



# **ANNUNCIATION**

## **CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Annunciation Catholic School**

**525 W. 54<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Minneapolis, MN 55419**

**Phone 612-823-4394**

**[www.annunciationmsp.org/school](http://www.annunciationmsp.org/school)**

**VISION:** Annunciation Catholic School fosters each child's potential to create a better world through faith, virtue, knowledge, and service to others.

**MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENT:** Annunciation Catholic School's mission is to form students in the Catholic faith, to instill in them a love for God and neighbor, and to guide their lifelong potentiality into the world.

We have served South Minneapolis since 1923, providing excellence in education for students from Pre K through 8th grade. The International Baccalaureate program now enhances our tradition of values-based learning and outstanding academics.

Through an inquiry and action-based approach to learning and teaching, we are helping to develop responsible, disciplined problem-solvers, ethical citizens, and compassionate, creative leaders who change the world.

We are devoted to:

† Inspiring in students a lifelong curiosity about the world and their role in it.

† Encouraging students to live their faith in their lives; to lead through example; to become active participating members of their communities; and to serve others.

† Nurturing the development of the whole child in an open, inquisitive, respectful learning environment.

† Affirming and respecting the diversity and uniqueness of each individual.

† Collaboration between our committed community of parents, teachers, students, administrators and the Church.

† Sharing the joy of our fellowship and spreading love, hope and peace.

**PHILOSOPHY:** At the root of our philosophy is the belief that students in the emerging years of adolescence have unique needs and that this is a critical period in their development.

**Therefore, we seek to:**

- Provide a challenging and rigorous academic education to ensure students are well prepared for high school.
- Foster the intellectual, social, emotional, and religious growth of children.
- Emphasize student self-direction, student independence, and student responsibility for learning under expert guidance.

- Have a student-centered, creative, flexible approach to teaching and learning.
- Use innovative approaches to teaching, such as integrated lessons, team teaching, differentiated curriculum, and writing across the curriculum.

**The middle school education should:**

- Provide an academically challenging curriculum.
- Emphasize independent learning and thinking skills.
- Allow students to connect material and skills learned in one class to those presented in another.
- Emphasize the need for students to be life-long learners.
- Teach students *how* to learn, not simply *what* to learn.
- Prepare students for higher-level high school course work.

**The middle school student should:**

- Be involved in active learning experiences.
- Learn decision-making skills.
- Have the opportunity to socialize and work with diverse age groups.
- Be in an environment that is small enough so that each student is known and held accountable for schoolwork, as well as behavior.
- Have the opportunity to take part in extracurricular activities that promote spiritual, athletic, and creative growth.

Annunciation prides itself on its exceptional teaching staff, many of whom have advanced degrees, additional certification, or have been recognized as leaders in their fields. Annunciation Middle School uses Responsive Classroom and Envoy strategies for behavioral, social, and emotional growth. Teachers implement strategies to facilitate students' connectedness, responsibility, safety, and productive learning.

**COMMUNICATION:** Good communication between students, parents, and teachers is an important element in any successful educational program.

Annunciation Middle School communicates in several ways:

- Each teacher posts assignments and due dates on Sycamore, a communication tool. Students will have their own Sycamore accounts and access codes for each of their classes. Parents will also have access to their student's account.
- Google Classroom – is an online system for teachers to post assignments and students to submit assignments.
- Report cards are prepared two times a year. Students receive letter grades.
- Conferences occur in the fall and again in the winter/early spring.

- Additional conferences outside the regularly scheduled times can be set up by contacting the teacher.

Parents can contact teachers via voicemail or email. Please refer to the school's website for specific email addresses and phone numbers. **Please feel free to contact teachers with any questions or concerns.** Teachers may not be able to check emails during teaching time, but should respond within 24 hours. If you need immediate assistance, contact the school office.

**FORGOTTEN HOMEWORK AND LUNCHES:** Forgotten items are left at the office and an email is sent so that students can pick them up when available.

**ORGANIZATION:** Good organization is a key to success in middle school. Students can find assignments using Google Classroom. Each student is assigned a locker. Students are encouraged to purchase dividers for their lockers. Students should go to their lockers in the morning, at lunch, and at the end of the day. They should follow their schedules and know what books and materials are needed for each class. There are hooks in the home bases for coats and backpacks, but all books and supplies should be in lockers so as to not disrupt classrooms during instruction. There is a special focus on organizational skills in sixth grade as students adjust to a new daily structure.

**LOCKS AND LOCKERS:** School supplies should be stored in their locker. Coats and winter gear will be stored in the coat area of each classroom. No supplies will be stored there to minimize distractions to the students. All students are provided with a lock at the beginning of the school year and students are encouraged to lock their lockers during the day. Please note that anytime a Chromebook is left in a locker, it must be locked. If a student loses their lock, a replacement lock will need to be purchased for \$5.00. Students should keep their lockers locked when not in use.

**HOMEBASES:** Students in the Middle School are assigned to one of six homebases. During a non-pandemic year, each homebase is a community of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, offering students a meaningful time to get to know peers from other grade levels. The older children mentor the younger, especially at the beginning of the sixth grade year. Students gather in homebase in the morning for prayer, attendance, and Morning Meeting. Students return for lunchtime prayer.

**CLASSES:** Annunciation Middle School has a seven period day. Students attend six core classes: Math, Science, Social Studies, Religion, Writer's Workshop, and Literature. Students also study Creative Arts, Spanish, and Physical Education/Health.

Annunciation School focuses on providing differentiated instruction to better address the needs and abilities of all students. Within classes, teachers offer a variety of learning opportunities to challenge students at their levels. Additionally, each grade offers three levels for math classes.

Annunciation Middle School offers small class sizes, as well as high expectations and

accountability. Teachers are available for extra help during WIN (What I Need) time.

**HOMEWORK:** Middle school students can expect one to two hours of homework a night on a regular basis. Students are expected to complete their work on time.

**GRADING:** Subjects (including specials) are all graded A through U (performance fails to meet requirements/no credit). Report cards are issued two times per year. Each class uses a variety of categories on which to base a cumulative grade. Categories might include, but are not limited to in-class work, homework, quizzes, tests, written work, and projects.

The grading scale is based on the percentages below.

94-100 A

90-93 A-

87-89 B+

84-86 B

80-83 B-

77-79 C+

74-76 C

70-73 C-

67-69 D+

64-66 D

60-63 D-

Below 60% U

**HONOR ROLL:** Annunciation Middle School recognizes students whose grades qualify them for the High Honor Roll (3.67 GPA and above) and Honor Roll (3.20 GPA and above). Students who maintain a 4.00 GPA are recognized as Scholars of Distinction. Missing and late assignments affect students' candidacy for the Honor Roll.

**MISSING WORK POLICY:** In addition to the pursuit of knowledge, it is essential for each student to learn the value of time management, organization, and follow-through. Students need to turn in their work on time. Please familiarize yourself with each teacher's turn-in procedure and grading policy.

Parents may log in to Sycamore at any time to view a student's assignments. Assignments can

be sorted by “missing” and “incomplete” status. “Missing” denotes an assignment that has not yet been turned in. “Incomplete” means that an assignment may have been turned in, but does not meet requirements. Missing assignments become late when they have been completed. Please consult with your child and/or individual teachers as necessary for specifics when absent. Teachers update their Sycamore accounts as frequently as possible.

Please familiarize yourself with each teacher’s late work policy.

If students are absent, they should make arrangements with their teachers regarding a reasonable timeline for completing assignments.

**VACATIONS/SPORTS/OTHER ACTIVITIES:** Vacations, and absences due to sports and other activities are strongly discouraged when school is in session. Taking students out of school often gives the child the message that school is unimportant. When families choose to take children out of school for trips, sports, or other activities, it is the child’s responsibility to get caught up and request information and missing work upon their return to school. A week’s notice of extended absence is helpful in planning academic lessons. **Please notify your child’s homebase teachers AND the school office.**

**ILLNESS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:** If a student is absent from school due to illness, he/she should not attend extra-curricular activities - i.e sports, etc.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL SUCCESSFUL BEHAVIOR POLICY:** The goal of the Annunciation Catholic Middle School Successful Behavior Policy is to foster positive student decision-making while supporting a compassionate and vibrant learning environment. The policy holds students accountable for their actions while offering multiple opportunities to improve decision-making.

Under the policy, teachers may issue demerits for student behavior infractions. Many of the infractions are valued at 1 point each in Sycamore.

The current 1 point demerits include, but are not limited to:

- Academic dishonesty
- Disrespectful behavior
- Disruptive behavior
- Horseplay/dangerous actions
- Inappropriate language
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Recess incident
- Tardy to class
- Uniform violation
- Use of beverages other than water in the classroom

- Use of gum, candy, or food in class

#### Automatic Detention Demerits - Valued at 3 points in Sycamore

- Cheating/blatant plagiarism
- Damaging property/vandalism
- Dangerous action
- Extreme disrespect
- Fighting and/or bullying
- Use of cell phone without permission

When a **demerit** is issued, the student as well as the family will be notified. Parents are able to see their student's discipline logs and detentions in Sycamore by clicking on the student profile and then clicking on the 'Discipline' button. Clicking on any blue violation link will open it up to provide more details.

Students who accumulate three demerits in one quarter will receive a detention. Each quarter, students start over with a count of 0 demerits. **Detention takes place from 7:15 a.m-7:45 a.m. on Thursday mornings in the auditorium.** Families will usually be notified via email the day prior if a student is receiving a detention as well as in Sycamore. If a student receives three or more detentions during the same quarter period, the student will be ineligible to attend quarterly Middle School celebrations such as dances or field trips. **Note that teachers may issue an immediate detention (without demerits) depending on the severity of an incident.** In the event that a student does miss a quarterly celebration due to multiple detentions, he/she will have the opportunity to attend the next event provided he/she has not again accumulated three or more additional detentions.

2021-22 quarterly periods:

- Q1 ends October 19, Q2 ends December 17, Q3 ends March 9, and Q4 ends June 2

Details on middle school celebrations will be announced during each quarter and are subject to change.

**HALL PASS POLICY:** To monitor hallway activity, instill accountability, and provide opportunity to retrieve forgotten class items—which would previously have resulted in a demerit—students who need to leave the classroom for any reason (e.g. bathroom, drink, going to a locker, etc.), may do so by having a teacher sign a hall pass located in the student planner.

Please note the following:

- In the event that a student has a medical condition requiring frequent breaks, parents are asked to contact school administration, the school nurse, and send a note to teachers.
- If a student has a learning plan that conflicts with the hall pass policy, the learning plan

will take priority.

- If a student does not have his or her student planner, he or she may borrow a pass from a classmate.
- If there are other extenuating circumstances requiring additional passes, parents are asked to contact school administration or the school nurse.

**TARDIES:** Students are tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. After 8:00 a.m. students must stop in the office for a tardy slip before proceeding to class.

Consequences of Unexcused Tardiness are as follows:

- 3 tardies – Assistant Principal will contact parents to discuss tardies.
- 6 tardies – A letter will be sent home from the school office.
- 9 tardies – Parents will be contacted to meet with school administration.
- 12 tardies – Student may be referred to Hennepin County Truancy Court.

Please note: students who are tardy to class during the school day fall under the Middle School Successful Behavior Policy.

Hennepin County has great resources and can be an asset in working through truancy with students. [www.hennepinattorney.org](http://www.hennepinattorney.org)

#### **LUNCH EXPECTATIONS:**

- A pass is needed if going to visit a teacher for help during lunch.
- Lunch/supervisors are school staff and should be given the same respect as teachers.
- Students will be dismissed for recess by lunchroom staff.
- During a non-pandemic year in some cold weather months, there may be the option for Middle School students to stay in the lunchroom during recess. Students who choose to go outside for recess are expected to remain outside.



**UNIFORM POLICY:** The following are the Annunciation uniform requirements.

*Middle School teachers will issue demerits for uniform infractions.*

	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
<b>Shirts/Blouses</b>	Green and white polos w/ school logo. Shirts must be tucked in unless they are the no-tuck banded bottom style. Any shirt worn under the uniform shirt must be solid white.	Green and white polos w/ school logo. Long or short-sleeve white blouses may be worn under jumpers. Shirts and blouses must be tucked in unless they are the no- tuck banded bottom style. Any shirt worn under the uniform shirt must be solid white.
<b>Pants</b>	Navy blue twill pants worn at the waist (no denim, corduroy, or cargo pants).	Navy blue twill pants worn at the waist (no denim, corduroy, capri or cargo pants).
<b>Skorts</b> <b>(Middle School ONLY)</b>		The hems of skorts must be no higher than two inches above the knee. Skorts must be worn at the waist, hems may not be rolled and the hem should be in good repair. Middle School only.
<b>Shorts</b>	Navy blue twill shorts must be no higher than two inches above the knee and worn at the waist. No cargo or athletic shorts.	Navy blue twill shorts must be no higher than two inches above the knee and worn at the waist. No cargo or athletic shorts.
<b>Jumpers</b> <b>(K-5 ONLY)</b>		Plaid jumper. Bike shorts, leggings or tights must be worn under a jumper. Socks must always be worn (unless wearing tights). Hem of the jumper must be no more than two inches above the knee and in good repair.

<b>Sweaters, Sweatshirts &amp; Jackets</b>	Must have a school logo. Uniform shirts must be worn under Annunciation sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets.	Must have a school logo. Uniform shirts must be worn under Annunciation sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets.
<b>Socks</b>	White, navy blue or black quarter, crew, or ankle length. No 'no-show' socks. Socks must be worn at all times.	White, navy blue or black quarter, crew, ankle, or knee-high length. No 'no-show' socks. Anklets are acceptable for girls in K-5. Socks must be worn at all times.
<b>Leggings/Tights</b>		White, navy or black
<b>Shoes</b>	Tennis, Velcro, buckle, slip-on, or tie shoes. Shoes that light up, have wheels or are otherwise distracting are not allowed. Boots of any kind may not be worn during the school day.	Tennis, Velcro, buckle, slip-on, or tie shoes. Shoes that light up, have wheels or are otherwise distracting are not allowed. Boots of any kind may not be worn during the school day.
<b>Accessories</b>	Simple (unadorned) blue, black or brown belts. Simple jewelry. Face jewelry is not allowed.	Simple (unadorned) blue, black or brown belts. Simple jewelry. Face jewelry is not allowed.
<b>Hair</b>	Hair must be clean and neat. Exaggerated hair styles or colors are not allowed.	Hair must be clean and neat. Exaggerated hair styles or colors are not allowed.
<b>Makeup</b>		No inappropriate or excessive make-up is allowed. Minimal makeup may be worn in Middle School (grades 6-8) only.

**Dress Code for Out of Uniform Days/Functions:**

- Dress-Up Day – Please wear clothing appropriate for attendance at Sunday Mass.

- Non-Uniform Day – Clothing must be appropriate for the weather and activity of the day. Skinny jeans, leggings or jeggings are only acceptable if a shirt or sweater is worn that comes down below the buttocks. Halter, midriff, tight, tank or low-cut tops are not acceptable.
- Spirit Wear- Students should wear Annunciation branded clothing that is in good condition. Pants, skorts, and shorts should follow the rules as outlined above.

#### **What is Not Acceptable for Both Girls and Boys:**

- Clothing which is in disrepair (ripped/torn, cut off, frayed, fringed, patched, or faded).
- Advertising or logos or any inappropriate slogans, words, graphics, or decorations (small logos on socks are permissible but discouraged).
- Open toe or open-back shoes, flip-flops, croc-like sandals, clogs, slippers, or boots (including fashion boots).
- Long-sleeve shirts may not be worn under short-sleeve uniform polo shirts.
- Hats

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT TECHNOLOGY:**

Student use of a device in school falls under the guidelines of Annunciation School's Acceptable Use Policy for Technology, found in the Student Handbook. Access to the internet is monitored through Annunciation School's content filtering software and all rules and expectations apply to the use of the device. All applications, activity, and documents stored on the device are the property of Annunciation and subject to regular review and monitoring.

#### **Students should not:**

- Modify the device in any way other than those instructed by the teacher.
- Exchange device with another student.
- Allow other students to retain or remove the device from their presence.
- Apply any permanent marks, decorations, or modifications to the device.
- Remove the supplied cover for the iPad or electronic device.
- Disable the device or its applications.

Failure to comply with these guidelines will be treated as failure to comply with the school's Acceptable Use Policy and will be dealt with as specified in the school's discipline code. The student will also pay the replacement cost of the device, or, if applicable, any insurance deductible if any malicious attempt to destroy the device has been discovered.

#### **ACCEPTABLE USE FOR SCHOOL DEVICES:**

##### **Goals for Student Users:**

- To increase students' productivity in and outside of the classroom when completing assignments, projects, and other activities.
- To capitalize on the vast array of academic resources that support best practices.

- To facilitate mobile learning across the school campus and beyond.
- To promote leadership in one's own learning by establishing access to educational resources and providing a host of tools to craft academically relevant information.
- See 1:1 Annunciation Use Policy on the Annunciation website for details on use of school devices, including Chromebooks.

**CHROMEBOOK VIOLATION POLICY:** Should a “minor” Chromebook violation take place, including—but not limited to: being off-task (games, memes), leaving a Chromebook unattended, distracting others with Chromebook usage, etc., students will be issued a demerit and parent notification will take place.

In the event of a “major” offense—including—but not limited to: damage to a Chromebook, inappropriate use of a Chromebook (e.g. explicit material), hacking accounts, or cyberbullying, the Chromebook may be taken away, a demerit will be issued, and parent notification will take place. Please note that while a student does not have his/her Chromebook, a loaner may be provided in each of the classrooms.

In accordance with the Annunciation School Parent-Student Handbook school administration reserves the right to modify consequences.

#### **CELL PHONES / SMART WATCHES:**

- All cell phones must be powered off at all times during school hours - 8:00AM to 2:45PM.
- Cell phones are not allowed in school bathrooms/locker rooms at any time.
- No cell phones are allowed out of a student's locker or backpack during school hours.
- No pictures/videos are to be taken during school hours except for school-sponsored events with prior approval from teacher/administration.
- No pictures/videos are to be posted online except with permission from parents of students represented in the said picture/video.

PLEASE NOTE that because smart watches (such as Apple Watches) function essentially as cell phones, they may be used as a timepiece ONLY or are subject to confiscation.

#### **Failure to follow these rules are as follows:**

- Violation - Verbal reminder or cell phone and/or smart watch may be confiscated and brought to the office. It can be picked up at the end of the day. Parents may be notified.

Administration may confiscate and search cell phones, including, but not limited to, text messages, pictures, call logs, emails, and voice messages if they have reason to believe it has been used for prohibited purposes. If a student refuses, it will be held by administration until a parent arrives and they will check the phone together.

**CYBERBULLYING:** Bullies can use text messages and social media to start rumors and send mean comments and inappropriate pictures. Bullies can be anonymous in cyberspace, and may feel like they can't get caught. However, investigations can reveal the source of cyberbullying. If online bullying or harassment causes disruption in school, staff will intervene- even if personal electronic devices are used to post or send messages. Cyberbullying should always be reported to school staff as there is no tolerance policy for it. These reports will help establish a pattern of bullying.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY:**

**Guiding Principles:** **We believe** that creating a culture of academic honesty is the responsibility of all members of the Annunciation community. **We believe** that only through the practice of academic honesty students can reach their individual potential. **We believe** that inquiry based learning encourages creative and critical student work. **We believe** that authors have a right to determine how their work can be used, shared and built upon, and these decisions should be respected. **We believe** that by promoting academic honesty, we are striving to create a community based on respect and encourage creativity and personal responsibility.

**Academic Honesty:** Annunciation teachers aim to instill an understanding and respect of academic honesty. All subject teachers work with students of all age groups to develop understanding, highlight the importance of completing one's own work, promote best practices and identify skills that need developing. Violations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, primarily between the teacher and student, but when deemed necessary, with the cooperation of administration and parents/guardians.

**An academically honest student does not cheat.**

**Cheating includes:**

- Copying another student's work and turning it in as their own
- Allowing others to copy their work
- Allowing others to do work for them
- Doing work for others
- Using aids while taking a test or quiz unless it is allowed
- Giving or receiving answers during tests or quizzes
- Discussing test or quiz questions and answers with anyone who has not yet taken the test or quiz

**An academically honest student does not plagiarize.**

**Plagiarizing includes:**

- Copying directly from a source, either print or web-based, into their work
- Presenting someone else's words, expressions, art, ideas, or data as their own
- Purchasing someone else's work and turning it in as their own

**Potential Consequences:**

- Parent contact
- Office referral
- Potential for partial or no credit for all involved
  - Ex. Students have to make corrections to plagiarized items for a reduced grade or an alternative assignment/project for a reduced grade.
- Alternative assignments may be given at the teacher's discretion.
- Parent conference with school representation to determine further appropriate actions

**MISSING TEXTBOOKS and CLASSROOM MATERIALS:** If a student loses a text or classroom book, or does not return it at the end of the school year, a written notice will be sent to parents. Report cards for the student will be held until the book is returned or until the book is paid for, according to the current book price to replace the book.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS:****Academic Special Programs**

- WIN Time – Students choose the session for study time or additional help by teachers in specific curricular areas.
- Camp Foley – Environmental camp focusing on ecosystems and the interconnectedness of humans and the environment (6<sup>th</sup> grade).
- Geography Bee

**Non-pandemic Year Academic Special Programs**

- Spelling Bee
- Academic Triathlon
- Math Club – Afterschool club where students use problem solving skills to solve interesting math problems. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade prepare and compete in a state-wide math competition. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade participate in Math Counts, a national math competition.
- Academic Showcase – Student designed projects exhibited in the spring of the year- 6<sup>th</sup> grade does a History Day project, 7<sup>th</sup> grade does a Science Fair project, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade can choose between the two.
- Quiz Bowl (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

## **Service Programs**

- AYM – Annunciation Youth Ministry, focusing on leadership, recreation and religious development (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade).
- Leadership Team – Service organization comprised of eighth graders

## **Non-pandemic Year Service Programs**

- Ambassadors – Middle School Students who showcase Annunciation to visitors throughout the school year.
- Mentoring Program – Older students mentor incoming sixth grade students.

## **Extra-Curricular**

- Band – Band instruction & lessons
- Choir
- IMPROV – An after school creative arts class culminating in a spring performance (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade).
- Music Lessons – Piano
- Sports Teams – Basketball, baseball, cross-country, soccer, softball, volleyball.

## **ADDITIONAL EVENTS:**

- Middle School IB Awards and Donut Day - Monthly meeting and treat.
- Christmas – 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade party; 8<sup>th</sup> grade caroling.
- Carnaval – Mardi Gras celebration - teachers and students prepare the environment, parents work with costuming and food.
- Halloween – Celebration in Middle School (if calendar allows).
- Graduation – Ceremony and Mass (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Washington, D.C. Trip (8th grade)

*\*\*\* Academic, Extra-Curricular and additional events are all subject to change.*

**Annunciation Middle School is committed to providing your children with an outstanding religious and academic education within a nurturing environment. We provide our graduates with the educational tools and confidence needed for a successful high school experience.**