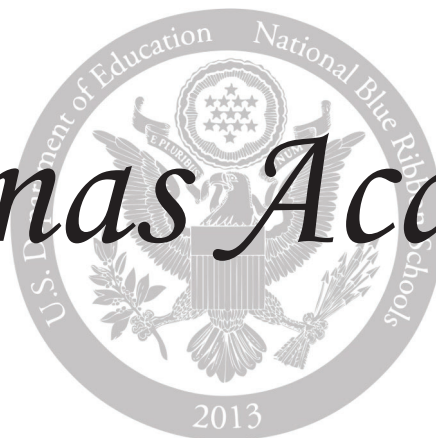


Parent/Guardian Handbook  
2019-2020



*Aquinas Academy*



## Welcome to Aquinas Academy

Aquinas Academy is a community of students, faculty and parents/guardians who work together, share ideas and value learning. As a member of Aquinas Academy, you are an active and important member of the school/parish community. As a member of this community, we will call on you to uphold the proud tradition from which Aquinas Academy draws. Inherent in this call are certain rights and responsibilities that we entrust to you and challenge you to continually make Aquinas Academy a better place.

Every student has the right to learn in a safe and nurturing environment, where respect for each person is stated and lived. In order for the academy to function smoothly, certain guidelines are necessary. Therefore, this handbook serves to define procedures that should be followed in order for us all to work well together. Since it is impossible to enumerate a procedure for every possible situation, concern for those around us and common sense should be attitudes that guide our actions. Some policies and procedures described in this handbook will change periodically, and Aquinas Academy reserves the right to make such changes.

The Aquinas Academy experience of growing and learning together in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation gives our school its strength and joy.

Parent/Student Handbook  
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## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Aquinas Academy admits students of any race, creed, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. Aquinas Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **Purpose and Use of the Handbook**

This handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Aquinas Academy. To meet this objective, the school administration is given flexibility and the ability to exercise discretion. In appropriate circumstances, the principal/assistant principal/pastor has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in the handbook. This handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students and/or parents/guardians.

## **Amendments to Handbook**

This handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the school administration. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

## **Accreditation**

Aquinas Academy is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and is a 2013 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

## **History of Aquinas Academy**

Aquinas Academy was established under the direction of Monsignor William McCann and the educational guidance of the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell, New Jersey. As the only Catholic elementary school in Livingston, the academy blends traditional and innovative learning and assists each student in developing his or her fullest potential in an environment that fosters the growth of the whole child.

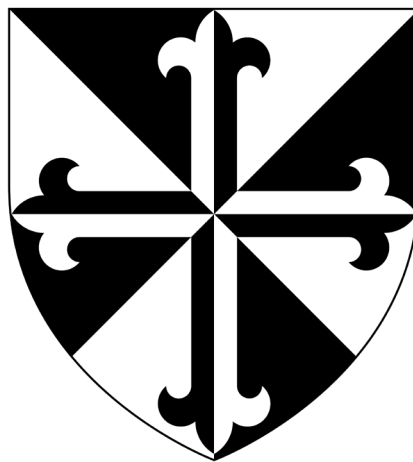
The academy, founded in 1952 as Saint Philomena School, was renamed in 1988 to affirm the regional character and expanded curriculum of the school. The academy is named in honor of Saint Thomas Aquinas, a renowned Dominican scholar and philosopher. Our name reflects the love of truth and the pursuit of knowledge espoused by Saint Thomas.

## **The Dominican Shield**

The members of the worldwide Dominican Order are committed to study and contemplation; to preaching and teaching the message of the Gospel from the thirteenth century to the present time.

The fleur-de-lis represents the Order's roots in France, while the cross is the call to a life of prayer and penance. "Veritas" (truth) has been the motto of the Order, which refuted the Albigensian Heresy in the middle ages.

The traditional colors of black and white associated with the Dominican Order, stand for penance and purity; both of life and doctrine.



## **Mission Statement**

Aquinas Academy is a Catholic elementary school, under the auspices of Saint Philomena Parish, dedicated to academic excellence and the development of Christ-centered values and principles.

Inspired by Gospel teachings, our faculty strive to instruct the mind and nurture the faith in each of our students. As a community, we generate a lifetime of intellectual curiosity, spiritual growth and a sense of service to society. This environment, in conjunction with the loving hand of God, prepares our students to take their place as leaders in the church and the world.

## **Philosophy**

Aquinas Academy is a mosaic of people who foster a love of learning by sharing academic excellence, solid Catholic values and principles, meaningful contributions to the community, global awareness, and active stewardship.

The academy consists of clergy, students, teachers, and parents who work together in a cooperative educational and faith environment. We are dedicated to providing a quality education for each child regardless of race, creed, ethnic, or socioeconomic status.

Our administration, faculty and staff work together to provide a nurturing, supportive environment. Students are encouraged to appreciate the fine arts, to develop critical thinking and to excel in communications and technology. Students are also challenged to promote lifelong wellness through physical fitness and health programs developing respect for one's body and mind.

Various professional workshops, selection of appropriate resources, self-evaluation, and diverse methodology of instruction assist the faculty in supporting each child's efforts toward intellectual development. The faculty utilizes the curriculum guidelines of the Archdiocese of Newark in conjunction with those of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Common Core State Standards.

Since parents are recognized as the primary educators of their children, a strong interdependence exists between home and school. This link is enhanced as families, students and staff are encouraged to attain a relationship with God and to cultivate values of peace, love, freedom and justice in the pursuit of both personal and social progress.



## **Beliefs of Aquinas Academy**

We believe that:

- We are dedicated to providing a quality education to our students regardless of race, creed, ethnic or socioeconomic status respecting the uniqueness of each individual.
- Solid Catholic values and principles are instilled in our students to provide a strong code of ethics to guide them in the present and throughout life.
- A secure environment is provided for our faculty, staff and students to the best of our ability.
- The academy provides a challenging academic program in a nurturing and supportive environment.
- Teachers address the different learning styles of their students with varied teaching methods.
- Critical thinking skills, communication and technological literacy are encouraged in all curricular areas.
- We encourage our students to develop a sense of social justice providing opportunities for service within the community.
- The academy provides an opportunity to learn a world language to enhance and reflect the differences and similarities within various cultures.
- Competitive athletic programs, as well as physical education and health programs, teach our students the importance of physical fitness, values and ethics.
- Our students will become independent, creative thinkers, confident decision-makers and responsible leaders.
- The academy avails itself of modern technology providing a SMART Board and LCD projector in each classroom, as well as a Media Center within the academy.

## I. Admissions

### A. Policy on Admission of Students

Aquinas Academy gives preference to:

- Siblings of students who are currently enrolled in the Academy
- Students who have been enrolled in the AQA Preschool Program
- Registered parishioners of Saint Philomena Parish who currently have siblings in the school
- Registered parishioners of Saint Philomena Parish who currently have no siblings in the school
- Catholic students registered in parishes other than Saint Philomena Parish and who currently have siblings in the school
- Catholic students registered in parishes other than Saint Philomena Parish but who currently have no other siblings in the school
- Non-Catholic students
- In the event that Aquinas Academy maintains a waiting list, it will be for one academic year only. Registration is required for the succeeding academic year.

### B. Technical Requirements for Admission

#### 1. Age

- A Birth Certificate must be submitted for proof of age.
- A Kindergarten student must be five (5) years old on or before October 1. A First grade student must be six (6) years old on or before October 1.

#### 2. Immunization Requirements

- Varicella Vaccine (Chickenpox)
  - Children entering K or First grade.
  - Pre-K/K-Prep students after 12 months of age
- Hepatitis B Vaccine (3 doses)
  - Children born on or after January 1, 1996
  - Children entering K-Prep/K or First Grade Provisional admittance with one documented dose; second dose received no later than three months later; third dose no later than 12 months after first. - Children born on or after January 1, 1990- and/or entering grade 6.
  - The two-dose method is an acceptable alternative only if appropriately documented administered to 11-15 years of age pupil.
  - All students grade 9 through 12 (September 2004).
- Medical exemptions acceptable from M.D. or D.O. and also Certified Nurse Practitioners.
- Subject to annual review by school personnel (confirm with medical provider). Based on current New Jersey state standards. Provisional Admission is granted until all full health requirements are fulfilled.

- Children admitted without completed documentation must show appointment for the remaining doses and cannot take more than one year for completion.
    - DPT Vaccine
      - For children under age (7) seven, a minimum of four (4) doses are required one dose must be after 4th birthday. Any five (5) doses also comply.
      - For children over (7) seven years of age, three (3) doses are required.
      - Pediatric D.T. toxoid is acceptable only with valid medical contraindication.
    - Polio Vaccine
      - Children less than seven (7) years of age, 3 doses of either OPV or IPV is required, provided one dose is given on or after the 4th birthday. Any (4) four doses also comply, must be separated by one month.
      - Children over (7) seven year of age, three doses are acceptable
    - Measles vaccine
      - Two doses of measles required for children born after January 1, 1990. Must be given after 1st birthday and second at least one month apart.
    - Rubella & Mumps vaccine
      - One dose required after 12 months.
    - Hib Vaccine
      - Requirements for one booster dose after 12 months of age before 16 months of age. For child care center or preschool up through 59 months is required.
    - Tdap & Meningococcal
      - 1 dose of Tdap vaccine (required for children born on or after 1/1/97)
      - 1 dose of Meningococcal vaccine (required for children born on or after 1/1/97). Please note: This is to be given no earlier than 10 years of age.
      - \*Tdap & Meningococcal vaccines are required for all entering 6th graders who are 11 years of age or older; 6th grades < 11 years must receive Tdap and meningococcal vaccines once age 11 is reached.
    - Influenza
      - 1 dose annually (ages 6- 59 months) given between September 1 and December 31 of each year.
      - Required for children enrolled in preschool or K-prep on or after 9/1/08.
3. Health Requirements
- All new students, including K-Prep & Kindergarten students are required to have a:
    - a) complete physical examination signed by physician
    - b) complete dental examination signed by dentist
4. Wellness - We, at Aquinas Academy, support and promote healthy living for all students.
- This includes: eating well, getting proper sleep, lots of exercise and fresh air and good personal hygiene, especially frequent hand washing.

- Please do not send your child to school ill! Please keep him/her home if there is fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye or unexplained rash. Children should be kept at home until fever free for 24 hours.
5. Testing - Should Aquinas Academy deem it necessary, testing will take place prior to acceptance.
  6. Catholic Applicants - A Baptismal Certificate and verification of the reception of any additional sacraments is required.
  7. Transfer Students
    - Completion of all required registration forms
    - Adherence to age, immunization requirements, health requirements, and testing (as stated above)
    - Transfer notification from most recently attended school
    - Report card and standardized testing results from most recent previous school - Adherence to discipline policies of previous school
    - Interview with parent/guardian and student
  8. Financial Obligations
    - A non-refundable registration fee per family is due at time of registration
    - Tuition/Fees from any previous school must be satisfied

## **II. Attendance**

### **A. General Statement**

- Prompt, regular attendance is absolutely essential to academic success. The parent/guardian is expected to foster these good habits in the student, both for the benefit of the student's current academic achievement and to encourage mature adult behavior in the future. Character formation and emotional security are greatly enhanced when children are present in school on a regular basis and when they arrive on time and remain for the entire school day.

### **B. School Hours**

- Full Day Session - School hours are 8:00 AM until 2:40 PM.
- Half Day Sessions - 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

### **C. Absence**

- The following procedures represent a mutual effort to account for the presence of students during school hours:
  - The school office is to be notified by telephone by 8:00 AM when your child will not be attending school.
  - Upon return, each child must present a note written to the homeroom teacher by the parent/guardian including the dates of and explaining the reason for absence.
  - Absence of four consecutive days requires a doctor's note.
- Should a child be reported absent and a call has not been received, the assistant principal or other employee of the school will make every reasonable effort to reach a parent/guardian by phone to verify the legitimacy of the absence.

D. Excessive Absence

- Excessive absence shows lack of commitment to the education process. This can result in poor academic performance and could contribute to the child's inability to master the academic material presented. Excessive absences may result in retention.

E. Tardiness

- Students are expected to arrive on time for school. Continual tardiness distracts from the student's ability to meet the challenges of the day in an orderly and proper fashion. It also causes interruptions for the teacher and class that are in progress.

F. Early Dismissal

- The Academy discourages parents/guardians from removing students from school before the 2:40 PM and 12:00 noon dismissal times. It is disruptive to the learning process and classroom organization. Where frequent early dismissals exist, the principal will confer with the parents/guardian in order to correct the abuse.
- A student who leaves school during the day due to illness, appointments, or any other reason, must be picked up in the main office by the parent/guardian or authorized person and signed out by that person. No student shall be sent home or leave school for any reason without the knowledge of the principal or assistant principal. A written note should be sent to the office and homeroom teacher from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for early release, at least 24 hours in advance. Early dismissal is not to the child's advantage and is discouraged by the school.

G. Calendar

- Please keep the yearly calendar and communication updates in a convenient location in your home. Noon dismissals are noted on the yearly calendar. Please check our website regularly.

H. Supervision

- The academy's responsibility for supervision of students begins at 7:45 AM and ends at 2:40 PM For children properly enrolled in the academy's After School Program, Aquinas Academy's responsibility for supervision begins at 2:40 p.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. For children properly enrolled in the Before Care Program, supervision begins at 7:15 AM and ends at 7:45 AM when the children go to the gym, etc. for regular supervision. Children not enrolled in the Before Care Program, may not be on the premises before 7:45 AM. Children not enrolled in the After School Program who are not picked up by 2:55 PM will be brought to the After School Program. The parent/guardian will be responsible for the applicable fees. For students participating in after school extra-curricular activities, prompt pick-up is necessary. Should students not be picked-up on time, they will be brought to the After School Program and parents/guardians will be responsible for the applicable fees. Students should not be on school grounds when supervision is not provided.

I. Absence from School and Participation in School Activities

- If a student is absent from school because of illness or disciplinary action, he/she will not be permitted to take part in extracurricular or athletic activities that afternoon or evening. If a student is absent from school for a reason other than illness or disciplinary action, Aquinas Academy reserves the right to make an individual judgment regarding same day extra-curricular and athletic participation.

J. Family Vacations

- Parents/guardians who wish to take their child(ren) out of school for vacation or family matters should discuss the child's progress with the principal and teacher. This policy is generally discouraged however, the primary obligation rests with the parent/guardian. In the event that this should occur, students will not be permitted to take textbooks with them. Work will have to be made up upon their return to school. No work will be given ahead of time. The responsibility for the make up of the work/tests rests with the student. It is also a matter of courtesy that the principal/assistant principal and teacher be notified in writing prior to the time of non-attendance.

K. Truancy

- A student who deliberately avoids coming to school, contrary to the wishes of his/her parent/guardian, is considered truant. Habitual truancy will be reported to the Attendance Officer of the child's district of residence. A student who is truant will be subject to discipline.

L. Emergency Closing, Cancellation of School, Delayed Openings

- An emergency closing can occur due to inclement weather, no heat, severe absenteeism on the part of the faculty and students due to flu, measles, etc. Notification will be given through our Honeywell Alert System. Remember to register for this each September.
- Should we be notified by local public school districts, which provide the academy with bus service, that the buses will arrive early due to inclement weather, we will make every effort to notify parents/guardians. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, the student will not be sent home on the bus.

**III. Home-School Communication**

A. Appointments with School Personnel

- Parents/guardians who wish to meet with the principal, assistant principal, a teacher, or any member of the school staff must contact the individual to arrange a mutually convenient meeting time. For the sake of good order in Aquinas Academy, parents/guardians may not approach staff members during the school day without arranging an appointment beforehand.
- Staff members who wish to communicate with the parents of a student may do so by phone, letter, email or at a mutually convenient appointment. Teachers will not schedule an appointment at times that may conflict with teaching or supervisory duties.

- Persons with concerns, should first attempt to address the concern with the teacher. Only after such attempts have proved unsatisfactory, should administrators be contacted.
  - When appointments are made, both the parent/guardian and the staff members should be aware of the purpose of the conference so that all concerned may be appropriately prepared.
- B. Regular Communication with Families
- Aquinas Academy will communicate weekly with all parents/guardians via the website. On occasion we may need to send home a hard-copy. Please check the website regularly, and particularly on Thursdays.
- C. Children Bringing Cash/Return of Notices to School
- Money/return notices that are sent to school should be placed in a sealed envelope and identified with the child's name, grade and section, the amount enclosed (where applicable) and its purpose.
- D. Home School Association
- The HSA of Aquinas Academy has been organized for the following reasons:
    - To function as a communication organ linking Aquinas Academy's administration and faculty with the parents/guardians of its students in order to promote the spiritual, academic and social well-being of these same students.
    - To underscore the dedication of Aquinas Academy by uniting the professional contributions of its administrators, faculty and parents/guardians.
    - To articulate the scholastic excellence of an Aquinas Academy education.
    - To engage in activities designed to promote the welfare of Aquinas Academy.
  - The HSA sponsors meetings throughout the year. Socials and fundraisers are also planned.
- E. Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents
- School Records
    - Parental Rights To School Records - Aquinas Academy abides by the provisions of applicable law with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary and upon request, the academy will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student's essential academic records.
  - Court Orders
    - If there is a court order specifying the rights and responsibilities of individual parents, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the academy with an official copy of the court order. The custodial parent is to supply the principal/assistant principal with the "custody section" of the divorce decree since it contains information which may be useful to the academy in fulfilling its obligations. Pick-up from School - Refer to the "Court Order" if on file with Aquinas Academy.

#### **IV. Academic Policies**

##### **A. Curriculum**

- The major subjects offered at Aquinas Academy include: Religion, Language Arts, Reading, Phonics (K-Prep-3), Spelling, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Special subjects include: Art, Music, Physical Education, and World Languages.
- Remediation Services are provided through the Essex Regional Educational Services Commission.
- The Band Program (Genesis, Inc.) is offered at an additional expense which is not included in tuition.
- It is expected that students successfully complete the designated courses for promotion.

##### **B. Religious Education and Religious Services**

- Since the Catholic School provides the atmosphere for living the faith in its local environment, formal religious studies classes are an integral part of the curriculum. All students are required to take religion class. The school day and lunch periods begin and end with prayer and it is expected that all students be reverent during prayer time.
- Provisions are made for monthly school liturgies, liturgical celebrations, and other seasonal activities.
- The core of our religious values comes in the daily teaching of the Word of God designed to guide each child in a meaningful exchange in the day-to-day living of the Christian life.
- The non-Catholic student is welcome at Aquinas Academy. The non-Catholic student is expected to understand and agree that the school exists to educate in the framework of Catholic values. Non-Catholic students must participate in the religion classes and liturgical services scheduled during the school year.

##### **C. Sacramental Program**

- The religious education child(ren) receive at Aquinas Academy provides a thorough overview of our faith, as a supplement to the model of faith and worship parents/guardians are providing at home. This model of family faith is coupled with the participation in the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. The immediate preparation for these sacraments belongs to family and parish. It is the family who first began and continues to instill faith in the child, and it is the parish which is the primary welcoming, initiating assembly. As such, the religious education required immediately before Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation is provided through our parish and school.

##### **D. Homework**

- Homework assignments are given to supplement and reinforce classroom teaching and learning. A variety of activities will be assigned that are an outgrowth of the student's classwork. Homework assignments will be appropriate to the age, ability and the need of the student.



- Since students concentrate, work and learn at different rates and assignments vary in difficulty, the following homework time allotments at the various grade levels are offered as suggested guides:

K-Prep/Kindergarten	As needed
Grade 1	Approximately 30 minutes
Grades 2-3	Approximately 45 minutes
Grades 4-5	Approximately 1 -1 1/2 hours
Grades 6-8	Approximately 2 hours

- Students may vary in their ability to complete the homework in the suggested time frame.
- Students are reminded that homework is their responsibility. Study and reading homework assignments are as essential as written assignments in fulfilling homework obligations. Additionally, class notes should be reviewed daily.
- During the week and on weekends, time should be set aside for long-term assignments: e.g., book reports, research papers, projects. Parents/guardians are asked to support the teacher regarding various rules and directions concerning assignments. Parents/guardians are expected to supervise and check their children's homework so as to make certain that it is complete, neat and acceptable.
- Suggested Tips:
  - Set a definite time and quiet place for home study.
  - Homework is the child's responsibility and must be completed on time; neatly and accurately.
  - Encourage good work and show enthusiasm for accomplishments.
  - Check on long-term assignments such as projects, book reports, online assignments, etc.

#### E. Homework/Absence

If a child is absent, the homework procedure is as follows:

- If it is a one day absence, get the assignments the day the child arrives back to school. Grades 4-8 may check Google Classroom for posted assignments.
- If a child is to be absent more than one day, call or send a note to the school office requesting homework by 8:30 a.m.; specify approximate number of days the child is expected to be absent and pick up the assignments and books in the school office at the end of the school day your request was made or the next morning.
- All make-up homework assignments are to be completed and returned to the teachers as requested. Projects and other long range assignments must be returned on time. Tests are to be made up at the discretion of the teacher.

#### F. Interim Progress Reports, Report Cards

- Interim Progress Reports will be mailed home halfway through each trimester for K-Prep-3. Grades 4-8 can be found on Power School. These notices alert parents/guardians to areas in which the child needs additional assistance. These reports are to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher the next day.

- Report Cards are distributed three times a year. Parents/guardians are asked to review and discuss the report card with their child. The report card envelope is to be signed and returned to school.
- Daily Progress Reports and All About Homework Reports are important means of communication between school and home. They are given when necessary to keep parents/guardians current on any area of concerns or missing and/or incomplete assignments.
- We encourage parents/guardians to contact us whenever there is a question, a need for explanation or a problem area they would like to discuss. Often such contact can prove to be most helpful in understanding, calling attention to or working toward a satisfactory conclusion to various concerns. Never can a situation be worked out if one is unaware of problem areas or if one is aware of only one side of a situation.

#### G. Report Card Grading

- Archdiocese of Newark Schools Office has changed our school to Trimesters (3 trimesters)
  - End of first trimester is November 21st
  - End of second trimester is March 8th
  - End of third trimester is June.
- The grades for K-Prep and Kindergarten are based on a developmental scale for our youngest learners.
- The grades for 1-3 are as follows:
 

E - Exceeds	(High Understanding)
S - Secure	(Understanding Demonstrated)
D - Developing	(Growth Demonstrated)
B - Beginning	(Beginning Stages)
N - Not Yet Performing	(Assistance Required)
- The grades for 4-8 are as follows:
 

A+ (97-100)	B (83-87)	D (70-72)
A (92-96)	C+ (78-82)	U (Below 70 - Failure)
B+ (88-91)	C (73-77)	
- Personal Development Codes:
  - O - Outstanding
  - S - Satisfactory
  - I - Improvement Needed
  - U - Unsatisfactory
- 6, 7, 8th grades will be given final exams...those exams will be based on third trimester material.

#### H. Records and Transcripts

- Viewing records: A parent/guardian has the right to view his/her student's:
  - Academic record
  - Academic standardized test results
  - Health records
  - Emergency card (emergency phone numbers, etc.). These records will be made available upon request by appointment.
- Government records: Records attached to publicly funded services provided through the local Board of Education such as Child Study Team Reviews, Comp Ed, Speech, ESL, etc. are the property of the Board. A parent/guardian who wishes to examine these records or to procure additional copies for his/her own use must contact the Essex Regional Educational Services Commission.
- Transcripts: Transcripts of academic and health records will not be given directly to the parent/guardian in the event of a transfer. A request for transfer must be submitted in written form by a parent/guardian. Transcripts will be sent directly from school to school when Aquinas Academy receives an official written request from the receiving school. If the parent/guardian does not submit a request for transfer that includes an authorization to send a transcript, the receiving school must secure permission from the parent/guardian to request the transcripts from the "sending" school.

#### I. Retention/Withdrawal

- Failure to meet minimum academic requirements may result in retention in the grade. Academic requirements include, but are not limited to, satisfactory grades on tests, class work, homework and projects. Proper deportment, effort, attitude as well as social and emotional development are also considered.
- Should the administration deem that the academy cannot provide an academic program suitable for the child's individual needs (whether or not the student has an I.S.P.), that child may be asked to be withdrawn from the academy.
- Students who exhibit inadequate academic performance and/or non-compliance with school policies may be asked to be withdrawn. When there is a possibility of non-promotion or withdrawal, the administration will arrange a conference with the parent/guardian.

#### V. Field Trips and School Activities

- A. Aquinas Academy sponsors and conducts field trips for the educational enrichment of our students. Participating in field trips is a privilege. No student may participate in a field trip unless a signed parent/guardian permission slip for the specific event is submitted to Aquinas Academy. The permission form is provided by the academy and the school permission form only will be accepted. Students who fail to submit this form will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Notes and phone calls will not be accepted. Faxes of the original permission form will be accepted. Parents/guardians who do not wish their child to participate in a field trip, are asked to indicate that on the form. (See Appendix A)

- B. School activities such as field day, assemblies, dances, socials, etc. are offered to students to enhance the curriculum, as well as the students social and emotional development.
- C. Field trips and school activities are privileges afforded to students. No student has an absolute right to either. Participation is based on satisfactory academic and appropriate behavioral standards.

## VI. General Discipline Policy

- A. A spirit of Christ-like charity, respect for authority and mutual cooperation are essential elements of the learning environment at Aquinas Academy. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward one another and toward all members of the staff. They must take seriously their obligation to develop lifetime habits of self-control and concern for the well being of others. Home and school will work together to help students to learn and live the qualities of responsible behavior and the elements of good citizenship.
- B. A student who chooses to disrupt the good order of the school or to violate a policy or regulation will have to accept the consequences of those irresponsible choices. **Appropriate discipline is within the discretion of the principal/assistant principal.** Accountability for uncooperative, disruptive or unsafe behavior may take any of the following forms: misconduct referral or warnings; corrective assignments; denial of privileges; detention; in-school suspension; out-of-school suspension; or expulsion.
- C. Actions which violate the law, threaten or cause harm to other students or staff members, disrupt or impede the welfare and progress of the school community, or bring discredit to the school will not be tolerated. Such actions or other severe violations of school rules may result in immediate expulsion. If a student persists in violating basic obligations of courtesy, consideration, respect, cooperation or safety, a principal/parent/student conference will be scheduled. All subsequent discipline, counseling, consultation and corrective action plans will be viewed as positive home-school efforts to help the student improve behavior. If these cooperative efforts of parents/guardians and school staff prove ineffective, the student will be subject to expulsion or may be denied re-admittance to the school.
- D. Harassment is any sort of continuing behavior that is annoying, including inappropriate Internet communication. It can be words, gestures and actions, which tend to annoy, alarm, and abuse (verbally) another person. A person commits a petty misdemeanor if, with purpose to harass another, he or she: (1) makes a telephone call without purpose of legitimate communication or (2) insults, taunts or challenges another in a manner likely to promote a disorderly response; or (3) makes repeated communications anonymously or at extremely inconvenient hours, or in offensive, coarse language; or (4) subjects another to an offensive touching; or (5) engages in any other course of alarming conduct serving no legitimate purpose of the actor.
- E. Harassment occurs then, when one person makes repeated verbal written or physical contact with another person who does not want these contacts. Bullying is a particular type of harassment that generally involves some force, whether overt or subtle. Exclusion is widely considered to be a form of bullying, even though there may be no apparent contact. By ignoring or excluding an individual from participation in some group activity, the bully demonstrates his or her force of power.

- F. At Aquinas Academy, we attempt:
- To assist children in developing respect for themselves and others
  - To instill in our students a sense of Christian behavior and respect for authority
  - To develop a sense of awareness and sensitivity toward others
  - To train students to accept responsibilities in their lives
  - To assist students in realizing that regulations are a necessary part of life
- G. The following will not be tolerated:
- The issue of and/or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, firearms or any item considered harmful to oneself or others
  - Smoking on school premises
  - Fighting or any behavior which infringes on the safety, protection and rights of another
  - Inappropriate language (spoken or written); profanity and obscenity
  - Taunting/bullying/plagiarizing
  - Harassment/Sexual harassment
  - Defacing and damaging school property and the property of others
  - Disruptive and /or disrespectful behavior
  - Stealing, cheating and forgery
  - Leaving school grounds or classroom without permission during school hours
  - Not being where one should be at a given time during school hours
  - Disrespect for the rights and property of others including their right to learn
  - Truancy
  - Any other behavior deemed inappropriate for school age children
- H. Violations may result in serious disciplinary action by the principal, assistant principal and/or pastor; e.g. suspension or expulsion.
- I. The terms of suspension will be determined by the severity of the incident at the discretion of the principal, assistant principal, and/or pastor.
- J. Detentions may be recommended if deemed necessary at various grade levels. Examples of minor infractions include but are not limited to:
- uniform violations
  - failure to return correspondence requiring parent/guardian signature
  - lateness to class
  - no homework/incomplete assignments
  - disrespect for the property and rights of others including their right to learn
  - being unprepared for class
  - excessive talking
- K. If a student is to serve a detention before school or after school, the parent/guardian will receive a detention form to sign and return to school. Lunchtime detentions will be given on an “as needed basis” by the teachers or principal/assistant principal.
- L. Extra-curricular activities are a privilege and should a student not comply with the anticipated academic behavioral and social standards, the administration reserves the right to suspend a student from these activities.

## VII. Discipline Policy

- A. The essence of Christian Discipline is self-discipline. Students must realize that the observance of rules brings happiness to themselves and to others. Parents and students should be aware that authority is necessary to promote spiritual and mental growth and to develop a sense of responsibility.
- B. ALL school rules and regulations aim to safeguard the liberties of students rather than curb them.
- C. Standards of Behavior - in fostering the values of respect, responsibility, safety, and proper personal appearance, the school expects students to abide by the standards of behavior which promote such values. The following is a list of possible inappropriate behaviors. It is not exhaustive. Appropriate discipline is always within the judgment and discretion of the Principal.
- D. The principal deems the following behaviors inappropriate. This policy shall apply to student behavior while at school and extra-curricular programs, on school grounds, during school hours while off school grounds, at school-related functions on or off campus, and in transit to or from school or any school related function.
- E. Conduct referrals, detention slips or an action at the principal's discretion will be issued for any infractions of school rules. Disruptive behavior shall include, but is not limited to:
  - Continued and willful disobedience
  - Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person in authority
  - Lying, cheating, and plagiarism
  - Disregard of school rules and policies (including missing assignments/projects)
  - Trespassing or unauthorized presence in areas restricted from student use
  - Bullying, fighting or physical assault upon another pupil, teacher or any school employee, or inciting others to engage in such physical assault
  - Hazing or harassment of a student in a sexual, verbal or physical manner
  - Use of profanity, abusive language or threatening and provocative language
  - Unsolicited or unwanted touching
  - Intimate contact or indecent exposure
  - Throwing of food, paper, pens or other objects
  - Chewing gum or candy on school property
  - Taking or attempting to take school or personal property from classrooms, school offices, or any other areas of the school's facilities; or personal property from another student whether by force or fear
  - Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, substantial damage to school property or endangering another student or school personnel
  - Tampering with, damaging, defacing or destroying school or personal property
  - False fire alarm or emergency call
  - Taking part in any unauthorized occupancy of the school and refusing to leave promptly when directed to do so by a person in authority
  - Truancy and cutting class; leaving school property without permission
  - Possession or use of unauthorized electronic devices including tablets, I-pods, cell phones, or computer software
  - Possession or use of knives, razorblades or any other unsafe or illegal objects
  - Participating in activities relating to the sale, purchase or distribution of gambling paraphernalia or lottery related materials

- Possession, use, sale or distribution of any tobacco product, controlled dangerous substance, alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia, explosives, firecrackers, smoke bombs or similar materials
- Arson or attempted arson
- Forgery of signature and/or tampering with documents of parents, guardians, teachers or other students
- Failure to return papers with required parental signature
- Inappropriate usage of software, hardware or computer networks
- Disregard of the dress code - Wearing an incomplete, inappropriate or untidy uniform
- Wearing make-up, such as, but not limited to eye liner, shadow, blush, gloss, nail polish (see dress code)
- Wearing decorative jewelry (girls may wear a single stud earring in each ear).
- Wearing inappropriate, exotic, shaved or decorative hair styles or styles that violate the school code
- Having tattoos or body piercing other than pierced ear lobes (girls)

### **VIII. Bullying Policy**

- A. NOTHING IN THIS POLICY SHALL BE INTERPRETED TO PROHIBIT OR ABRIDGE IN ANY WAY ANY STATEMENTS OR EXPRESSIONS OF OUR CATHOLIC FAITH OR THE EXERCISE OF OUR BELIEFS AS CATHOLICS OR INTERFERE IN ANY WAY WITH THE TENETS OF OUR CATHOLIC RELIGION.
- B. Flowing from the Christian vision expressed at Aquinas Academy, we are called to establish relationships that are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values, we reject ideas, beliefs, and behaviors that marginalize or victimize people. We stand up for the right as we declare a safe school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers will be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.
- C. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property or at any school-sponsored function or disrupts the feeling of safety at school.
- D. Harassment is any sort of continuing behavior that is annoying, including inappropriate Internet communication. It can be words, gestures and actions, which tend to annoy, alarm, and abuse another person. A person commits a petty misdemeanor if, with purpose to harass another, he or she:
1. makes a telephone call without purpose of legitimate communication; or
  2. insults, taunts or challenges another in a manner likely to promote a disorderly response; or

3. makes repeated communications anonymously or at extremely inconvenient hours, or in offensive coarse language; or
  4. subjects another to an offensive touching; or
  5. engages in any other course of alarming conduct serving no legitimate purpose of the actor.
- E. Harassment occurs then, when one person makes repeated verbal or written or physical contact with another person who does not want these contacts. Bullying is a particular type of harassment that generally involves some force, whether overt or subtle. Exclusion is widely considered to be a form of bullying, even though there may be no apparent contact. By continually ignoring or excluding an individual from participation in some group activity, the bully demonstrates his or her force of power.
- F. All students, staff, and volunteers are entitled to respect and personal safety. Verbal abuse, name calling, or cyber harassment is unacceptable. In addition, physical harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with the Archdiocesan Policy. If any student experiences bullying, harassment, or feels threatened in any way, he/she is to report this to the Principal immediately.
- G. At Aquinas Academy bullying is viewed as a breach of the school behavior code. Any reports of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken.
- H. The response to bullying will provide:
- Guidance and other support to the victim
  - Interviews conducted with sensitivity and due regard to the rights of all students concerned
  - Notification to parents/guardians of both parties for consultation according to the severity of the offense.

Factors that determine consequences:

- Age, developmental and maturity levels of the involved students
- Surrounding circumstances
- Nature and severity of the behaviors
- Incidences of past or continuing patterns of behavior

Implementation of consequences:

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Deprivation of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion



- I. Incidents of bullying behaviors should be reported to the teacher in charge. A teacher will take a calm, impartial, problem-solving approach when reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. The teacher and/or principal will interview all parties involved and investigate to get accurate details before disciplinary action is taken.

## **IX. Use, Possession and Distribution of Controlled Dangerous Substances**

### **A. Definitions**

- Controlled Dangerous Substances are defined in sections I and V of the New Jersey Criminal Code. They include but are not limited to: marijuana, heroin, and anabolic steroids. The term controlled dangerous substance also includes alcohol.

### **B. Under the Influence**

- A student is judged to be under the influence whenever she/he exhibits physical or physiological symptoms (including but not limited to unsteady walk, dilated pupils, slurred speech, erratic or uncharacteristic emotional reactions) which are commonly associated with the use of controlled dangerous substances. Possession is defined as knowingly or purposely obtaining or possessing, actively or \*constructively, a controlled dangerous substance or drug paraphernalia:

- on or off school property;
- on the person;
- in an accessory (including but not limited to purse, book bag, gym bag or knapsack);
- in a locker or desk; and
- in a privately or school-owned vehicle.

\* Constructive possession refers to a student who intends or has the capacity to exercise control over the drug paraphernalia even if she/he does not have physical possession of the item. For example, who hides drugs on school property or asks a classmate to hold drugs for him/her, constructively possesses the drugs.

### **C. Distribution is defined as sharing, selling or dispensing a controlled dangerous substance**

- on or off school property;
- with or without receiving payment; and
- to individuals enrolled or not enrolled in the school.

### **D. Possession with Intent to Distribute applies regardless of whether or not a student intended**

- to receive payment
- to distribute the controlled dangerous substance to an individual enrolled or not enrolled in the school; and
- to distribute the controlled dangerous substance on or off school property.

### **E. Policy**

- A student shall be considered in violation of school policy if he/she is observed:
  - To be under the influence
  - In possession
  - Engaged in distribution
  - Have possession of a controlled dangerous substance with intent to distribute

- Such a student shall be subject to the following provisions and to the general discipline policy stated in this handbook.
  - When a student is identified as being “under the influence” or “in possession” of a controlled dangerous substance, the principal/assistant principal may refer the matter to local law enforcement officials.
  - When a student is identified as “distributing” or “in possession with intent to distribute” a controlled dangerous substance, the principal/assistant principal must refer the matter to local law enforcement officials.
- A student suspected of violating the policy governing controlled dangerous substances will immediately be placed under suspension for an indefinite period. The student and parents/guardians shall be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegation as quickly as possible.
- If the principal/assistant principal determines that there
  - Was no violation of policy, the student will be permitted to return to school.
  - Was a violation of policy, the principal/assistant principal may discipline the student according to the general discipline policy stated in this Handbook up to and including expulsion.
- The principal/assistant principal may require the student to participate in an appropriate treatment or counseling program as a condition of the student’s eventual return to the school.
- When violation of this policy involves “distribution” or “possession with intent to distribute,” the discipline imposed will normally be expulsion.

#### **X. Technology Advisory for Home Computer Usage**

A. With the many advances in computer technology, there exists a number of serious drawbacks. Certainly, the internet utilized properly is a wonderful educational tool. Children can easily sit down and draw upon information in a matter of minutes that it would have taken a trip to the library and an hour of research to obtain. However, it is important that parents/guardians be vigilant.

- Parents are required to work in partnership with Aquinas Academy to:
  - Monitor your children’s activities on the computer. This includes violent computer software programs and all social networks.
  - Keep your computer in a common area of your home; not an isolated bedroom.
  - Talk to your children about using the internet wisely.
  - Tell them not to give out personal information on the internet or in chat rooms. This includes their real name, address, phone number or a description of their activities (e.g. sports, etc.)
  - Tell your children never to meet anyone they contact on the internet.
  - Parents/Students - DO NOT publish pictures or videos of any other children on the internet.

- B. You may wish to investigate and purchase browser-filtering software to keep your children out of inappropriate websites. None of the products are 100% guaranteed, but will provide some protection. All will need to be upgraded regularly.
- C. For older children, please emphasize the importance of using e-mail/texting properly. Have them ask themselves the following questions:
  - Who will read the e-mail/texting?
  - Am I writing anything negative about someone?
  - Would I say to a person's face the same thing I am putting into a written message?
  - Would I be embarrassed if my mother, father, or teachers read the message I am sending?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, the e-mail/text should not be sent. It is also important for children not to forward an e-mail/text sent to them by another person without the other person's permission.
- D. As adults, we believe it is our responsibility to monitor our children's computer usage. We cannot afford to be lax. Their innocence is too great a loss!

**XI. Acceptable Use of Computers Policy** (found in Policies and Procedures in the Parent Portal on the website)

- A. Please read the "Acceptable Use of Computers Policy," discussed it with your child/children and understand that your child will be bound by this policy. Our family understands that if our child(ren) does/do not adhere to this policy, he/she will lose or be restricted in his/her computer privileges and that her/she may be subject to disciplinary action. All students will:
  - Use Aquinas Academy technology resources for educational purposes only (under the supervision of an adult).
  - Treat with respect and exercise care in the use of all school computer hardware, software and communications equipment.
  - Use responsibly any school supplies (e.g. paper, electronic media, printer ink, etc.)
  - Make no attempt in any way to alter, damage, install, modify, upgrade, repair, or remove any school software or hardware, included but not limited to interface cards, monitors, printers, scanners, modems, wiring, mouse or keyboards, etc.
  - Report any message received through the academy technology resources that make them nervous or uncomfortable to the adult in charge and/or the school administration.
- B. The following are not permitted:
  - To send or display offensive messages or pictures
  - To use obscene language
  - To insult/harass or threaten others
  - To trespass into another person's folders, work or files
  - To violate any copyright laws
- C. School administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to insure that users are using the systems responsibly.

## **XII. Medication**

### **A. Policy on Administration of Medication:**

Aquinas Academy strongly discourages the administration of either prescription or non-prescription medication in school or on field trips. However, if it is absolutely essential that a student receive medication while under school supervision, the following procedures apply.

- A parent/guardian must come to school and personally administer the medication (the administration must be aware of this in advance).
- If this arrangement is not possible, (in extraordinary cases) the school nurse/principal/assistant principal (or other designee) will administer the medication under the following conditions:
  - The medication must be given to the school nurse/principal/assistant principal (or other designee) by the parent/guardian.
  - The medication must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container
  - The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an "Authorization to Administer Medication in School" form. This form is available from the school. (See Appendix B)

Students will be permitted to self-administer medication only for life-threatening illnesses or conditions. The parent/guardian must schedule a conference with the school nurse to discuss, in detail, the need for the medication. The parent/guardian and the student's physician must complete and sign an "Authorization for Self-Administration of Medication in School" form. This form is available from the school. (See Appendix C)

### **B. Policy on Administration of Epinephrine:**

As permitted by New Jersey law, the school shall follow the orders of a physician or advanced practice nurse for emergency administration of epinephrine via epi-pen for anaphylactic shock.

- Parents/Guardians Authorization and Agreements Regarding Liability
  - Written authorization for administration of the epi-pen must be received from the parent/guardian of the student. The parent/guardian of the student shall be notified that upon administration of the epi-pen in accordance with procedure below as provided by law. The school and its employees or agents shall have no liability for any injury arising from administration of the epi-pen of the student. The parents/guardians of the student shall indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees or agents for such injury, as provided by law. (See Appendix D)
- Administration of the epi-pen by the School
  - The school nurse shall have primary responsibility for administration of the epi-pen. In the absence of the school nurse, another school employee - designated and trained in administration of the epi-pen by the school nurse pursuant to New Jersey law - may administer the epi-pen.

C. Allergies

With the ever-increasing numbers of children who are severely allergic to all nuts, parents/guardians are asked to pack alternate food for lunch and/or snack.

Nut allergies are usually severe and can be fatal. As part of the Aquinas Academy family, we are requesting everyone's cooperation to help make Aquinas Academy an environment that is nut-free, safe, and healthy for all of our children.

**XIII. Health and Safety**

A. Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

- New Jersey State law requires that any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect, must make a report to the New Jersey Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P).

B. Asbestos Management Plan

- The Academy's Asbestos Management Plan is on file in the school office, as required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This document is available for examination upon request.

C. Crisis Management Plan

- The Academy's Crisis Management Plan is on file in the school office, as required by the Archdiocese of Newark. This document is available for examination upon request.

D. Fire Drills/Security Drills

- Fire Drills and Security Drills are held on a regular basis. Teachers review all drill procedures and practice these procedures with each class.

E. Health Services

- Whenever the school nurse is present, she is responsible for first aid. If the nurse is not present, an injured or sick child is sent to the office. When a child becomes ill or is seriously injured at school, the parent/guardian will be called and notified, possibly to pick up the child. No child may be sent home by himself/herself. The parent/guardian must come into the school office and sign the child out.
- Among the services provided by the nurse are eye, hearing and Scoliosis screening as well as provisions for Dental Screening and Medical Examinations (when necessary).
- Emergency telephone numbers are to be kept current. Please notify the school immediately of any change of telephone numbers; home, business or cell.

F. Parking Lot

- Please drive slowly in the parking lot. Do not double park or leave your car engine running while waiting for your child(ren). Do not block rectory garages or driveways. A parking lot procedure acknowledgement form is required annually and is posted on the school website, as well as Family ID.

#### G. Access Procedures

- During the school day, immediately before and after school, all visitors to the school must report to the school office in McCann Hall to receive a "Visitor's Pass".
- Parents/guardians are not to go to classrooms at any time before, during or after school. Teachers must supervise students and are not to be distracted by parents/guardians.

#### H. Please note the following:

- Parents are requested not to bring any forgotten articles to school. It is the student's responsibility to remember their belongings.
- Lunch is not to be dropped off at school. Please be sure your child has lunch when they leave the house in the morning.
- Once the students leave the building at dismissal, no one will be allowed to re-enter the building to get anything (books, clothing, book-bags, etc.) that he/she has forgotten. This is a major point of student responsibility as well as safety and you are asked not to bring your child back to school.

#### I. Facilities Use

- Use of the academy/parish buildings and grounds must be requested through the administration for school sponsored activities. Following approval, the requested space must be signed out at the rectory. The "Use of Building" forms must be submitted to the school office for all school sponsored activities. For non-school sponsored activities and/or personal requests for buildings/grounds usage, the parish contract must be observed and proper supervision is required. The parish policies will be observed in the areas of rental fees and insurance riders as well as the parish sign-out policy.

### **XIV. Dress Code and Uniforms**

A. As part of the value education of the Catholic school and because of its distinctive nature, attention should be given to proper dress and attire. Student attire requires that students be in full uniforms at all times. The purpose of our uniform code is to minimize the emphasis of fashion trends and unnecessary competition during the school day. While we expect our students to dress with dignity and pride, we do not want this to become a focal point of their day at Aquinas Academy.

#### B. Full Dress Uniform (Winter Uniform)

- Full uniform is defined to mean as follows:
  - Girls:
    - School Jumper (K-Prep-5) or
    - School skirt & weskit (6-8) or uniform slacks
    - White uniform blouse (K-Prep-8) (short or long sleeved) or Turtleneck w/ logo
    - V-Neck Sweater w/ logo
    - Uniform twill pants
    - White/Blue knee socks or Navy tights
    - White/Navy cardigan sweater with AQA emblem

- Boys (K-Prep-Grade 8):
  - Navy uniform dress slacks - Dark socks
  - Blue uniform shirts (short or long sleeved) or Turtleneck w/ logo
  - V-Neck Sweater w/ logo
  - School vest/sweater with AQA emblem
  - Solid navy blue tie
- Shoes: (K-Prep-Grade 8) Dark brown or black penny loafer or dark brown or black tie shoe. No sandals, high heels, platform shoes, work boots, sneaker-like or ankle high shoes are to be worn. Boots are not to be worn in class on inclement weather days. No sneakers are to be worn with the Winter Uniform.

#### C. Gym Uniform

- Students must participate in physical education classes as scheduled unless a written excuse is provided by a physician and submitted to the principal/assistant principal.
  - The gym uniform is as follows:
    - All grades K-Prep-8: Navy gym shorts with screened Aquinas Academy, yellow shirt screened with Aquinas Academy, white sneakers, and white socks. Each child is to have a Navy Blue sweatsuit screened with Aquinas Academy. Put your child's name with indelible marker on the labels of both shirts and pants. Students wear gym uniforms on gym days as their school attire for the day.

#### D. Warm Weather Uniforms

- The warm weather uniform consists of a white knit golf shirt embroidered with Aquinas Academy, navy blue walking shorts, white ankle socks and low top white walking sneakers or docker style shoes.

#### E. General - Please note:

- No variations on the uniform code are permitted.
- It is expected that all uniforms be washed and pressed on a regular basis.
- Shoes should be cleaned and polished.
- Girls: No dangle earrings, nail polish or make-up.
- Boys: No earrings.
- All students: Hair: neat, clean, groomed; no eccentric trendy styles, dyed hair; no body piercing, no tattoos.

#### F. School Code Regarding Hairstyles:

Hair grooming should be appropriate and conducive to the atmosphere of a Catholic school. Hair, for both boys and girls, is to be neatly groomed and conservative. Hair for boys must not extend beyond the shirt collar and MUST be above the eyebrows. Hairstyle should not impede vision. No extreme hairstyles or bleaching/dying are allowed. The color must be natural and remained unchanged for the duration of the school year. Non-traditional fads in hair styles (boys and girls) are not acceptable. Wearing inappropriate, exotic, shaved or decorative hairstyles violate the school code.

**XV. Financial Policy**

- A. The St. Philomena Parish Finance Committee in conjunction with the Pastor, establishes the regulations under which the tuition and fees be paid. The Principal is charged with the duty of impartially enforcing these regulations. A student’s class registration is provisional until such financial obligations have been satisfied.
- B. The Finance Committee and Pastor reserve the right to change the regulations of the school including those concerning tuition, fees, parish contributions and the manner of payment. Such changes are effective for all students from the date when they are first promulgated.

C. Tuition Rates:

Parishioner:	One child	<i>These amounts are published during January/ February</i>
	Two children	
	Three (or more) children	
Non-parishioner:	One child	
	Two children	
	Three children	
	Four children	
HSA Fees:	Child Dues	\$25.00
Jr. High only:	Novel Fee	\$30-\$60

D. Tuition Policy:

- A non-refundable \$340.00 registration fee per family is required. The tuition payment schedule for the school year will be a ten month plan paid directly to the school. The first payment is due in July and the last payment is due in April.
- Families enjoying the parishioner discount are expected to be registered at St. Philomena Parish, be an active member of the worshipping community and parish sponsored programs/activities and contribute a minimum of \$10.00 per week to the support of the parish through the use of the Parish Envelope System (July 1 through June 30 of each academic year). Should the parish obligation not be met, families will forfeit their right to parishioner tuition status and be removed from parishioner tuition status.
- A returned check fee will be imposed for checks which do not clear the bank. Future payments will be required as a money order or certified bank check.
- The Administration has the right to suspend services if tuition is not paid in a timely fashion.
- Services, class trips, extra-curricular activities, etc. may also be terminated for any student whose tuition is in arrears in excess of 60 days.



- Should an emergency arise and interfere with the ability to make tuition payments as scheduled, the principal and pastor must be notified in order that an alternate payment plan be made.
- Should a child be withdrawn or expelled from school, tuition will be reimbursed on a pro-rated schedule as to the date on which he/she leaves during the academic year.
- All families are expected to participate in the major fund-raisers of the HSA.

## **XVI. Continuance at Aquinas Academy**

A. Aquinas Academy maintains high standards of academic and personal excellence.

- Continuance at Aquinas Academy requires:
  - The fulfillment of school requirements in the field of academic subjects
  - The fulfillment of school requirements in disciplinary areas
  - A wholesomeness of attitude and cooperation in all areas
  - Compliance with New Jersey health regulations
  - Fulfillment of all financial obligations: tuition, church donations, Before School Care, After School Care, tuition late fees, class dues, etc.
  - Re-registration due at the designated time
- It is expected that parents/guardians support, uphold and cooperate with the established policies and procedures of the academy. An atmosphere of respect, concern and charity should exist between home and school. Conduct of a parent/guardian that interferes with the administration and/or learning environment of the academy will result in the dismissal of the child/children from the academy. This includes and is not limited to gossip about, harassment of and/or threats to the administration and/or teachers and staff in any manner or form. The education of a student is a partnership between the parents/guardians and the school. Just as the parent/guardian 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.

## **XVII. Miscellaneous**

A. Before School Care and After School Care Programs

- The academy provides the services of Before School Care and After School Care services. Registration forms are sent via Family ID. All policies for these programs must be followed.
- The Before Care Programs runs from 7:15 - 7:45 AM At 7:45 a.m. students are brought to the gym for the usual supervision. The After School Program runs until 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday on full day sessions. The After School Program for K-Prep and Kindergarten students is offered through the Preschool Department. Costs for these programs are determined annually and are not included in the tuition.

B. Emergency Form and Required Forms on Family ID

- Emergency contact information must be filled out online through Family ID. All information should be completed and accurately filled in by the parents. If a child becomes ill or is hurt during the school day, parents will be notified. In case of illness or serious injury, the school cannot assume responsibility for the child without permission from the parents/guardians. Every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians, so please make sure we have the correct telephone numbers; home, work, and cell. Should your child not have allergies, please write in the word “none” in that section of the form.
- Be certain to fill out all required forms via Family ID prior to the start of school.

C. Textbook Care

- All textbooks should be covered. Contact paper, scotch tape, etc. must not adhere to hard covered texts. A book-bag is required for all students.
- Should textbooks or workbooks be lost, a new book must be purchased.
- Fines or replacement costs shall be imposed for books not kept in proper condition.

D. Telephone Calls

- The school telephone may not be used by students except for emergency (Permission will be given by the office staff). Phone calls may not be made for forgotten homework, sneakers, lunches, etc. or to remind parent of pick-up time. Pick-up time for after school activities should be pre-established. No student is to use the telephone in the Parish Center, teachers' room or St. Joseph Hall.
- Beepers and cell phones or any electronic devices should not be brought to school. However, if circumstances deem it necessary to have a cell phone in school, it should be given to the homeroom teacher upon arrival in the morning and retrieved at the end of the day. Children should not be getting personal phone calls from anyone during the school day.
- Please keep the yearly calendar in a convenient location in order that unnecessary calls not be made to school. Always check the website for needed information!

E. Bus Transportation

- Bus service or reimbursement is provided by some resident Boards of Education. Bus schedules are sent directly from the local Board of Education to the families concerned. Each bus is under the supervision of the driver.
- In the best interest of safety and courtesy, parents/guardians are asked to instruct their children in good habits of bus behavior.
- Students are to observe the following regulations:
  - All students must wear seatbelts and face forward in their seats at all times.
  - No students are allowed out of their seats unless disembarking/embarking.
  - Keep the bus clean - There should be no eating or drinking on the bus.
  - Observe all rules and regulations as stipulated by the bus driver

- Students are not to ride on a bus other than the bus assigned to them. If a child is not a bus rider, permission may not be given to him/her to ride any bus. Children who wish to visit another child must have other arrangements made by their parents/guardians in advance. Absolutely no exceptions!

#### F. Graduation

- Graduation - Grade 8
  - Recognition of the achievement of graduates is most appropriately carried out through the granting of the official Archdiocesan diploma. This takes place in a simple ceremony, religious in nature.
    - Graduation requirements include:
      - Satisfactory completion of all academic requirements
      - Adherence to discipline policies
      - Financial obligations be satisfied prior to Graduation
- Graduation – Kindergarten/K-Prep
  - Participation in kindergarten graduation requires:
    - Satisfactory completion of all academic requirements
    - Adherence to discipline policies
    - Financial obligations must be satisfied prior to Graduation

#### G. Activities and Sports

- Student life at Aquinas Academy is enriched through participation in after school activities and sports programs. Students are encouraged to participate in these activities to develop their skills, to expand their interests, to form additional relationships, to acquire a sense of teamwork, and to expand their sense of service. It is expected that students adhere to the rules/regulations set forth by the moderators of the various activities.
- The moderators and/or coaches serve at the pleasure of the school administration. They are expected to uphold the academic and disciplinary policies of the academy as well as specific regulations pertinent to the specific activities set forth by the administration. We anticipate that parents/guardians will behave in a dignified, respectful manner at all times.

#### H. Use of Student Information/Pictures

- The Academy reserves the right to use student pictures in publications, newspapers, websites, etc. Any parent/guardian who does not wish his/her child(ren)'s picture(s) used, must indicate that on the release form.

#### I. Parties

- Parties are not encouraged for every occasion. When parties are planned, it is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. We encourage healthy foods.

- J. Volunteers (Chaperones/lunch helpers/coaches/scout leaders/club moderators, etc.)
- In order to demonstrate our personal commitment to the safety of minors, ALL volunteers who have contact with minors, as determined according to the guidelines provided by the Archdiocese of Newark, must have on file at the school office the Acknowledgment of Archdiocesan Policies with Respect to Conduct with Minors and Certain Reporting Obligations (VII, VIII B, VIII C) and the Disclosure and Authorization Form (Choice Point). The documents to be read and the Acknowledgment Form and Disclosure form will be provided to each volunteer. Attendance at a “Protecting God’s Children Program” of the Archdiocese of Newark is required and a certificate of training attendance must be on file in the school office.
  - Volunteers serve at the pleasure of the school administration. They are expected to uphold the regulations pertinent to the specific activities set forth by the administration.

### **XVIII. Appendix**

The following forms are included for use in conjunction with the Handbook:

- A. Sample Permission Slip for Field Trips (specific forms will be sent home for trips)
- B. Authorization to Administer Medication in School (to be discussed with Principal)
- C. Authorization for Self-Administration of Medication in School (to be discussed with Principal)
- D. Authorization to Administer Epinephrine

Appendix A  
SAMPLE (actual may vary)  
Field Trip Permission for Aquinas Academy, Livingston, New Jersey

Dear Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s);

Your son/daughter is eligible to participate in a school-sponsored activity requiring transportation to a location away from the School building. This activity will take place under the guidance and supervision of teachers and other representatives of AQUINAS ACADEMY. A brief description of the activity is as follows:

NAME OF EVENT:

EDUCATIONAL VALUE:

DESTINATION:

DESIGNATED SUPERVISOR:

DATE AND TIME OF DEPARTURE:

DATE AND ANTICIPATED TIME OF RETURN: METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION:

STUDENT COST AND ATTIRE FOR THIS TRIP:

If you would like your child to participate in this event, please complete, sign and return the following statement of consent and release of liability. As parent/guardian, you remain fully responsible for any legal liability which may result from any personal actions taken by your student. If you have any updated information relating to your child or his/her participation in this event, please advise the School as soon as possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

I request that my child (full name of child) \_\_\_\_\_ participate in the event.

I understand that this event will take place away from the school grounds and that my child will be under supervision of the supervisor(s) named above. I consent to the conditions of the event stated above, including the method of transportation.

I understand and agree that in the event that my child should suffer injury of any sort while participating in this event, I will not seek to pursue any claims against the supervisor named above, the School, and/or any of its agents, servants, employees or volunteers, unless such injury is caused solely by the intentional or grossly negligent conduct of the named supervisor.

\*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ I/We do not wish our child, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in this field trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian) DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Guardian) DATE

Please return this entire form and fee to Aquinas Academy by \_\_\_\_\_ (over)

Appendix A  
Permission Form (reverse)

Emergency Information

Please indicate where you and someone you designate can be reached while your child is on the field trip.

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Other & state relationship

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child \_\_\_\_\_

Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Work # \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is your child on medication? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If so, the medication must be in the original container and a school medication form must be completed and attached.

Appendix B

Authorization to Administer Medication in School [TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL UPON COMPLETION]

NAME OF STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

DIAGNOSIS/ILLNESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MEDICATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DOSAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL DIRECTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

I certify that the above information regarding this Student is correct, and that administration of the medication to this Student is necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature of Prescribing Physician] [Date]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Address] [Phone]

\*\*\*\*\*

I/We authorize the School Nurse or, in his/her absence, the Principal to administer the above medication as indicated. I/We understand and agree that the School, the School Nurse and the Principal shall not be liable for any injury to the Student resulting from the administration of the medication as authorized by my signature below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Appendix C  
Authorization for Self-Administration of Medication in School  
[TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL UPON COMPLETION]

NAME OF STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DIAGNOSIS/ILLNESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
MEDICATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOSAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_  
SPECIAL DIRECTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_  
POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

I certify that the above information regarding this Student is correct, and that administration of the medication to this Student is necessary, and that the Student has received appropriate instruction to self-administer the medication.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature of Prescribing Physician] [Date]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Address] [Phone]

\*\*\*\*\*

I/We authorize the School Nurse or, in his/her absence, the Principal to permit the Student to self-administer the above medication as indicated. I/We understand and agree that the School, the School Nurse and the Principal shall not be liable for any injury to the Student resulting from the self-administration of the medication as authorized by my signature below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_ Date



Appendix D  
Authorization to Administer Epinephrine

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Authorization and Acknowledgment

I/We hereby authorize the school to administer epinephrine via epi-pen to the student named above, in accordance with New Jersey law and the school policy stated below. As stated in the orders of the physician/advanced practice nurse above. This authorization includes the school nurse or, in the absence of the school nurse, another school employee designated and trained by the school nurse in accordance with New Jersey law.

I/We acknowledge receipt of written notice from the school that, provided the procedures set forth in New Jersey law and school policy are followed, the school and its employees or agents shall have no liability as a result of any injury arising from administration of the epi-pen to the student. I/We understand and agree that to indemnify and hold harmless the school and its employees or agents against any claims arising out of administration of the epi-pen to the student. Certify that the above information regarding this student is correct, and that administration of the medication to the student is necessary, and that the student has received appropriate instruction to self-administer the medication.

I/We understand this authorization and these agreements are effective for the duration of the current school year.

---

(Signature of Parent or Guardian)

(Date)