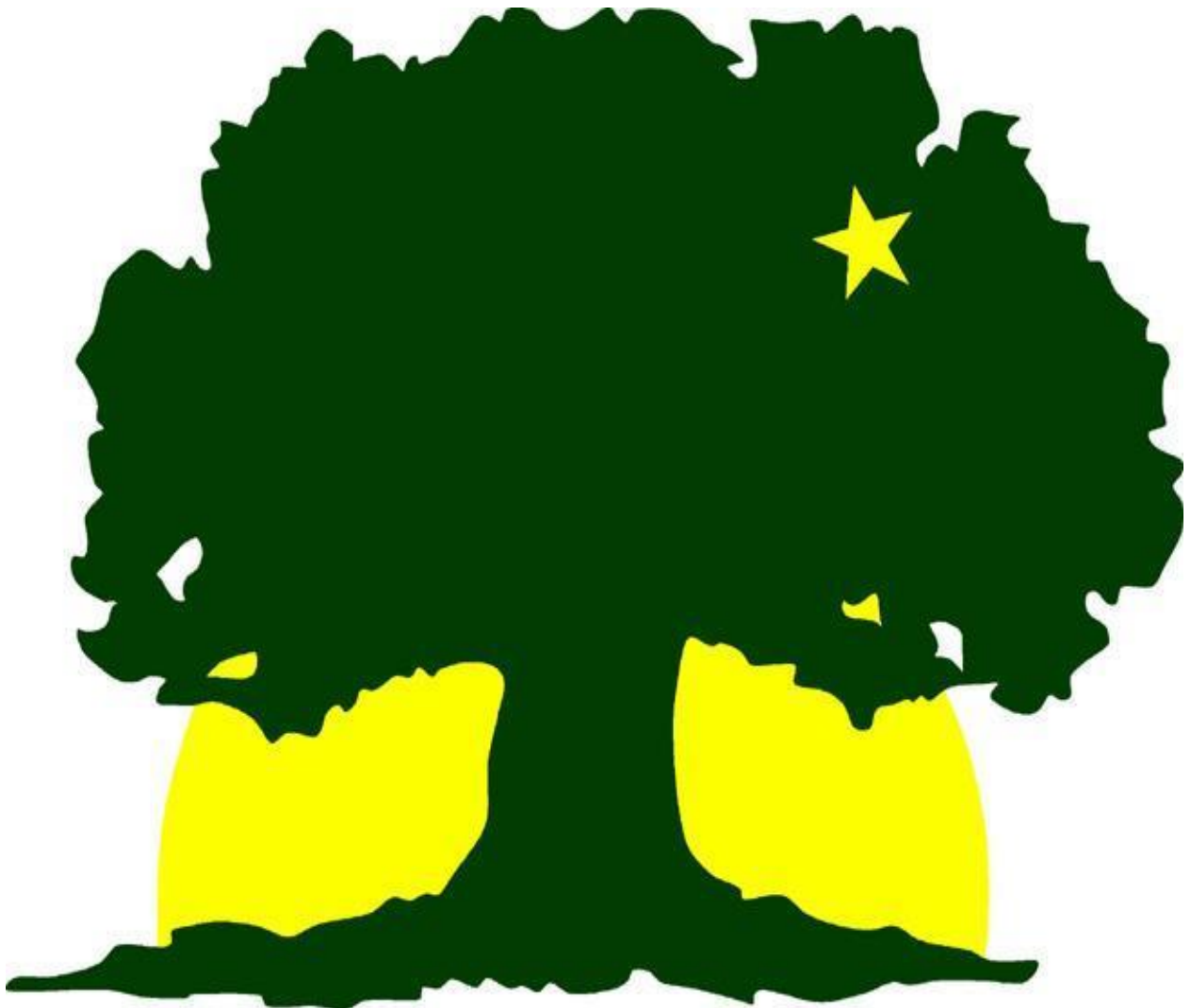


Scholar and Parent/Guardian Handbook

Quarter 4, 2020-2021 School Year



Home of the Eagles

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Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg

stpete.academyprep.org

Mission

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

Statement of Philosophy

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

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

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

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

Non-Discrimination Policy

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

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Academy Prep

Center of St. Petersburg

Dear Scholars and Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I want to welcome you as we return to campus at Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg for Quarter 4 of the 2020-2021 school year.

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

The administration, teachers and staff are dedicated to our scholars and are committed to providing a safe and caring learning environment. This is evident in our curriculum, enrichment activities, and all other ways we serve our AP community. We look forward to the same high level of commitment from our scholars and parents/guardians because this is a true partnership between the school and our families. Scholar success depends on the consistent, concerted efforts of faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and of course, the scholars themselves.

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

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

Sincerely,



Gina Burkett
Head of School

General Information

Arrival, Breakfast, and Morning Convocation

Scholars arrive between 7:30am and 7:55am and proceed to their designated classroom immediately after their temperature has been checked by a member of staff.

Lower School (5th and 6th grade) scholars must be dropped off in front of the Lower School building (signs will be posted). Upper School scholars must be dropped off in front of the Upper School classroom building.

Breakfast is served from 7:30-7:45am. Scholars who receive school breakfast will eat socially distanced at the tables outside the Multi-Purpose Building (MPB). Scholars may not bring their own breakfast (or any other food items) to school, but certainly may choose to have breakfast at home prior to arrival at school.

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

After finishing breakfast, scholars stay in their seats at the designated tables. They will be instructed by a supervising staff member to throw away their trash and proceed directly back to their designated classroom.

Please note: Any scholar arriving after 8:00am will be marked tardy, and must go to the front office to sign in and receive a pass before proceeding to their designated classroom

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

Students will stay in their core classroom throughout most of the day, except for special elective classes (PE, Music, and Art) that require moving to areas designated for those endeavors, and for lunch/recess.

Arrival and Dismissal Rules

Please note for children's safety and ease of movement during arrival and dismissal, we require parents'/guardians' help in adhering to our policy of dropping off and picking up scholars inside the school's gates. **Parents may not park outside the gates and then walk onto campus to pick up children while COVID protocols are in place.**

Scholars who walk or ride bikes to school must have permission forms on file with the school office before they will be allowed to walk or ride bicycles home from school. Bikers are required to walk their bikes once they enter school grounds. Scholars who bike/walk must be escorted across 23rd St to the sidewalk or onto the 22nd Ave sidewalk by a member of staff when they depart campus.

Dismissal for all students is at 3:15pm each day, and all scholars should be picked up by 3:30 at the latest. Scholars not picked up by the above mentioned times will be sent to a designated/announced location, and families will be charged \$3.00 for every 15-minute increment for late pick ups.

A phone call or an email indicating the reason for the dismissal is required. Before coming to school to withdraw a scholar early, a parent or legal guardian should always call the school first. An unapproved or unscheduled early dismissal can be highly disruptive since scholars are often off campus for enrichment programs.

Scholars leaving early may only be signed out by an authorized adult. Adults who are unknown to the school office staff will be asked to prove their identity by showing a valid driver's license. If such adult is not authorized, the scholar will not be released until the parent/guardian is contacted and gives verbal permission.

Attendance (Absences from School)

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

- Family crisis
- Illness

A scholar's attendance, regardless of academic performance, is a required element in ensuring a scholar is gaining an understanding of all classroom instruction. In the event a scholar is absent longer than three days, the school requires a doctor's note. A scholar's absence affects the scholar, his/her classmates, and the teacher. Therefore, if a scholar is absent more than 10 days in any one given semester, he/she will more than likely not be invited back for the next school year.

Annual Class Trips

If conditions relating to the pandemic permit, scholars will have the opportunity to go on end-of-year class trips. Scholar participation in these trips is dependent on maintaining acceptable behavior and good academic standing. A scholar who has been suspended or who has a lengthy disciplinary record may not be permitted to participate.

Attendance (Daily and Early Dismissal)

The official start of the school day begins with Convocation in home classrooms at 8:00am sharp. Please notify the office by 7:30 a.m. if your child is going to be absent. In the event a scholar must be absent longer than three days, the school requires a doctor's note to be provided to the front office (a PDF or cell phone picture of the note sent via email to Ms. Antoinette Smith, asmith@academyprep.org), is perfectly acceptable.

Early dismissals must be avoided as much as possible. Any early dismissal requires that a parent or legal guardian notify the school office ***in advance***.

Scholars are expected to be prepared for all classes. Their conduct in class must be respectful toward both their teachers and their fellow classmates. Scholars must observe all classroom rooms of conduct and etiquette, and work diligently on all assignments from their teachers.

When switching from their home classroom to another classroom or lunch, scholars must line up quietly and socially distanced, remaining so as they walk between classrooms or areas of campus accompanied by their teacher.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Cell phones and/or electronic devices include, but are not limited to iPods or MP3 players, web browsing devices, and hand-held Gameboys/PSPs. If a scholar needs to bring a cell phone or other electronic devices to school, the scholar must ensure it is "OFF" upon arriving at school. The item must be placed inside their backpack and turned off the entire day. If they do not have a backpack, then the cell phone is to be turned into the front office, where the item will be placed in an envelope with the scholar's name. All envelopes will be locked in the office for the day. Scholars may retrieve their items at the end of the day from a staff member. Any scholar found with a cell phone during the school day, or if their cell phone rings or vibrates during the day in their backpack, will have it confiscated and be issued a detention. The cell phone will be returned only to the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are requested to refrain from calling their children during the school day. Messages may be given to scholars only through contact with the office.

Communication with Faculty and Staff

When a parent or student needs to contact a faculty or staff member, they are encouraged to utilize the school's email system or call the school during the normal school day and ask to be transferred to that individual's extension. Teachers and staff have been advised to respond to all questions and inquiries within 24 hours during the school week.

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

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

Food, Beverages, and Gum

1. **No outside food is permitted on campus** unless granted permission from the Head of School.
2. **Gum is prohibited everywhere on campus grounds.** Scholars found chewing gum will immediately be issued a silent recess.
3. Breakfast is provided at Academy Prep from 7:30-7:45 a.m. daily. Scholars are not required, but are encouraged to have breakfast on campus if they do not have a healthy meal before leaving home in the morning.
4. All scholars are required to receive a school-provided lunch. Scholars who have special dietary restrictions and allergies must submit the appropriate paperwork from a physician to receive an alternate meal option.

Health, Immunization, & First Aid

All scholars at all grade levels must have proof of an annual physical examination on file in the office. In addition, state law requires that immunization dates be on file with the school before a child begins school. These immunization records must be on a specific Florida form available at most physicians' offices and at the Pinellas County Health Department. The school office must be made aware of any allergies, physical problems, or other health-related information that may be important in an emergency or cause interruptions in your child's daily activities. During the school day, the office staff will assist scholars who become ill or injured.

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached and a scholar is in need of medical attention due to injury, the Head of School and/or staff will use their best judgment to seek help for the scholar and will continue to attempt to reach the parent/legal guardian. Without permission from a parent/legal guardian, only emergency first-aid treatment will be given by Academy Prep.

Administration of Medications

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

1. A medical authorization form, signed by the parent/guardian and physician requesting the administration of medication, must accompany all medication.
2. Medication must be brought to the front office via a responsible adult.
3. Medication must be in the prescription container with the date, dosage, name of drug, and the scholar's and physician's names clearly marked. Medication must remain in the container in which it was originally dispensed.
4. Parents/guardians should arrange for a separate supply of medication for school. Medication will not be transported between home and school on a daily or weekly basis.
5. *When any medications are added or changed in any way, a new authorization form will be required.*
6. When medication dosages or times are changed, both steps must be followed:
 - a. A written note from the parent/guardian requesting the change must be sent to the school.
 - b. A new label from the pharmacist or physician's order indicating the change must be sent to the school.
7. Medication will be stored in a secure location at the school at all times.
8. Since there is not a nurse to service our campus, scholars' medications will be administered by the office staff.
9. When medication is discontinued, or at the end of the school year, medication not taken home will be destroyed.

Academy Prep cannot dispense over-the-counter pain reliever or other medication without the proper, signed authorization form. This includes cough drops, first aid ointment, etc. Parents/guardians must notify the school immediately upon learning that their child has head lice or a communicable disease, such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, hepatitis, strep throat, H1N1, COVID-19, or Fifth Disease.

Late Fees

Families will be charged \$3.00 for every 15 minute increment for late pick-ups. Scholars who have not been collected after the close of school will be required to wait in a designated area until their ride arrives. The parent or guardian will need to come to the office to sign the scholar out before he/she is dismissed. All accrued late fees will be added to the scholar's monthly balance. Late fees are paid in cash only.

Lockers & Backpacks

To ensure social distancing and cleanliness at AP, students will NOT be using lockers during Q4 of the 2020-2021 school year. They must bring all materials in a backpack, which will be kept in their assigned classroom throughout the day.

Lunch and Recess

Unless otherwise permitted by the Head of School after review of a legitimate written authorization from a trained and licensed medical professional, **scholars may not bring their own lunch to school.** No food or drink aside from unflavored water is permitted in classrooms, lockers, or elsewhere within the buildings.

Scholars sit down to eat at designated tables/seats and are expected to exhibit polite and proper mealtime behavior. When finished, and only with staff permission, they clean up after themselves, including throwing away all trash and cleaning up their area.

Scholars remain seated at their tables during lunch, unless authorized by a teacher to use the restroom. Teachers will guide students between lunch, recess, and their subsequent classes; students are not permitted to walk around campus without teacher supervision.

Media Consent

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

Parties

No party invitations may be distributed on campus. Scholars are invited to share their birthdays at school with their classmates, though we cannot allow distribution of food (cupcakes, etc.) due to pandemic conditions.

Personal Equipment

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

Replacement of Lost Instructional Materials

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

Scholars must provide their own school supplies including pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, and binders. Teachers will not distribute these supplies to scholars, and materials cannot be shared between scholars due to current health and safety protocols. A school supplies list will be distributed to scholars and their families before the beginning of school.

Returning to school

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

All assignments will be provided for scholars via Google Classroom, with the exception of occasional major tests and projects. Scholars will be given one day to make up assigned homework for each day of an excused absence, including those due to observance of particular religious holidays.

School's Right to Inspect Physical and Intellectual Property

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

To ensure the protection of all parties involved, the school reserves the right to record any distance learning initiated by APSP to include voice, image and identity.

Please note that no one is authorized to record interactions at APSP, including any online educational activity, whether via phone, tape recording or other electronic device, without authorization from the Head of School.

Signing In and Out

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

Social Media

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

Student Records

The case often arises where other schools or institutions (camps, physicians, educational psychologists, therapists) require official transcripts, recommendations, or behavioral questionnaires. We ask that parents/guardians provide us with at least one week's notice before the information needs to be mailed. **Please note:** No records, recommendations, or observation forms, other than progress/report cards, will be released directly to parents or legal guardians. It is standard practice among schools, and Academy Prep policy, to mail all such information directly to the receiving institution. Additionally, documents, including report cards, will not be released until accounts are paid in full.

Study Halls

Study Hall is designed to provide a quiet, comfortable, safe, and productive environment for scholars to complete their homework assignments, make up overdue work, and receive additional assistance to strengthen their overall academic performance at Academy Prep. Study hall periods have been integrated into all students' schedules for Q4 of the 2020-2021 school year to provide these quiet study times.

Study Hall Rules

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

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

Tardies

Tardiness is considered a serious matter as it disrupts the school day of the tardy scholar, his/her classmates, and teachers. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the scholar and his/her parents/guardians to ensure that the scholar arrives at school on time. Teachers cannot be responsible for work missed because of a scholar's repeated tardiness, and there are important concepts and information shared during convocation that make it a vital part of a scholar's school day.

Scholars arriving on campus at 8:00 a.m. or later are tardy and should report to the main office where they will sign in, receive a pass, and wait outside in silence until Convocation is dismissed.

Excessive tardies and unexcused absences will not be tolerated. If the Head of School sees that a family is not respecting the school's start time, a conversation will occur with the possibility of asking the family to come in for a special conference. Families who do not show improvement after a conference may not be invited back the next school year even if the student is in good academic standing.

Transportation

If conditions permit, AP vehicles may occasionally be used for transporting students to external events. Students must remain socially distanced, seat-belted, and seated quietly at all times to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the driver and all passengers. Scholars must obey the driver at all times. No one will throw anything in the vehicle or from the vehicle windows or deface the school vehicles in any way. Parents/guardians will be responsible for any vehicle damage caused by their children.

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

Visitors' Passes

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

Academic Policies

Academic Grading Scale

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

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

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

Academic Probation

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

Academic Recognitions and Awards

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

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

Scholars may also be recognized with awards for perfect attendance, excellent school spirit, most improved GPA, and no detention offenses during a given marking period.

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

Assessment

Scholars may expect weekly assessments in all core subjects, as well as final exams or final projects at the conclusion of each semester. Proper studying, preparation, and editing/revision are essential for the successful completion of all

coursework. There will also be standardized testing periods during the year in order to determine the academic progress of each scholar. Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of these testing days.

Class Citizenship Grades

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

Expectations for Upper School Scholars

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

Graduation Expectations & Requirements

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

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

Homework/Classwork

In addition to any homework assignments, which are occasional for Lower School scholars and more consistently distributed to Upper School scholars, it is expected that all Academy Prep scholars will spend at least 60 to 90 minutes each day studying, preparing for classes, and/or reading independently.

If a scholar is absent from school, the parent/guardian is encouraged to check Google Classroom to view assigned classwork and/or homework. Teachers upload most assignments into Google Classroom, which students can access from any internet-capable device. Absence is therefore not an excuse for lingering incomplete homework.

Students will be given one day to make up assigned homework for each day of an excused absence, including those due to observance of a particular religious holiday. If the homework or other assignment was due or completed on the day of the scholar's absence, the assignment will be due or completed the day the student returns to school.

If an absence is lengthy or involves unusual circumstances, the Academic Dean, in consultation with the faculty and Head of School, may extend the due date for the missed assignments. If a class does not meet due to a scheduling change, a teacher can still require students to hand in assignments that would otherwise have been due that day.

Late Work

Any work that is missing or incomplete on the assigned due date will be considered late, and penalties may be assessed to work that is turned in after the due date at the discretion of the teacher.

ParentWeb Online Grades

Each family will receive a username and password for the school's software program that will provide access to grades as well as other important information for parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should check grades and behavior on a weekly basis.

Physical Education

Physical education is a key component of the overall holistic education at Academy Prep. Participation is expected unless a student has a doctor's note indicating they are unable to participate in specific activities.

Progress Reports

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

Promotion to Next Grade

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

Continued enrollment at Academy Prep depends upon the scholar's overall academic and behavioral performance. Scholars who do not maintain a C average (2.0) or better GPA based on their final grades in their academic subjects, or who in the opinion of the Head of School are not living up to the school's standards of excellence in conduct, are not likely to be invited to attend Academy Prep for the following year. Arrangements may be made by the parents/guardians with the Head of School to correct such a deficiency through the Summer Session. Continued enrollment at Academy Prep is also dependent upon involvement with the school by parents/guardians.

Report Cards

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

Scholar-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are required when necessary for the success of the scholar. Conferences concerning the scholar's progress can, at times, be accomplished by telephone or email. When an in-person conference is deemed necessary, parents/guardians will receive a written notice or phone call to set up a mutually agreeable time. **Parents or legal guardians contacted by the office for a conference are required to attend. Scholars are also required to attend.**

Dress Code

The dress code promotes a sense of personal discipline and civility on our campus. Scholars are expected to arrive at school fully in dress code and remain so throughout the day. This includes shirts being tucked in. We ask that children and parents/guardians review and discuss this information together, recognizing that grooming and dress decisions are a joint responsibility.

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

Everyday Dress Code for Boys and Girls

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

Pants/Shorts For Boys

- Solid navy blue pants or navy blue shorts
- All shorts should fall at 2 inches above the knee cap. Anything shorter, and your child will be asked to change.

Pants/Shorts/Skirts For Girls

- Solid navy blue pants, capris, shorts, or skirt/skort/jumper
- All shorts, skorts, and skirts should fall no higher than 2 inches above the knee cap. Anything shorter will prompt us to require your child to change.

Shoes & Accessories

- 5th-7th grade scholars must wear all black, closed toe, rubber-soled shoes with black crew socks. Sandals, platform shoes, and backless shoes are not permitted.
- Socks must be black crew socks (white is ok for 8th graders) that fall above the ankle but not above the calf.
- Caps, hats, bandanas, and coats are not to be worn inside school buildings.

Jewelry

- Analog or digital watches are permitted, but 'smart' watches with internet accessibility are not permitted.
- *Earrings*: Girls may have no more than two small ear studs or small ½ inch hoop earrings (one in each ear), worn in the lowest hole in the lower earlobe. No dangle earrings are allowed, and acceptable colors include silver, gold, black, brown, white, yellow, green, or navy blue.
 - Male scholars may not wear earrings.
- Scholars will not be permitted to wear jewelry that is visible outside of their clothing with the exception of a watch. This includes necklaces, rings, bracelets, and any other ring attached to the body.

Cold Weather Attire & Outerwear

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

Hair and Haircuts

- Boys' hair must be kept neat and clean and be out of the eyes.
- Two tones and hair designs (lines, words, or mohawks) are not permitted. No student (male or female) may have a full mohawk, nor should there be the appearance of a fauxhawk, which means hair is braided tight on the sides and full at the top, lending the appearance of a mohawk.
- No beards or moustaches are allowed. This can include what a scholar may consider as peach fuzz.
- Girls' hair must be kept neat and clean. This should be done without the use of bandanas or scarves.
- No unnatural colors or highlights in stark contrast to the scholar's natural hair color are allowed.
- All hair accessories must be black, brown, white, yellow, green, or navy blue.
- No hair clips, twine, or beads may be threaded through a scholar's hair. This statement includes various materials and colors.

Makeup and Nail Polish

- No makeup (eye shadow, blush, eyeliner, lipstick, etc.) is allowed.
- Lip gloss is not permitted at any time during the school day. Chapstick or lip balm is only permissible in situations where it is obviously necessary to stop chapped or cracked lips.
- Scholars' nails must be their natural nail. No acrylic or other material over the natural nail is permitted.
- No colored nail polish is allowed. This includes glitter/sparkles/etc. and any designs. Nails should be plain.
- If nails are being professionally manicured, only a clear polish is permitted. Light pink polish is not acceptable even though it is sometimes called "natural." Polish *must* be "clear."
- Nails should be short (meaning no longer than 1/8" from the tip of any finger), neat, and clean.
- French tips are not permitted, nor are any other types of colored tips. Nails should not be shaped or pointed, but rather squared or rounded.

Masking & Social Distancing Requirements

All scholars, parents, AP staff members, and others must be wearing a proper face covering at all times on the AP campus, including inside AP buildings, during transitions between classes, outside during recess, etc. unless a specific socially distanced 'mask break' is provided with supervision by a member of the AP faculty or staff.

Face masks must fully cover the mouth and nose, and should be wearable throughout the day. Common acceptable types of masks include:

- Disposable ‘surgical style’ masks (3- or 4-ply versions)
- Reusable / washable cotton mask (should be washed between uses)

Note: This can not be a ‘gaiter’ style (those you pull upwards from your neck), as the materials used in these are not designed to be worn for longer durations and are more likely to slip off when speaking, etc.

Students must maintain social distancing throughout the day. This will include:

- Desks remaining spaced out in their assigned locations within classrooms
- Remaining in designated seats when at the lunch tables
- Not “clumping” or getting close to others whenever a group is walking to/from a class
- Avoiding groups and maintaining distance when at recess or during masks breaks outside

Special Dress Days / Free Dress Days

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

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

Uniform/Dress Code Enforcement Policy

The following steps will be taken to support compliance:

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

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

Conduct

Every Academy Prep scholar deserves to experience Academy Prep as a welcoming place for his/her growth and learning. Personal pride and consciousness of the needs and rights of others are fostered throughout these years. Scholars are expected to be considerate of others in the school community at all times. Scholars thus have a responsibility to respect the rights of others and to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains the order of the school.

Teachers manage scholar behavior within their own classrooms. Scholars and teachers engage in discussions about feelings and the well-being of each member of the class. The administrative team and guidance counselor work with teachers and scholars on behavior modification when necessary. Any scholar who is unable to demonstrate acceptable behavior will be given consequences. The overall goal is to enable scholars to take ownership for their proper behavior. We help them achieve this goal through guidance, understanding, and appropriate intervention. Teachers and administrators will notify parents/guardians of behavior that warrants greater concern and work in partnership with them to develop appropriate plans of action.

For those whose behavior does not meet the school's expectations promoted in our mission, the discipline system has been established. Scholars who engage in inappropriate behavior may be subject to the disciplinary actions of silent recess, lunch detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Scholars are not permitted to:

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

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

Campus and Classroom Behavior

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

- *Dismissal at the end of class:* When class has concluded, the teacher will guide scholars through the 3-step dismissal procedure. Scholars must quietly and quickly comply in order to be dismissed to their next class.
- *Walking from one class to another:* Scholars will walk quietly, in order, in a single-file line from one class to the next when they are dismissed. If the teacher requests that they stand in line outside the door until they are invited into the classroom, they do so in line and in silence.
- *Greeting guests:* When a guest is escorted into or enters the classroom, scholars will immediately stop what they are doing, put writing utensils down, stand, and wait to be introduced. If the guest shakes their hand, scholars will smile, look directly at the guest, and introduce themselves. When guests are touring or spending time on campus,

whenever possible, scholars are expected to stop as they are walking by and introduce themselves, adding “Welcome to Academy Prep!” Scholars are urged to interact with guests as much as possible.

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

Cell Phones and Other Devices

We do not suggest students bring cell phones to campus. If they do, these must be turned to the OFF position (not silent or vibrate), and be kept in their backpack throughout the day. Any phone brought out or seen by a staff member will be immediately confiscated, and a parent/guardian must pick up the phone at the end of the day. **It will not be released to the student to bring out to the car/parent.** Students whose phones are confiscated also will face disciplinary action.

Discipline Tracking

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

Dress Code Infractions – 2 Demerits

Tardies – 2 Demerits

Silent Recess (minor offenses) – 5 Demerits

Scholars will receive a Silent Recess for the following infractions:

- Constantly talking out of turn
- Minor mask infractions
- Moving without permission after a warning has been issued (walking around the room, dancing, etc.)
- Distracting behaviors after warning was issued (singing, humming, tapping etc...)
- Flicking paper balls or other objects across the room after warning was issued
- Other distracting behaviors, including chewing gum on campus

Lunch Detention (major offenses) – 10 Demerits

Students will receive a lunch detention for the following infractions:

- Disrespect to authority
- Habitual name calling
- Use of profanity
- Attempting to deface school property
- Repeatedly refusing to cooperate, including with proper mask wearing
- Inappropriate physical contact (neck slapping, play fighting etc...)

Referral/Suspension (severe offenses) – 20 Demerits

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

- Fighting
- Bullying
- Theft
- Cheating & Plagiarism
- Falsification of records
- Being excessively disrespectful towards others or threatening the safety of a teacher or scholar
- Hateful/explicit language

- Destruction of school property
- Leaving, or attempting to leave, campus without permission
- Throwing objects that can injure others or possessing a harmful object

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

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

Expulsion

Students exceeding 75 demerits in any given quarter may also be considered for expulsion, or not permitted to re-enroll for a subsequent quarter, semester, or school year at the discretion of the Head of School.

Plagiarism

Cheating on tests and other school assignments is a serious offense. **Handing in another scholar's work is a form of cheating, as is copying from another scholar's exam or school work as well as copying or improperly paraphrasing from any books or from the internet without specifically indicating in a paper (via use of quotations and citations) that one has copied or paraphrased.** Scholars caught cheating will receive a zero for that test/assignment, as well as the substantial likelihood of additional disciplinary measures at the discretion of the teacher and Dean of Students or Assistant Head of School. Second and subsequent offenses will result in failure in the course and more serious disciplinary action, including expulsion.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Scholars

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

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

Parent/Guardian-School Partnership

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

Additionally, parents/guardians support the school by following arrival and dismissal procedures, reinforcing the school's policies with their children, turning to teachers and school administrators when they have questions and need information, ensuring scholar compliance with uniform and dress codes, and contributing in many other ways to support our educational mission. We appreciate our involved parent body and are continuously available to partner with them in the joy of guiding our students.

Responsibilities and Expectations of Parents/Guardians

A scholar's continued enrollment at Academy Prep depends upon the cooperation of parents/guardians in his or her educational endeavors. Academy Prep parents/guardians are expected to comply with all the following commitments:

- Sign the Contract of Scholar & Parent/Guardian Responsibility stating that they will abide by all policies, procedures and rules of the school as a condition of enrollment.
- Ensure their children attend school regularly, on time, and for the whole school day in accordance with the laws of the state of Florida and the policies of Academy Prep.
- Present concerns in a calm, reasonable manner. Such concerns should first be relayed to the teacher or administrator directly involved in the situation; senior administrators can be requested to participate in the mediation process if a satisfactory solution is not reached.
- Work with the school and be proactive in responding to academic, disciplinary, or other related matters pertaining to their child.
- Talk with their child about school activities and expected behavior.
- Ensure that their child receives the health examinations that are required by law.
- Adhere to the parent/guardian requirements concerning required volunteer hours and attendance at Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings.
- Attend student/parent/teacher conferences when requested.

Activity Fees

Due to challenges facing all families during the current pandemic, Academy Prep has decided to waive the normal \$20/month activity fee for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year for all of our families.

Additional Fees

Additional fees may be charged to your account. These can include uniform (belts/socks) and late pick up fees, plus any damages to AP-provided technology (e.g. Chromebook, headphones, etc.). It is our policy that all activity and late fees be paid when invoiced on a monthly basis. Failure to pay the 30 day balance by the end of the second month, may result in the student(s) not being able to attend Academy Prep until the applicable balance is paid in full. Failure to pay any balance due by May 6, 2022 may result in the student not being allowed to take final exams, 8th graders not participating in class trips or graduation ceremonies and school records not being released to families and/or requesting schools/agencies. This includes college prep programs to which 8th graders are applying.

Parent/Guardian Engagement Hours

Due to Covid, engagement hours were reduced for the 2020-21 School Year, but parents were asked to still participate through attending virtual zoom meetings, posting advertisements about AP's events, etc. Academy Prep felt that parents have been showing engagement throughout this year by participating in their scholar's virtual education, so this number was reduced for the 2020-21 school year to just 10. Below is the standard for the 2021-22 school year.

From the start of the summer session through the end of our school year in May, in addition to attendance at parent-teacher conferences, parents/guardians are required to provide the following hours of service to Academy Prep:

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

If the required hours are not served by May 14th, a fee of \$3.00 per unserved hour will be assessed and the scholar will not be allowed to attend school until this fee is paid.

With the school's approval, other adult family members and friends may represent the parents/guardians for service hours. Arrangements for these service hours are made privately between each family and the Community Relations office, and the hours are monitored by the Community Relations office. Completion of the service hours requirement is a condition of a student's continued enrollment at Academy Prep. The Head of School may take a family's special circumstances (including the number of children enrolled) into consideration when monitoring and determining the service hours requirement.

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

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

Florida's Step Up for Students Scholarship Program provides a scholarship of \$6,505 (for the 2020-21 school year) per student from Florida corporations to Academy Prep in support of the education of all Academy Prep students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Price Meals Program. Any *new* family that does not qualify for a SUFS Scholarship or an equivalent financial need-based scholarship (e.g. FES) will not be eligible to attend Academy Prep. SUFS eligibility must be submitted to Academy Prep by the published deadline.

Emergency Procedures

No School Days

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

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

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

Evacuation

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

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



Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg

stpete.academyprep.org

Please have your child return this page to his/her homeroom teacher.

I have read Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg's 2020-2021 Quarter 4 scholar/parent handbook and if I have any questions, I will call the school to ensure I understand the school's policies and guidelines. I will also go over these guidelines with my child to ensure his/her understanding.

Parent's/Guardian's Name (printed)

Date

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Scholar's Name and Grade (printed)

Scholar's Signature