cancelled, then ESP will close at 4:00 p.m. It is your responsibility to be informed.

ARRIVALS/DISMISSALS FROM ESP

Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedure - Parents must sign the attendance book when bringing their child to Before Care and sign the attendance book when picking up the child from After Care. Only the designated persons listed on the Emergency Forms will be allowed to pick up your child from ESP. If there is a change on a particular day, a note or phone call to ESP is required in order to release the student. Once your child is signed out, he/she may not return until the following day.

Parking - Children are dropped off and picked up behind the school.

When parking, parents need to stay outside the coned area near the classrooms downstairs so as to leave an area of safe passage for those exiting the rooms. No child is permitted to enter or leave the building alone at any time.

ATTENDANCE

Regular School Day Absences - A child cannot be absent for the entire school day and then be dropped off for ESP.

Excused Absences from ESP - If a student is not going to attend ESP for a particular day, a note signed by the parent or a phone call to the office will be expected in order to release your child from ESP to a carpool.

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HEALTH

Accident or Illness - If an accident occurs in ESP the Director will call the parent according to the severity of the injury. Head injuries will be reported to the parent no matter what the severity so that you can observe your child for the next 24 hours. The Director and staff maintain CPR and First Aid certification, as required by Maryland Child Care Administration.

If a child becomes ill in ESP, the parent will be notified and asked to have the child picked up PROMPTLY if the Director deems it necessary.

No child will be allowed to stay inside due to allergies or illness during our outdoor play hour since the staff is required to be on duty outside.

Head Lice - A child may return when she/he is free of lice and nits. She/he will be examined discretely by the Director upon the child's return if there is no physician's note.

Chickenpox, Ringworm, etc. - A child may not attend ESP until a physician's certificate (stating that the condition is not contagious) is received.

Medicine - A student may not possess, administer, or distribute medication, prescription or nonprescription. If medication must be given during ESP hours, an authorization form must be signed by the parent before medication will be administered. Medicine will be administered by the Director of ESP.

Asthma/Allergies - Medication, inhalers, etc., must be supplied to the school health room with the physician's medication authorization forms.

CLOTHING FOR ESP

Play Clothes and Shoes (Grades K - 8) - It is recommended that the children change clothes for ESP so that the uniforms do not get ruined. Play clothes should include tennis shoes (no sandals) and appropriate clothing for the weather.

Appropriate Clothing - Midriiffs tops, tank tops, T-shirts with inappropriate logos, and skimpy clothing may not be worn to school. Tight Lycra/spandex pants are permitted only if worn with a shirt long enough to reach the thighs. Younger children should wear clothing that is easy to put on by themselves. Please label uniforms, play clothes, jackets and sweaters with child's name. Please make sure clothes fit comfortably.

PAYMENTS AND FEES

The Extended School Program (ESP) payments are due on the 30th of each month, beginning July 30th and ending April 30th. Late fees will be assessed the day following the due date and every 7 days thereafter. (See Policy 3.8.)

Withdrawal of a child from the ESP program will require written notification with a specific date mentioned in the letter for termination of services. The letter of withdrawal is to be sent to the business office of the rectory and a copy to the ESP Director. Any refund due will be given based upon the day the letter is received in the business office of the rectory. There will be a \$25 processing fee assessed for withdrawal from the ESP Program. All school policies referring to Tuition and Fees are also applied to the ESP Program. A re-registration fee of \$50.00 will be assessed to re-instate a student into the program during the school year.

A financial statement will be sent home in January to be used for tax purposes.

LATE PICKUPS (After Care)

If a child is picked up after closing time for any reason, the parent is required to pay a late fee.

The time will be noted in the sign-out book, and the late fee will be collected at that time. Remember to have someone in reserve in case there is an occasion when you cannot arrive on time. Chronic late pickups will result in the expulsion of your child from the program.

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After closing time, the late fee is \$1.00 per minute per child. Checks may be made payable to The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle/ESP. Please remember that although a late arrival is not intentional, a late fee is still required. You should have a back-up plan in place for unexpected situations.

HOMEWORK

The children begin their homework at 4:30.

Checking Homework - In grades 1 - 2, homework is checked for accuracy when shown to the teacher on duty. In grades 3 - 8, homework is checked for completion when shown to the teacher on duty.

It is still the parent's obligation to recheck homework at night and sign it, if required. If there is a problem with your child not getting homework done in ESP, please speak to the Director.

BEHAVIOR

Expected Behavior - The program follows the same rules that apply during the school day, and the children are expected to follow these same rules after school.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Minor Infractions - These would include actions such as using a bad word when playing, saying inappropriate things to others, being mean to playmates, not following directions, etc. These actions will result in a conversation with the teacher about why the behavior was unnecessary and how to change it. The student will then be given a warning. If the behavior continues, the child will receive a timeout for no more than 10 minutes. During this time, the student will complete a behavioral reflection. The parent will then be told upon arrival. If the same behavior continues after the parent has been informed, then the behavior will become a major infraction.

Major Infractions - These would include actions such as threatening a student or staff member, showing blatant disrespect to a staff member or student, physical or verbal assaults on a student or staff member, defiance of a reasonable request as directed by a

staff member, rude or obscene conduct, or continued minor infractions, as stated above.

All major infractions will be referred to the Director. In the Director's absence, a senior staff member will handle the situation and then refer it to the Director for further action.

Major infractions will result in a conference with the Director and parent/child. An ESP suspension or detention will occur. If deemed serious enough by the Director, a parent may be called at work to pick up a student immediately. If major infractions continue, the student will be expelled from the program.

TEACHER CONFERENCES

There should not be informal or scheduled conferences with a teacher while working in the ESP. The teacher has other responsibilities at that time and will have to make an appointment with you.

REQUIRED FORMS

Because ESP is licensed by the State of Maryland, certain documents are required to be kept on file. These are:

- Health Inventory (requires physician's signature)
- Emergency Form
- All About My Child

These documents are separate from the forms that you complete for the school office or health room. Your child may not attend ESP until all forms have been completed.

Please notify the Director of any changes regarding the health of your child, as well as changes that need to be made on the emergency form. It is imperative that you can be reached immediately in case of emergency.



Parents'/Guardians' Responsibilities to the School

All parents are required to:

1. Understand and support the religious nature of the school
2. Partner with the school in the education of their children
3. Promote the school and speak well of it to others
4. Keep current with all the communications from the school
5. Establish a good working relationship with their child/ren's teachers
6. Attend parent meetings and conferences
7. Support the fundraising efforts of the Home/School Association
8. Participate in the Service Hours Program
9. Meet all financial obligations in a timely manner

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

PARENT and SCHOOL AGREEMENT

I _____, as parent/guardian of a student(s) of The Academy of Saint Matthias the Apostle, have read and agree to be governed by the School's Policies and Procedures. I also specifically acknowledge that I am aware of, and agree with, the procedures and policies contained in the Health Room section of this manual.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date